



303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.

Might - In - Flight

"HELLS ANGELS" NEWSLETTER

VOLUME VI NUMBER 3

JULY 1982

"CINCINNATI"

OHIO

OCTOBER 7

THRU

OCTOBER 10 '82

REGISTER EARLY - LIKE TODAY !
REUNION OF THE EIGHTH AIR FORCE/
MINI-REUNION 303RD BOMB GROUP

If you haven't already mailed your Reunion Registration Form, do it, SOON. Advance registrations will be accepted until Sept. 17, but every year there is a flood of late-comers. Since total attendance will exceed 2,000, there is no guarantee that you can be accomodated if you register late. Besides, the 303rd will receive \$4 for each advance registration by one of our members. We get "zilch" if you wait until after Sept. 17.

Cost for the 3-night package is \$476 double, \$301 single. That includes room, 7 meals and all scheduled events. The 2-night package, beginning Fri. afternoon, Oct. 8 is \$348 double, \$216 single. There also are packages for Cincinnati area locals who will not require hotel accomodations. The up-shot is there is a plan just right for YOU, so make your plans to be a part of this Big

Event. If you need registration forms, you can get them from Joe Vieira or write to: 8AF Reunion, P.O. Box 1304, Hollandale, FL. 33009.

The 303rd Rendezvous and Hospitality room will open at noon on Thursday, Oct. 7. Time has been allotted on Thurs. and Fri. for Unit activities. Your advance registration will contribute to the "hospitality" that will be available in this room. In addition, if you register in advance, you and your guests will be assigned seats at 303rd tables for lunch and dinner on Friday as well as for the Saturday Banquet. Your name will also be included in the Roster list to be distributed at the Reunion and will be posted on the Unit Locator Board at Reunion Headquarters.

Let's make sure the 303rd is well represented at the Reunion and at the important Memorial Dedication Ceremonies on Sat., Oct. 9 at Wright-Patterson AFB. You'll enjoy the activities and it's a great opportunity to renew old friendships at our own, 303rd Mini-Reunion.

SSMA REUNION, TOO

The Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association will also hold its 1982 get-together in conjunction with the 8AF Reunion. If you participated in Mission 115, 14 October, 1943, you are eligible to join this group. Dues are \$20 for 2 years and should be mailed to: Eugene F. Sebeck, Sr.,

Rt. 1, Box 117, Vanderbilt, PA.
15486. This is just one more reason for you to plan to be in Cincinnati this October.

D. C. IN '83

Plans are progressing for the 1983 Reunion of the 303rd BGA to be held in Washington D. C., Sept. 22-25, 1983. You'll want to block out those dates now and make plans to be a part of our fifth Bi-Annual Reunion exclusively for 303rd BGA members.

Any suggestions or recommendations for the '83 Reunion should be sent to Pres., Richard Waggoner or Secy., Joe Vieira. Better yet, pass them on in person in Cincinnati this Oct.

We will have 2 night and 3 night packages. Costs are not firm yet, but the estimates appear reasonable for the DC area. Extra nights at the hotel will be available at reduced rates for those who want to arrive early or stay over, for more sight-seeing.

Details will be released in future Newsletters as they become firm. Registration forms will be mailed to all members when appropriate. All we want you to do now is MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR WDC, SEPT. 22-25, 1983. We had 288 in attendance at San Diego in '81. Let's double that in DC in '83!

MISSING AND MISSED

The following members of our association are missing! Apparently they have changed addresses since mail to them is being returned to Joe Vieira. If you have any information about any of these (especially a current mailing address) please contact Joe. These are last known addresses:

Augustus C. Anderson 24 Oak Circle Dr. Wheeling, WV 26003	Jens C. Jenson Box 123 Garard Rt. Sidney, MT 59270
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Ed J. Broussard, Jr. 11014 Wickersham Ln. Houston, TX 77042	John Scott 114 E. Portal San Clemente, CA 92672
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Geo. R. Redhead 720 Madeira, NE Albuquerque, NM 87108	Samuel Minkowitz Box 2947 AFFA Audit Office APO NY, NY 09179
--	---

Col. Peter L. M. Packard
2902 Greenway Dr.
Elliott City, MD 21043

"DAWN MISSION" SCRUBBED - TEMPORARILY

"I hope you will permit me the space to send my very best wishes to all my friends in the 303rd, an association of which I am most proud to be Honorary Member No. 024, and as far as I know, one of the few Englishmen to be a member.

Whilst attending last year's San Diego reunion, I announced the publication of a second limited edition print, titled, 'Dawn Mission'. Since returning to the U.K., I have run into contractual difficulties and, for the time being, have had to postpone publication. All members who ordered either at San Diego, or by mail since, have been advised by letter of this postponement.

I am able to advise members that there are some 40 prints remaining for sale of 'Come Straight In', a 20"x16" full colour, limited, signed and numbered edition print depicting the wartime, emergency landing of a B17G at Molesworth, following a daylight raid on Germany in the summer of 1944. We published only 250 prints following the 1979 Dayton, Ohio reunion and over 200 now hang in the homes and offices of 303rd members. If any member would like to acquire one of the remaining prints, they can be obtained by writing to me at the following address: Norfolk Art Publishers Limited, 175 Plumstead Road, Norwich, Norfolk, England.

They should enclose their check for \$40.00. Immediately on receipt of same we will airmail their print to them. Incidentally, the original painting was presented to the 303rd Association at Dayton."

Sincerely,
Ray Cossey
Managing Director

Norfolk Art Publishers Limited

REPORT FROM BRINGTON/MOLESWORTH

This letter has been forwarded to us by Dave Fraser, Harwich, MA. Dave says, "I thought the attached letter would be of interest to ex-303rd personnel:"

11th March, 1982

Dear Mr. Fraser,

Thank you for your letter enquiring about Molesworth. The village is little changed since the war. Five new houses have been built, one restored and two bits of derelict property have been demolished. Brington which is the first village when turning right out of the main gate, has built four houses, plus forty-two base housing units for the USAF and two sets of huts have gone. If you were here when money was raised by American personnel for church spires, you will be interested to know that much of it went to rebuilding the spire of Brington Church and a tablet inside records the fact.

The only unit that has operated on the base for some years is a Redistribution and Disposal one and the runways are being torn up right now. According to present plans, Cruise Missiles are to be stationed here in several years time - they will not need the whole of the area and it is likely that some land will be sold off probably to return to agricultural.

If you do make the trip next year call in if you so wish.

Yours sincerely,
Revd. George L. North
Brington Rectory
Huntingdon
Cambridgeshire
PE18 0PU

Bythorn 305 (S.T.D. 08014)

I feel sure the good Vicar would be pleased to hear from other 303rds, particularly if you worshiped in the Brington Church during your stay at Molesworth. If you were a part of the fund raising effort, you might let him know you're pleased that the spire has been renewed. . . AND, by all means, on your next trip to the Midlands, "call in if you so wish".

LOTS OF QUESTIONS - CAN YOU SUPPLY ANY ANSWERS???

I am seeking a bit of information in regard to a former 303rd member. His name is Forest "Pete" Norman. I understand he was flying as tail gunner on a 303rd B-17 on the March 18 mission to Vegesack. The plane was hit over the target and limped back to the Channel with fighters following. They ditched. Sgt. Norman was wounded and got two broken legs. He was hospitalized for six months. A Sgt. Stoebel was lost.

Norman also flew on the October 14, 1943 mission to Schweinfurt during which he was wounded in the arm by a tail attack from a FW190. He, in turn, shot down the 190. They lost one engine and the left waist gunner was hit and bled to death. His name may have been Tomosko. The fighters were the "yellow nose" bunch.

"Pete" mentioned a Sgt. Vogel who had flown in the August 1, 1943 mission to Ploesti and who was shot down but evaded capture and got back to England. Would like information on these men from anyone who knew them or knows anything of those missions.

Also, would like to contact any other "Evaders". Was "The Witch's Tit" a 303rd plane? Who flew it? Appreciate any help I can get on these queries and would appreciate contact with Schweinfurt veterans, Aug. and Oct., '43; Hanover, July 26, '43.

303rd Associate Member
Glenn A. Stephens
2455 Chevoit Dr.
Ft. Collins, CO 80526

HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO "TELL ALL"

I am trying to locate veterans of WWII for two different purposes. First, I desire to interview them to get their personal experiences, be they humorous or serious. I'd like to put together a book in the Ernie Pyle style. Contacting them is easy once you can locate them. Locating them is the difficult part. I am writing to any unit organizations I can find to see if they can assist. Could my requests be placed in your unit newsletter? I will write and send a questionnaire to any members who reply. If your unit has a history

available, I would like to know how I can obtain a copy. I have been involved in military history for years, but this is a labor of love. I do not write for a living, but have always wanted to accomplish a work like this. My second interest is in acquiring military items relating to WWII. These include unit histories, maps, photos, unit newspapers, diaries, U.S. and enemy uniforms, insignia, etc. Collecting these is what started my interest in a book. I have met a number of interesting people and have heard many stories. Only in recent years have I awakened to recording these experiences before they are no longer available. These, I felt, would make very interesting material and come from the viewpoint of the typical person who lived them rather than from a high level only, which often does not know what it's really like to work or fight in the conflict. I am still serving with the military and am a Vietnam veteran having served as an infantry officer in the 1st Infantry Division.

Very truly yours,
 Major Terry Carlson
 2710 N. Monticello Ave.
 Chicago, IL 60647

Mail to: Joe Vieira
 6400 Park Street
 Hollywood, FL 33024

- ___ FIRST 300 MISSION BOOK \$5.00
 (Includes 303rd Decal)
- ___ 303rd BGA DECAL 1.00
- ___ 303rd BGA PATCH 2.50
- ___ 303rd BGA PIN 1.50
- ___ MEMBERSHIP ROSTER 1.00

My check (Money Order) for \$ _____
 is attached. (Do not send cash.)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

Make check payable to: 303rd BGA

"THE FIRST 300"

The second printing of this 34-page, 8½"x11" booklet has been completed. Get your copy by mailing the order form at the bottom of this page.

Originally published early in 1945, this booklet "is the combat story of the first 300 missions of men of the 303rd Bombardment Group who worked, fought and died gloriously to write an honorable and brilliant chapter in our nation's history." It is profusely illustrated and packed with memories for every man who was a part of "Hell's Angels". With each booklet, you will receive one of the new, official decals of the 303rd BGA. If you want the decal only, it sells for \$1.00.

PLANES OF FAME MUSEUM

Located at the Chino Airport, Chino, CA, this museum has more than 50 vintage aircraft on display. Included is the B-17G, PICADILLY LILLY. Our own Jim Ferris acts as a tour guide on week-ends explaining the workings of the "big bird" and relating some of his personal flying experiences. If you ever get to Chino, put the Planes of Fame Museum on your "must see" list and swap a few tales with Jim. He's always delighted to give 303rders a special tour!

FINAL TAPS

Our deepest sympathy to the families and friends of these, our comrades who have passed away:

WALTER GASSER

July 27, 1981 (Recently reported by Walter's nephew, Fred Gasser, 699 Lincoln St., Amherst, OH 44001.)

EDWIN RUSSELL

Rt. 2, Box 74A
 Okeman, OK 74859
 April 13, 1982

JOHN W. COTTRELL

1400 Hickory Blvd., Apt. 903
 Bonita Beach, FL 33923
 June 2, 1982 - Heart attack

Scientist 'pits' F-16 against Hitler forces

129

By MARK THOMPSON

Star-Telegram Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Adolf Hitler's war machine that rolled across Europe during World War II could have been stopped in its tracks within 30 days if the Allies had had two General Dynamics F-16 jets.

In fact, the Third Reich could have been shut down in a month with 1.2 of the Fort Worth-built warplanes.

That's the conclusion of a study circulating through the Pentagon that marshals evidence to counter the claims of military critics who say that today's weaponry has become too complicated to win wars.

The 12-page, technical report was written by Dr. S. Keith Jackson Jr.

A 15-year General Dynamics employee, Jackson received his doctorate in aerospace engineering science at the University of Colorado. He prepared the study at the Pentagon's request for the Aerospace Congress and Exposition.

"I wrote it as both a citizen and a General Dynamics employee," Jackson said this week. "I think there's been a lot written in the media giving technology a bad rap."

He acknowledged that it's difficult to prove the value of the F-16 — or any modern weapon — to a skeptical public without an actual war to test its capabilities.

So Jackson created a time warp and decided to "fly" his company's airplane in the European theater of 1943.

"Is 1981 technology really that much of an improvement over what was available in 1943 and, if so, in what way and by what means?" he asked in the introduction to his report.

"In comparing statistics, in many respects the F-16 — today's lightweight fighter — is more nearly comparable to World War II's heavy strategic bomber, the Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress," Jackson's report said.

Although the B-17 was twice the size of the F-16, the Fighting Falcon can carry up to six tons of weapons — twice what the B-17 could handle.

The B-17's wingspan, at more than 100 feet, was three times that of the F-16. At full throttle, the B-17 couldn't reach 300 mph, while the Fighting Falcon can fly at speeds of 1,300 mph.

In comparison with the F-16's one-man and computer-assisted crew, the B-17 required 10 airmen.

Of course, the B-17 was a lot cheaper than the F-16 — about \$250,000, or a fraction of the \$9.5 million F-16 cost cited by Jackson.

When inflation, higher labor rates and many other economic factors are considered, the F-16 is twice the cost of a B-17, according to Jackson's calculations.

"In terms of 'real' cost, then, the F-16 is, while somewhat more expen-

sive than the 'comparable' aircraft of 1943, not nearly as much so as popular legend would have it," the report said.

To determine whether the F-16 is worth the extra money, Jackson "replaced" the B-17 with the F-16 in one of World War II's most crucial air battles — the raid by the U.S. 8th Air Force on the ball-bearing factories at Schweinfurt, an industrial town in the heart of south-central Germany.

Ball bearings were vital to Germany's war effort, said Albert Speer, a confidant of Hitler and his minister of armaments and war production.

"Hitler could not continue his war without ball bearings," Speer said in his autobiography, *Inside the Third Reich*.

The bearings permitted Germany to build some of the best planes and tanks in the world. Without the sophisticated industrial capability to make them, it would have taken months or years for the Nazis to shift to less-sophisticated roller-type bearings, Speer said after the war.

After raids against the five ball-bearing plants in Schweinfurt were flown late in the summer of 1943, the Allies knew they had to muster another attack to finish the job.

Planes destroyed in the first raid had to be replaced — the fighters of the time didn't have sufficient range to accompany the bombers into Germany, turning the B-17s into sitting ducks — and the good weather needed from England to Germany proved elusive.

Time was running out.

"If the 8th Air Force did not attack by 13 October, at least four long winter months would elapse before a favorable weather condition occurred again," wrote Pierre Closterman, a pilot with Britain's Royal Air Force. "And in four months that factory would supply ball bearings for thousands of aero-engines for the Luftwaffe."

Finally, Oct. 14, 291 B-17s manned by nearly 3,000 men left England for the seven-hour, 800-mile round-trip by way of Schweinfurt.

Speer was discussing the war with Hitler at the Germans' East Prussian headquarters when the attack was made. The Nazi leader was called away to a telephone for a report from the scene.

"Hitler came back from the telephone in good spirits," Speer recalled. "A new daylight raid on Schweinfurt had ended with a great victory for our defenses, he said. The countryside was strewn with downed American bombers."

Speer was uneasy, and his fears were confirmed when he finally reached his deputy in Schweinfurt.

"All the factories had been hard hit, he informed me," Speer said.

"The damage was far worse than after the first attack. This time we had lost 67 percent of our ball-bearing production."

The lack of ball bearings already had become a major bottleneck in Germany's war production efforts, Speer said.

After the war, Speer told the allied forces that Germany's war machine would have been crippled if Schweinfurt and ball-bearing plants in several other cities had been attacked relentlessly.

"We anxiously asked ourselves how soon the enemy would realize that he could paralyze the production of thousands of armaments plants simply by destroying five or six relatively small targets," Speer said.

Apparently, not soon enough. "What really saved us was the fact that from this time on the enemy, to our astonishment . . . ceased his attacks on the ball-bearing industry," he said.

"Had they continued the attacks, we would quickly have been at our last gasp."

Of the 291 B-17s, 228 made it to Schweinfurt. By the time the mission was completed, more than 200 were destroyed or damaged. More than 50 escort fighters had been downed, and about 600 B-17 crewmen had been killed or captured.

The toll was too high, the Allies decided, and the B-17 was not allowed to fly deep into Germany again until long-range escort fighters were perfected a year later.

By then, the Nazis' ball-bearing production had been dispersed among factories throughout Germany — and other nations — to guarantee Hitler a steady supply of the vital component.

"Turning now to speculation, we ask how many F-16s would have been required to achieve the same results as the B-17s did," Jackson's study said.

The F-16 could have carried nearly 5 tons of bombs on the 800-mile mission, or 2.3 times more than the B-17. The F-16's greater speed and easier maintenance requirements would have permitted it to make the round trip three times in one day in

just more than five hours, or nearly two hours less than it took the B-17 to make a single run.

Furthermore, the F-16 is able to strike its targets with surgical precision — at least 75 percent of the time — while the B-17 managed to place 13 percent of its ordnance on target.

Jackson also decided that the F-16 would have been virtually invulnerable to World War II weaponry. It easily could outrun the best fighters of the day, and ground-based anti-aircraft fire "would have had almost no value against the nimble F-16," the report said.

The final factor cranked into the formula is the F-16's radar, which allows it to strike large targets at night and in bad weather. The B-17's need for good weather limited its long-range missions to six days a month, or a single mission every five days.

"Only approximately six F-16s would have been required over one day to cause the same damage as the B-17 fleet did over the same day," Jackson's report said.

When the F-16's ability to fly around the clock, unlike the B-17, is added to the equation, the imbalance is even more startling.

"Less than two F-16s operating over a typical five-day period could have equaled or exceeded the combat effectiveness of the almost 300 B-17s launched against Schweinfurt over the same . . . five-day period," the study said.

"In less than a month, the same two F-16s could have destroyed all the other ball-bearing factories on Albert Speer's list, with a month to spare before repeating the process and thus bringing the German war industry to a standstill."

The difference between the two planes should show military reformers that technology can't stand still, Jackson said this week.

"I think the reformers are doing a lot of good," he said. "But I think in some of their emphasis on simplicity and cheapness they're counterproductive."

"The report is an answer to some of the assertions that say technology is at the end of its rope. I've gotten a lot of favorable reaction to it."

Reprinted from the Sun., June 13, 1982 issue of the STAR TELEGRAM, Ft. Worth, TX.

While it may seem ludicrous to compare today's F-16 to a B-17 without considering corresponding advancement in defense technology, this article does illustrate the sophistication of today's military weaponry. It's interesting reading, especially for those who battled the flak and the hordes of German fighters on 14 Oct., 1943.

303rd BOMB GROUP(H)ASSOCIATION, INC.
MIGHT-IN-FLIGHT

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION

Name _____ Military Grade _____ Spouse's Name _____
 Street _____
 Address _____ Apt. Number _____
 City _____ State _____ ZIP CODE _____
 Home Phone: () _____ Business Phone: () _____ Ext: _____
 Crew and/or Duty _____ Retired Military Grade if Any _____ Pilot's Name _____

_____ \$10.00-Dues (5yrs) _____ \$2.50-Patch _____ \$1.50-Pin _____ \$1.00-Roster
 _____ \$5.00-First 300 Mission Book (Includes Decal) _____ \$1.00-Decal

Signature _____ Date _____ Amount paid: \$ _____

DO NOT SEND CASH THRU THE POSTAL SERVICE: IF you are a member, please pass this application on to another 303rder that is not a member, THANK YOU.

 MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: 303rd Bomb Group(H)Association, INC., and Mail to:

JOSEPH VIEIRA
6400 Park Street
Hollywood, FL 33024

303rd BOMB GROUP(H)ASSOCIATION, INC
P. O. Box 8531
PEMBROKE PINES BRANCH
HOLLYWOOD, FL 33024
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