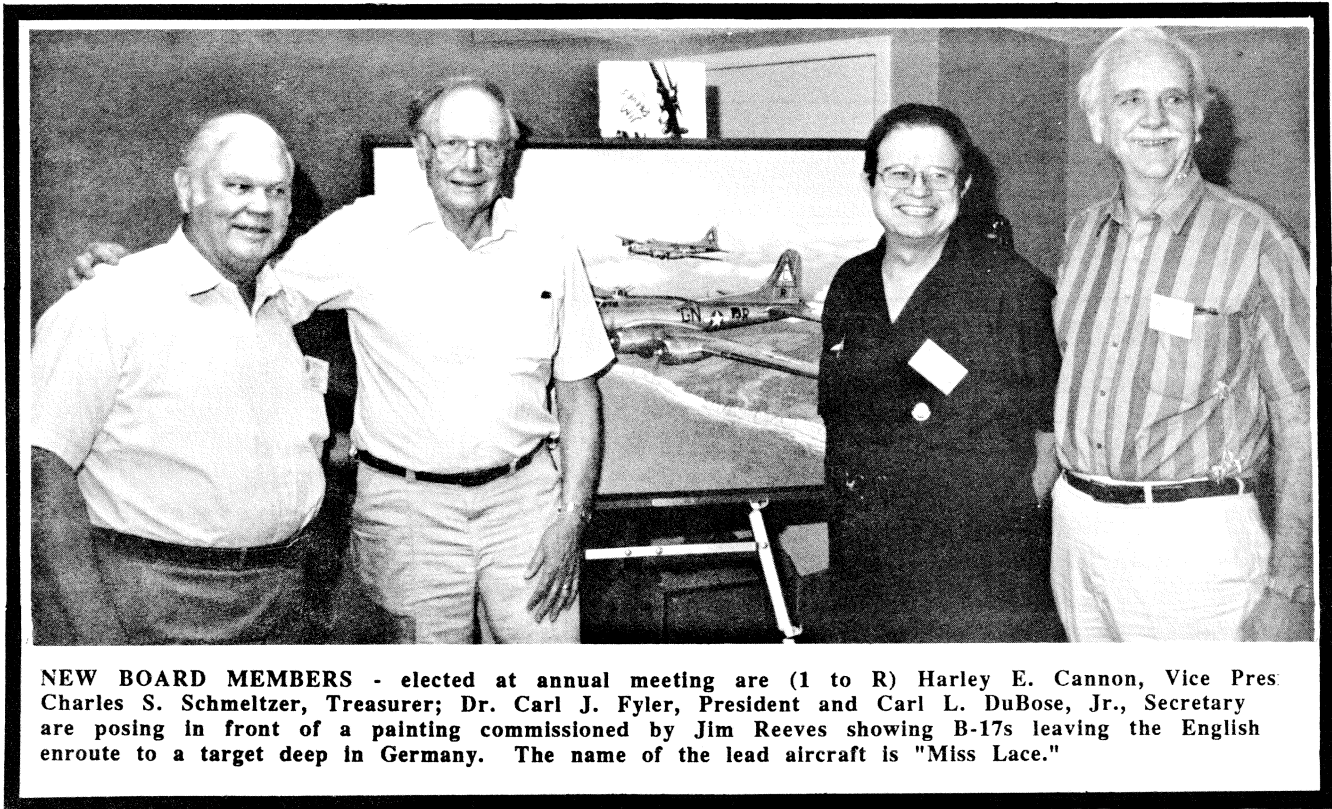




**303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.**

*"Might-in-Flight"*



NEW BOARD MEMBERS - elected at annual meeting are (1 to R) Harley E. Cannon, Vice Pres Charles S. Schmeltzer, Treasurer; Dr. Carl J. Fyler, President and Carl L. DuBose, Jr., Secretary are posing in front of a painting commissioned by Jim Reeves showing B-17s leaving the English enroute to a target deep in Germany. The name of the lead aircraft is "Miss Lace."

303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.  
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**303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.**  
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 See Below  
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 State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Bus. Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_  
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75-77	30
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**P.O. Box 5700**  
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CLIP—OR COPY ABOVE FORM

**8TH AF TO MEET IN PITTSBURGH OCT. 14-18**

"Get set for the biggest, finest and most enjoyable reunion ever held," is the word from the Eight Air Force Historical Society. The "Mighty Eight" is scheduled to form once again in The City With A Smile--Pittsburgh, Pa. on October 14-18, 1987. This will be the forty-fifth anniversary celebration of the Mighty Eight. The theme of the reunion will be "Salute to the Fighters." Ex-POWs will also be honored.

Hotels have been reserved in downtown Pittsburgh, the Vista, William Penn, Hilton and Hyatt for 8th AF attendees. The William Penn has been designated as the headquarters for the 303rd Bomb Group along with the 379th, 448th, 305th, 398th, 466th, 306th and 446th Bomb Groups. Since more than 500 members of the 303rd Bomb Group live within 500 miles of Pittsburgh, a good turnout is expected. At the present time the 303rd has the largest number of members belonging to the Eight Air Force

Historical Society.

Thursday, October 15, has been designated Unit and State Representatives Day, while Friday, October 16, has been designated Unit/Group and Chapter Day. There will be no Gala Dinner as in previous years. Units will dine on both Friday and Saturday nights in their own RDZ rooms. This arrangement will give all of the units more time to transact their own business and renew old friendships. After dinner Friday and Saturday nights, there will be a band, entertainment and a show in the main ballrooms of the Vista and Hilton Hotels. Milton Caniff of "Terry and the Pirates," and "Steve Canyon," fame will be an honored 8 AF honored guest.

Delta and US Air have been designated as the AFHS official airlines. To obtain the best prices available mention Delta File Co 108 or US Air File BE 728J.

Many special events have also been

scheduled. Special tribute will be paid to all the Fighter type Units but the B-17 and B-24 Groups will not be forgotten. Special facilities, help and info will be available to assist Ex-POWs in applying for the new POW medal. A three hour 8AFHS sponsored tour will be available on Friday. Included in the tour is a visit to the Cathedral of Learning, Mellon Institute, Heinz Chapel, Carnegie Institute and Flag Plaza. Other events available are a luncheon cruise, a dinner cruise, a High Tea Dance at the Wm. Penn Ballroom and an Open House and Air Show at the Greater Pittsburgh Airport.

The Registration Center and PX are located on the mezzanine of the Hilton, the Reunion Headquarters Hotel.

Anyone wishing additional information are requested to contact Membership Chairman, Jim Reeves; Newsletter Editor, Hal Susskind; 8th AF Reunion Chairman, Lew Lyle and 8th AF president Ben Smith.



**303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.**

**Might - In - Flight**

## “HELLS ANGELS” NEWSLETTER



VOLUME X NUMBER 4

Editor: Hal Susskind  
2602 Deerfoot Trail, Austin, TX 78704

JULY 1987

# 530 TURN OUT FOR TEXAS REUNION

The second largest crowd in the history of the 303rd Association reunions turned out for this year's Cowboy Roundup at Fort Worth, Texas.

More than 530 Hell's Angels attended the Gala Reunion Banquet on Saturday, June 6 to hear a humorous talk by Dr. Don Newberry, President of Howard Payne University. Also on the program was an interesting update on life at Molesworth in 1987 given by Lt. Chris Clever of the 303rd Tactical Missile Wing, present tenants of the real estate guarded by the 303rd so zealously in 1942-45.

The general membership meeting held on Friday was both action packed and well attended. The number of people attending topped the crowd at the 1985 membership meeting in Seattle. Highlights of the meeting were; a new slate of officers was elected headed by Dr. Carl J. Fyler, National Jr. Vice Commander of the Central Region of the American Ex-Prisoners of War; the By-Laws were amended and approved; Life Memberships in the Association grew from 3 in 1985 to more than 300 in 1987; the allocation of \$5000 to start research for an in-depth history of the organization starting with the National Archives in Washington, D.C. was approved. Other items discussed as well as the amended By-Laws are



**HOWDY PODNER** - Dr. Carl J. Fyler (1) gets a real Texas greeting from Washington resident Mel Schulstad.

covered elsewhere in this newsletter.

There was a sad note added to the festivities. Eugene F. Keely, (427) of Valley Stream, N.Y., suffered a coronary attack at Ranchland. He died later at a local hospital. He is survived by his wife Kathleen who was with him at the reunion. He was remembered in the prayers of all who attended the Catholic and Protestant services held on Sunday morning. The 303rd Bomb Group made a

donation to the American Heart Association in his memory.

Another incident which made news was the crash of a single engine Rockwell Commander owned by 303rder Frank DeCicco. The plane had been taking aerial pictures of the B-17 "Chuckie" carrying members of the 303rd on rides around the area. The Commander piloted by Albert Joseph Hagen of Katy, Texas and carrying ace photographer Coleman Sanders, had its landing gear down and was approaching Meachan Field, when the Fort Worth airport control tower told the pilot to change runways. "While we were changing runways, the engine quit," said Sanders. Although the plane was a total loss, no one on board the Commander was injured.

For some good news; Roger L. Kuydendall, who was listed under Taps in the March issue of the newsletter showed up hale and hearty to enjoy the reunion. Kuydendall is a stockbroker in Lubbock, Texas.

The decision where to hold the 1989 reunion was deferred to the Reunion Committee to study all the possible locations and report back to the Board of Directors for a final decision. Locations under consideration will be listed in a future issue of the newsletter.

## LAST B-17 COMES HOME IN 303RD COLORS

Painted in the markings of the 303rd Bomb Group's "Thunderbird," a veteran of 116 museums, a lone B-17 Flying Fortress, one of the last of 12,731 built, will soon be heading back from England for the U.S. under its own power. Sponsored by Conoco, the Lone Star Flight Museum of Houston, Texas will add the Boeing bomber to its growing collection by staging an epic retracing of the North Atlantic ferry routes in reverse with a handpicked crew wearing vintage Army Air Forces clothing from Avirex, Ltd.

June 1987 marked the 45th anniversary of the North Atlantic Ferry route's initial B-17 delivery to England via Greenland and Iceland.

Almost 8000 B-17s assigned to the mighty U.S. Eighth Army Air Force in England followed that route primarily

staging out of Presque Isle, Maine to either Goose Bay, Labrador or Gander, Newfoundland. The Atlantic Ocean was then crossed by going from Goose Bay to Bluie West One, Greenland to Reykjavik, Iceland to Prestwick, Scotland or from Gander direct to Prestwick, making the United Kingdom one enormous aircraft carrier from which to hit occupied Europe in concert with the Royal Air Force.

After visiting the original 303rd base at Molesworth, England, now the home of the 303rd Tactical Missile Wing, "ThunderBird" will head up for Prestwick for staging, cross to Reykjavik and Bluie West One, then down to Goose Bay, Gander and Presque Isle. There will be a 303rd Bomb Group member of the crew, former "ThunderBird" radio operator Gene Girman, who made his original crossing

to England in a B-17 in 1943. At each stop the Flying Fortress crew will play host to the people who aided in getting the bombers across during the war.

Upon its arrival in the U.S., the B-17 will visit cities as time permits. In Dallas, the crew will welcome Dallas Cowboys veteran Tom Landry aboard for the final flight to Houston. Landry should feel at home since he flew B-17s in combat with the 8th Air Force. It is hoped that final tribute to the aircraft will be made in July at Houston's Hobby Airport where Jimmy Stewart, an 8th Air Force combat pilot, will be the guest of honor at a Glenn Miller dance around the B-17 in one of the old World War II hangars.

Jeffrey L. Ethell

## THUNDERBIRD



Happy crew which flew in the Thunder Bird on its 100th Mission.

Boeing B-17G-25 D1, Army Air Forces Serial No. 42-38050, was assigned to the 359th Bomb Squadron upon landing at Molesworth on 18 January 1944. After an initial mission to Frankfurt was recalled by weather on 24 January 1944, the aircraft went on to become one of the veteran B-17s of the war with a total of 116 missions, the last flown on 22 March 1945.

After her first 25 missions she became a "lead crew" aircraft for the 359th with no regularly assigned crew. Later, introducing new crews to combat for a few missions before being handed over to a new bunch, she was strictly a "GI" ship, a group good luck symbol that seemed to always bring her boys home. By the end of the war the control

cables had become so stretched out of shape that she gave her pilots a hard time when a tight formation was required. Numerous hits produced a steady growth of bare aluminum patches over her entire body while her olive drab and gray paint became bleached to khaki, stained deeply with oil and exhaust. When retired she had gone through eight sets of engines and a large "WW" for War Weary was painted on her tail.

Radio operator Sgt. Gene Girman was introduced to combat in "ThunderBird" with Lt. Jack Hillary's crew in 1944. Everyone was hoping to get the required number of missions over with and go home--that didn't happen. When transferred out of "ThunderBird" Hillary's crew received a brand new B-17G, "Myasis Dragon." Before the nose art could be painted on they were over Merseberg, Germany on 24 August 1944. During the bomb run number 1 engine was hit, then another. In the top turret Sgt. George Paul called Hillary and copilot Lt. Bill Robertson, telling them to feather both propellers as he climbed down and began to clip on his parachute.

In the next instant, an 88mm flak round came straight up through the open bomb bay and exploded in the midst of 38 100-pound general purpose bombs hanging in the racks. Split in half, the bomber disappeared in the blinding flash of TNT and oxygen cylinders exploding.

Gene Girman was blown out of the radio room back through the fuselage, slamming against the pole above the ball turret. Unconscious, he slumped

over the hatch of the ball turret with shrapnel wounds in his right shoulder, arm and leg. Sgt. Reid Bishop was trapped inside his tiny ball without a parachute.

Bishop watched Girman slide off and fall out into space. Reaching up through the freed hatch, Bishop grabbed his chute from the nearby radio box, clipping it on. Before he could react, he was thrown out of the mangled fuselage behind Girman, hitting jagged metal on the way.

Girman woke up in mid-air to find his chute hanging on by a single ring. Hooking the pack up, he pulled the rip cord. Instinctively following Army Air Force procedure, he delayed opening by holding the pack shut...at about 2000 feet he let it deploy and noticed Bishop's chute opening nearby. As Girman touched down his knee was broken. Bishop had a bad scalp wound but otherwise made it down OK. A 10-year old boy watching in fascination ran for the local authorities and the only two survivors of Hillary's crew were captured to spend the next nine months as POWs.

Gene Girman was 21 in mid-1944. Today he operates his own realty company in Highland, Indiana. Reid Bishop is now retired from U.S. Steel in Orem, Utah. Carol Lea, Jack Hillary's widow, lives in Bellaire, Texas while Shirley Volpe, Bill Robinson's widow, is now in Doylestown, Pennsylvania.

Jeffrey L. Ethell  
Front Royal, VA.

## MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING JUNE 6, 1987

Meeting was called to order by incoming President, Dr. Carl Fyler, who stated that he would encourage members of the executive committee to become active in promoting expanding objectives of the association. He stated that monthly reports from officers to him would be required and that we should increase our efforts to contact new members.

It was noted that memorial services should be conducted at each meeting; general agreement was that this would be done at Sunday services.

After considerable discussion about control of the distribution and commercialization of membership rosters as well as the cost incurred, motion was made by Bill Heller that we place a voluntary charge of \$1.00 on the distribution of the roster with a disclaimer that the list is not to be used for commercial purposes. Walt Mayer seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Outgoing president Al Lehmann recommended that Hal Susskind be asked to continue to print the newsletter of about 12 pages at an approximate cost of \$1,200 per issue with approximately 4 issues annually. The newsletter should include awards, board actions, and historical happenings as well as the anecdotal stories which are so popular.

Bill Heller, Gen. Lew Lyle and others strongly recommended that we take action to promote the 303rd, especially since other groups are very actively doing so.

In order to alleviate some misunderstanding involving the appointment of two new chaplains, it was suggested that Carl Fyler write all the chaplains a letter stating that they were appointed to the "chaplaincy."

Gen. Lyle recommended that the board should

determine long range (5-10 years) goals. "Where are we going?" Fyler named Harley Cannon, Al Lehmann, and John Ladd to the ways and means committee to work on long range objectives.

Discussion ensued regarding solicitation of funds for the historical foundation, including a proposed building to house items collected by the historical committee. It was agreed that small donations from membership would show group support, while large donations from certain individuals would carry the load. No action was taken on this proposal. The existing historical committee, with Al Lehmann taking the lead, has done some work as indicated by the \$5,000 authorized by the membership at the general meeting. Lehmann was authorized to get the ball rolling on this project. Gen. Lyle volunteered to assist--his connections in Washington would be invaluable.

Harley Cannon moved that we move the \$4,000 plus now held by Father Skoner in a memorial fund to the historical account. Schulstad seconded. Discussion followed which indicated that some would like to keep a memorial fund account open to encourage donations for memorials other than the historical foundation. Motion was withdrawn.

DuBose moved, seconded by Cannon that we use the money in the memorial account as needed by the historical committee, but the memorial account would remain active to accept future designated donations. Motion passed. Lehmann voted against.

The audit report was given by Cannon, acting chair of the audit committee. The report showed the finances were in good order. Some recommendations would be forthcoming. Transfer to the new treasurer would be

accomplished on July 1, 1987. Mayer moved, Heller seconded that the report be accepted. Motion passed.

Lehmann moved, seconded by Schulstad, that a biographical questionnaire be mailed out to members in order that we might have a personal history of members. Motion passed.

The following committees were appointed by President Fyler--additional names were to be added to some of the committees.

### CONVENTION COMMITTEE

Melvin McCoy  
Bud Klint  
Walt Mayer (Chair)

### WAYS AND MEANS

Harley Cannon  
Al Lehmann  
John Ladd

### NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Melvin McCoy (Chair)  
Walt Mayer  
Frank DeCicco

### AUDIT COMMITTEE

Harley Cannon (Chair)  
Gordon Smith

Meeting adjourned.

Carl DuBose  
Secretary

## HELL'S ANGELS FORUM:

### THANKS and Many Thanks

In Nov. 1986 I had a stroke. Recovery has been very slow but I thought I could make it to the reunion of the 303rd Bomb Group at Ft. Worth. In fact I wanted to go very much. My wife, Marion, and I talked it over and decided we could make it. She has arthritis very bad in her left hip.

When we got to the Hilton in Ft. Worth we saw friends and others that we have seen in the past and we were very glad that we were there. But I found out that I wasn't as well recovered as I thought I was, my legs played tricks on me. Everytime there was a high curb to negotiate, steps without banisters like at the rodeo to the seats or on and off buses or on and off "Chuckie" there was always a helping hand and a smile on a nameless face. Maybe it was the Texas influence anyway my faith in the human race and particularly in personnel of the 303rd Bomb Group has been completely restored. Thanks again and I hope to see you all at the next reunion and that Marion and I will be in better physical shape.

**Grady Hodges, 358th Sqdn.  
1325 N. Nutmeg St. Apt. 301  
Escondido, CA 92026**

Thank you 303rds for your "TLC." I was deeply touched by your concern and assistance when my infirmities got the best of me. "The spirit was willing but the body was weak." There was too much walking and excitement. My old walking stick was not motorized. The straw that broke the proverbial camels back was the incident up in the picture taking room when the crowding and the heat got the best of me and I just flat conked out. I am sorry for any inconvenience or concern that I caused.

I am especially grateful to Mary Klint for the wheelchair and those who volunteered to push. Thanks for all your helping hands. Without these and the strong arms of Bill Heller who supported me during the Memorial Service I would never have made it. Thank each and every one of you for making it easy on mama. God bless and keep you all now and every day. We love you and appreciate your friendship.

**Chapple and Mama Slawson  
San Antonio, Texas**

.....I agree with you that we are now heading toward some meaningful goals but have a long way to go.

The good news is that I have never seen so many outstanding, qualified and

willing people in the 303rd Bomb Group. The Ft. Worth meeting was a very productive one.

I would like to take this opportunity to pass on my personal thanks to all who worked on the Ft. Worth Reunion, the participants and especially the Board of Directors that you have selected for the next two years. I'm proud to have been a member of the 303rd but more important I am happy to see so many people who really have been so successful in their business and personal life.

We have a real legacy to leave to this country and we must preserve it.

**Lew Lyle  
Hot Springs, Arkansas**

### Al Lehmann 303rd Bomb Group

Your note was very comforting. I'm sure Gene would be very proud and honored to be on the roster among his other "Fallen Comrades." He was so proud of his war experiences--my only regret is that he never put his stories on tape for his grandchildren to hear. He loved the 303rd reunions and always looked forward to meeting old friends.

Gene would have retired the end of this year and we had planned to do a bit more travelling. So much for that!

Please, if possible, in the next newsletter, express my deepest appreciation to those folks who tried so very hard to help Gene that evening at Ranchland. I don't know who they are but I do realize that they struggled valiantly. They all have my heartfelt thanks. Also, thank you kindly to the Group for paying my hotel bill.

Most sincerely,

**Kathleen Keely  
Valley Stream, NY 11581**

### A Day To Remember

Enclosed herewith are two articles which might warrant publication in the newsletter.

*Our Day* is one I mentioned recently to you. I did not realize it would be so long. The group picture is our original crew taken in front of "Red Ass," the first plane we flew in combat. The other three are of General Travis awarding a D.F.C. to Captain Brinkley, a D.F.C. to Sgt. Ferguson and the Silver Star to Sgt. Rein (pinning). The decorations were for heroism on *Our Day*, November 29, 1943.

The enclosed lyrics are another story. After several years of searching, I located all our crew members, some of whom are deceased and some are members of the 303rd group. About two months ago, I

located John Parrott, our original co-pilot. He is shown in the group photo enclosed. John is in bad health and prefers not to join the 303rd at this time. His son has written me and has given me permission to use the lyrics he has written as a tribute to his father and the members of the 303rd Bomb Group. Anyone wishing to contact John Parrott may do so by writing to his son Thomas (Bill) Parrott, 5310 Tendilla Avenue, Woodland Hills, CA 91364.

I hope you can find space in the newsletter for Bill's lyrics, and I will go so far as to request that Bill's letter be published next to the lyrics.

Keep up the good work.

**Guy A. Lance  
Stephenville, TX**

*Ed. Note: Bill's letter and lyrics are shown on page 8.*

### All Good Things Come....



I was privileged recently to spend three days with the Alamo Wing, Confederate Air Force at Stinson Field and Kelly AFB in San Antonio.

The picture of me above was taken in my old 303rd Bomb Group "crew position." As I explained to Col. Hancock, pilot of the B-17G, I wanted to correct an injustice done me in 1943. The base photographer at Molesworth came out to our B-17F to take pictures of each crew member at his position. Unfortunately, I was scheduled for an hour on the bombardier trainer that morning and missed the picture taking session. So, 40 years later, thanks to the Alamo Wing I finally had my picture taken at my old "crew position."

I also realized another first by taking a ride in the Wing's L-6, my very first ride in a single-engined military aircraft.

**Bob Taylor  
San Antonio, Texas**

## HELL'S ANGELS FORUM:

A pitch for the 444th



**Maurice "Slim" Paulk**

I was a member of the 444th sub-depot and was in the original 328th. When we arrived in the first week of Oct. '42 the ground crews were patching the planes with tin cans and British pop rivets.

I don't see or hear much of the 444th in the periodical from 303rd so I think I'll put in my two cents worth. Enclosed you will find photos. Do what you want with them, print them in the newsletter or display at the reunion--whatever.

The photos that I brought home were printed by Leroy Connelly and I in a dark room that I helped him make from an outboard wing panel crate, complete with electric wiring. It was in the reparable hanger. (If memory serves me correctly--he probably done most of the work cause I knew nothing about photography).

If you know Joseph Freedman you might ask him if he remembers the time that a 17G almost plowed us under. We were on the East end of the runway in a Jeep. Capt. says "Boy is that guy coming in low"!! I put the brakes to the jeep and we watched landing gear and ball turret flash by in front of our eyes. We were under the left outboard engine. Man!! I had butterflies in my belly for an hour--I never will forget that one.

Hope the next reunion can be nearer to Nebraska.

Yours in Memories  
M.J. Paulk  
Wood River, Nebraska

Telling it Like it is!

To all members of the 303rd Bomb Group Association, plus those contemplating joining and former members of the 303rd Bomb Group.

There have been many questions since our national meeting in Seattle in 1985 concerning the raising of dues to \$10.00 a year and Life Members schedule.

First of all with a dues schedule of \$10.00 for 5 years, this would only give us the use of \$2 a year and if we had a membership of approximately 1500, this would only give us \$3000 a year to operate on.

At the present time we are mailing out on a quarterly basis about 1500 newsletters at an average cost of about \$1 per copy, including postage. Everyone who has ever belonged to the 303rd Bomb Group Association is receiving a copy. Last year the newsletter, which grew from 8 pages to 16 pages plus the roster, cost us \$5934.38.

If we had continued with the \$2.00 per year dues schedule we would now be in bankruptcy.

The excellent Newsletter now being put out by Hal Susskind is certainly worth the whole ten dollars.

Members who are still refusing to pay the new \$10 membership dues are being subsidized by the men who are paying. This is not fair.

Our total operating cost for fiscal 1986 is about \$10,000. If it were not for the P.X. being ably handled by Bob Kidd, we would be financially strapped.

There are still about 400 members who have not adopted the new dues schedule. Come on Gentlemen and join the 20th century and bring your dues up to date. If you have any question, please contact Jim Reeves, our membership chairman.

Many of you should take advantage of the Life Membership Program. It is a very good deal for everyone. This money is in a separate account and is there to keep us going strong for many years ahead.

Age 60-64	\$75.00
65-69	60.00
70-74	45.00
75-77	30.00
78-up	free

Thank you for the support for the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association.

If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact or call me at 315-894-3490.

Keep 'em flying

John M. Ladd  
Retiring Treasurer of the 303rd Bomb Group Ass'n.  
Apt. C-16 Forge Hill Estate  
Iilon, NY 13357

From the editor's scratchpad

I have managed to receive three pages from a document called "Honor Roll," which lists members of the 303rd Bombardment Group (H) lost in combat against the enemy, in Europe. Evidently the pages were copied from charts which listed the date of the mission, the mission number, the target, the serial number of the aircraft, its name and the mission number of the aircraft. It also listed the names of the crew by position. I have pages 3, 4 and 5. I would appreciate it very much if someone could send me the missing pages. This information would help immensely in answering questions from a variety of people, including writers from both the U.S. and foreign countries. It will also help in compiling an indepth, accurate history of the 303rd which the present Board is committed to producing.

★ ★ ★

From my conversations with many members of the 303rd Association at the Ft. Worth reunion I realized that we have just as many talented people in our organization at this time in life as we did during the war years at Molesworth. Consequently the Board of Directors would like to tap all this experience and knowledge into making our organization the finest in the country. In the next issue of the newsletter we will include a questionnaire to determine what kind of talent there is presently available to our organization. In other words we are going to try and involve as many people as possible in achieving the goals we have outlined for the next five years. Look for the questionnaire in the next issue; in the meantime can anyone tell me how many of the people who served at Molesworth went on to become ministers, priests or rabbis?

I look for some wonderful stories to come out of this questionnaire. In the next issue of the newsletter I hope to do a story on Lt. Charles W. Spencer. His career after the war is a real interesting, heart warming, human interest story.

Because of the extra space needed to run the amended By-Laws and the Minutes of two very important meetings, we had to hold an interesting letter from a former Luftwaffe pilot who flew the "163 Komet" and also a letter from a writer in Switzerland requesting info about the 303rd B-17s and crews who landed there during the war and were interned. The list of names of attendees at the Ft. Worth Reunion are being carried in the roster supplement.

## Lady Luck Ground Checks Untold Tales of Life in the 360th

Some people believe in luck--they carry around a rabbits foot; wear a lucky tie or hang a horseshoe above their door. Other people scoff at such nonsense. They argue vehemently that luck charms are just so much junk, that Lady Luck is a figment of someone's fevered imagination and is believed in only by the unintelligent.

If such is the case, then I'm one of the poor intelligentsia who believes in luck; for after an experience of some friends of mine, which I happened to witness, I honestly feel as if there is such a personage as Lady Luck. The scenario deals with the actions of a certain ground crew chief, his assistant (I shall call them Bossie' and Gus' respectively) and the armament section chief--we called him Edgie' (not Edgy') on a certain day in Molesworth, England.

In the early days of the Eighth Air Force, there were none of the more modern inventions, such as electric hoists for lifting bombs into the bomb bays of the flying fortresses'. All bombs were put in their proper places on the bomb racks by manpower. The heavier bombs were put in place with the aid of a hand operated cable winch.

The bombs were placed in the various aircraft by the ordnance--armament crew. They were checked, after loading, by the armament section chief. The smaller bombs could be checked visually from the bomb bay catwalk but the larger bombs could be checked only by climbing into the bomb bay and mounting the topmost bomb. From this position all of the bomb shackles, fusing, arming wires and safety devices in that bay could be inspected and minor adjustments could be made. It was the armament section chief's responsibility to close the bomb bay doors after his inspection.

Bossie's ship had been on a mission that day with the other ships of our squadron. It was a lucky day. The battle damage was mostly minor in nature and Bossie's ship needed only ground checking and a few minor adjustments in order to synchronize the inboard engines.

Engines are sometimes temperamental. Bossie and Gus were running into difficulties trying to make those engines behave in normal fashion. During this time (night time of course) revised loading orders for the next mission had arrived and the new bombs were being loaded into the various ships of the squadron. Bossie's ship was scheduled to fly the mission with 1000 pound bombs, fused for instant detonation upon contact.

In order to facilitate the bomb



(L to R) ) O'Neil, Fleming, Roth and . . .

loading, Bossie and Gus were making the adjustments on their engines while the bombs were being fused and loaded into their ship. They hoped to be finished by the time the bombs were loaded. After the bombs were loaded and the ordnance--armament crew had moved to another ship, Bossie and Gus ran-up their engines again. (Ran-up or run-up means to start an engine; warm it up, advance and retard acceleration to certain RPM's for specified time limits, meanwhile checking superchargers, etc.). Everything checked nearly perfectly, except for a minor adjustment yet to be made on one engine. Gus made the necessary adjustment, while Bossie waited in the cockpit, holding the mixture control in the required position. Gus had just finished the job and had started to reenter the plane, when Edgie arrived to check the bomb racks.

The engines were warm. It did not take Bossie and Gus long to check the prop-pitch on all four engines. They shut the outboards down and prepared to run-up the inboards again for the final check. In the meantime Edgie had checked one side of the bomb bay and had moved to the other side to check those racks.

Edgie had just climbed astraddle the onboard thousand pound bomb on that side. He immediately saw that it was improperly shackled. It was too late\*\*\*//. The shackle gave way, pulling the arming wires from the bomb fuses. The bomb, with Edgie sitting on top of it, came crashing from the bomb bay to the concrete, twelve feet below.

I shall never forget those few moments. I saw Edgie tumbled from the bomb into a sitting position. He was facing that bomb. His face was as white

as a freshly bleached sheet. I think he was afraid to breathe, lest the bomb should detonate.

Bossie and Gus felt the quick uplift as the weight of the heavy bomb left the ship. They quickly looked back and saw Edgie and the bomb falling from the bomb bay. Quicker than it takes to tell about it, Bossie and Gus had switched off the engines, made a dive for the companionway and squirmed out of the escape hatch. They both landed on their feet, running madly. They ran about sixty feet, to the shelter of their tent, where they stopped and peeped fearfully around the corner of it.

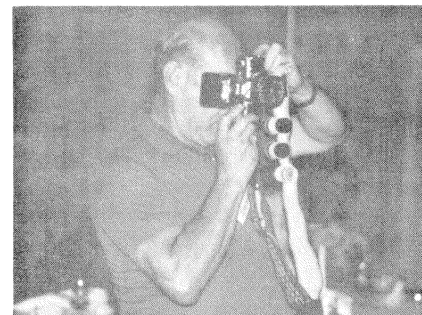
In the subsequent investigation it was found that Edgie's shoes had hooked the fuses on each end of the bomb. This had bent the fuse tubing in such a manner as to prevent the detonator release from sliding home. A metal stanchion, set in the concrete had been the only thing that prevented the bomb from rolling. If the bomb had rolled, Edgie would have been crushed and probably the detonators would have been released.

Neither Bossie nor Gus were ever able to explain to me how they could shut-off the engines, safety-lock all of the controls, both leave that airplane at the same time through an opening about twenty-one inches by twenty-two inches in size and run a distance of almost seventy feet,--all in less than ten seconds.

Perhaps Lady Luck does pull a ground check sometimes?

From the faded memories  
of ASN 10600562

### Who Am I?



This is the way you usually see me at 8th AF and 303rd Reunions. Outside of being an intrepid aerial photographer I am usually very quiet.

# The Saga of Jack Mathis Continues



Photo by Joe Wilkinson

Painting of the Mathis brothers at Mathis Airport in San Angelo

I read the article about Jack Mathis in the March issue of the newsletter with great interest and emotion, and it caused me to feel that it is probably time that I tell another part of the story.

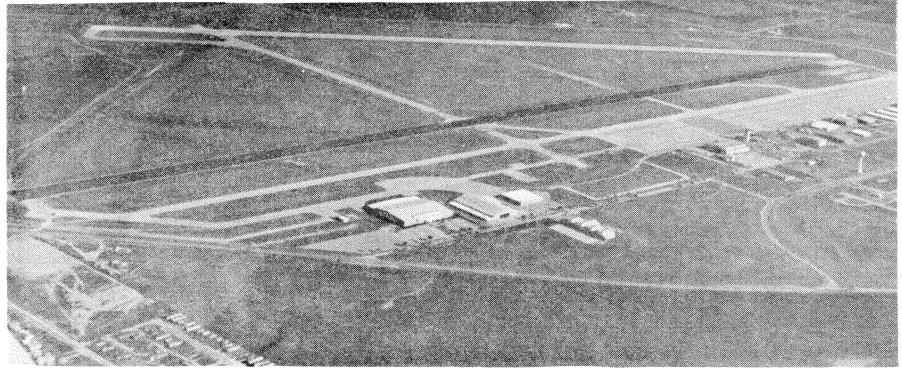
On April 17, 1943, the date of the Vegesack mission, I was the bombardier in the "FDR" captained by Ross Bales, and we flew lead plane in the second element of the group, led that day by the "Duchess".

Jack and I were classmates at Bombardier School and graduated from Victorville on July 4, 1942. We started together at Ellington Field right after the war began. We joined the 303rd at Alamogordo, New Mexico in July, 1942 where, after being assigned to the 359th, he became Stouse's bombardier and I joined Bales' crew. When all the crews were formed, we spent a couple of months training. After receiving delivery of new airplanes at Battle Creek, Michigan, and getting them outfitted, the group flew to Molesworth and arrived October 21, 1942.

Everyone is aware that the original crews which made up the 303rd experienced extremely high casualties. By April 17, 1943 there were not many of the original 359th squadron crews remaining, much less the original crew members.

Jack's brother, Mark, graduated from Bombardier School one of two classes after Jack and I, and he was assigned to B-26's and trained at McDill Field in Tampa.

On the night before the Vegesack mission, Mark received permission from his C.O. to visit us in Molesworth. We had a bombardier's party to end all parties and we planned to continue it when we returned from Vegesack. During the party, the possibility of Mark transferring to B-



Mathis Airport was formerly Conco Army Airfield.

17's from B-26's was discussed at great length and I think that he would have made a great try to get the transfer, even if events had turned out differently and Jack had safely returned.

The story of Jack's death has been told many times, and at no time better than it was told by Paul Gallico.

What happened then, though, was that after his death John Shroup, who was the bombardier for the "Knock-out Dropper," and I served as the honor guard and accompanied Jack's remains to the military cemetery outside of London where he was buried. John was also a classmate at Victorville. While this was happening, Mark was requesting a transfer to the 303rd to take Jack's place as a bombardier of the "Duchess."

Unknown to us, fate was at work and the squadron received orders for Stouse's crew to be returned to the States to take part in special assignments in the 3rd Air Force Training Command which was training replacement crews. Bill Calhoun, who was the squadron C.O. of the 359th, decided that I should replace Jack and return with Stouse's crew as the bombardier and, as it turned out, the last combat mission that we flew was Vegesack. We left the squadron and were transported back to the States on the Queen Mary.

In the meanwhile, Mark's transfer was granted and instead of being assigned bombardier of the "Duchess," he was assigned to the "FDR," and became my replacement instead of Jack's.

To the best of my knowledge, it was on the next mission flown by the "FDR," which I am told was to Kiel, that Bales' crew was lost leaving the target and there were no known survivors. Mark Mathis was the bombardier!

So, here I am. I replaced Jack after his death; his brother replaced me, and died on the next mission. Was it coincidence? Was it fate? Or was it predestined? I have had a lifetime to think about it.

Incidentally, in closing, I should tell you that my children include

three sons. The oldest is named Ross, after Ross Bales, captain of the "FDR"; the second son is named Richard, after Richard Browning, the navigator of the "FDR"; and the last and youngest is Mark, named for Mark Mathis, Jack Mathis's younger brother.

Paul M. Thomas  
Grand Rapids, MI. 49506

## Potpourri

Foley's Crew, 360th Sqdn., held a mini-reunion at Bob Rowe's home in Tampa, Florida during the second week of February. Attending were: 1st pilot Norment Foley and his wife "Bill"; co-pilot Bob and Katie Rowe; engineer Ed Snell; radioman Vernelle Johnson and his wife "Sweet Mary" and daughter Lisa and waist gunner Butch Gordly and Nora. According to reports, they played golf from dawn to dusk and toured the area and had dinner at the "306th Bomb Group" restaurant in Sarasota. A video tape was made of the highlights of the reunion and sent to: bombardier Rocky Littlefield; ball-turret gunner Hansel Waltmier; tail gunner Chuck Stewart and navigator Jim Conklin.

## In Memoriam

Rufus Charlton - 360th Mickey Operator, was the author of the cover story in the March issue of the newsletter. Rufus died February 1987 in Houston, Texas. Rufus who lived at 8502 Burning Hills, Houston, Texas, 77071 is survived by his wife Teet.

Eugene F. Keely, 427th Sqdn., suffered a coronary attack at Ranchland on June 4, during the Reunion. He died later at a Fort Worth Hospital. Gene, who lived at 25 Jackson Road, Valley Stream, N.Y. 11581, is survived by his wife Kathleen.



# NOVEMBER 29, 1943 WAS "OUR DAY"

One of our crew members remarked to me recently that he has difficulty remembering his wedding anniversary but he never forgets November 29th. And on the 26th anniversary of that date as I escorted my oldest daughter down the aisle to be given in marriage, my mind went back to that other eventful November 29th and I felt thankfulness at being alive. Indeed November 29, 1943 was our day.

We were Brinkley's crew. We flew with the 303rd group, 360th Squadron out of Molesworth, England. The target was Bremen, Germany. We were leading the group. My name is Guy Lance and I was assistant engineer and left waist gunner. This was our twelfth mission.

Because we were flying lead our regular bombardier was replaced for this mission by a lead bombardier. The other nine men aboard had been together since our flight training began in Ephrata, Washington about six months prior to this jaunt. I regret I cannot recall the name of the bombardier flying with us that day but the other crew members were: Pharris Brinkley, pilot; John Parrott, co-pilot; Sylvester "Red" Becker, navigator; Arthur Worthington, engineer and upper turret; Richard Snyder, radio; Charles Ferguson, right waist; Harold Reid, ball turret; and William Rein, tail gunner.

Realizing that the memory dims and facts can become distorted with time, one tends to question his recollections of forty-three years past. In an effort to be as factual as possible I contacted three of our crew members and stated simply, "Tell me about November 29, 1943." Those crew members were Worthington, Reid and Rein. The recollections of the four of us reflected the same details with slight variations, due in part to the fact that each gun position offered a unique vantage point.

Flak was heavy from the IP. Goering had his bunch up in force. The combination knocked down several of our B-17s in the immediate target area. As we approached the target we lost an engine which the pilots feathered. Because we could no longer keep up to the formation Brinkley turned the lead over to the deputy leader and we headed for cloud cover enroute back to England.

Except for occasional flak bursts we encountered no opposition until we broke into the clear near the Frisian Islands. Several FW-190 fighters were waiting for us and they hit us from 12 o'clock. The B-17 fell into a near vertical dive from about 22,000 feet.

The pilots and the engineer together, hanging onto the columns, finally persuaded the airplane out of the



OUR ORIGINAL CREW and the first ship "Red Ass" we flew on a mission. (L to R) Back Row: Lts Petrolino, Parrott, Becker and Brinkley; Front Row: T/Sgt Snyder, S/Sgt Reid, S/Sgt Ferguson, S/Sgt Lance, S/Sgt Rein and T/Sgt Worthington.

dive. As they fought for control I lay on my side facing the waist door. I vividly recall looking at my chest pack laying about three feet away. Centrifugal force kept me glued to the floor. Even if I had reached the chute I would have been unable to overcome the gravitational pull to bail out.

As we were leveling off the fighters pressed for the kill, coming in on our tail from between four and seven o'clock. Worthington had not yet reentered his turret when a 20-mm exploded between his twin 50s disabling his gun position. My gun was now inoperable. Ice and frost had built up on the receiver and I could not budge the charging handle which left me helpless to assist in our defense. Ferguson at right waist and Rein in the tail were getting most of the action. The plane was being torn apart by 20-mm cannon and 13-mm machine gun fire from the FW-190s.

In the initial attack Rein was hit in the left shoulder. During the dive his gun sight glass frosted over and he continued the fight without a sight. He was then hit in the left leg and left arm. Meanwhile Ferguson was bleeding profusely from the nose and mouth. He had taken 20-mm fragments in the face but kept firing throughout the ordeal. I was hit in the left forearm by 20-mm shell fragments and had taken a 13-mm machine gun slug in the left thigh. Snyder at the radio was hit in the wrist as he worked at his position. The ball turret glass was obscured with oil and Harold Reid could not see to fire which

was rather inconsequential because the attacks were from the high positions. Reid spun his turret and opened the hatch into the waist just as a 20-mm exploded with shrapnel hitting him in the arm. He ducked back into the relative safety of the turret and snapped the hatch shut.

The fighters repeatedly attacked until suddenly we saw an orange flash behind us and the attacks ceased. In all probability Rein blew an FW-190 out of the air and the others, for whatever reason, decided to go home.

Our B-17 still flew but her ordeal was not yet over. As we flew over one of the Frisian Islands at almost ground level, German machine and flak gunners opened up on us. Rein returned the fire. The plane had so many holes in it by this time we had no idea whether the ground fire did further damage.

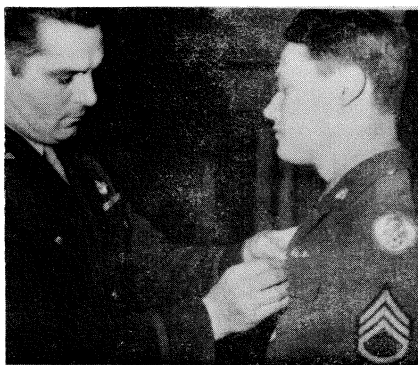
We were now over the North Sea free from enemy fire. I went back to the tail and assisted Rein to the radio room where we were all now assembled with the exception of the pilots. Those of us who could still function did what we could to administer first aid, tearing up a parachute for bandages and compresses. Ferguson, though badly wounded, took over the radio to send S.O.S. messages.

Assessment indicated that cables were damaged which made control difficult. The life rafts were destroyed. Number 1 engine had been lost over Bremen. Number 2 was maintaining power. Number 3 caught fire and the prop was feathered. Finally the fire went out. Number 4 engine was running rough

requiring constant throttle manipulation. The pilots dared not feather it because whatever assistance it could offer was badly needed. We were fighting for altitude.

Except for the radio everything that could be pried loose was thrown overboard to lighten the plane. That included guns, ammunition, oxygen bottles, parachutes, flak suits, helmets and boots. Gathered in the radio room, we sat braced against the forward wall in ditching position. It was now almost totally dark. Following Brinkley's instructions, Reid and I moved back to the waist windows to watch for a friendly ship we might ditch near. We passed within a few hundred feet of a freighter but could not identify it and Brinkley opted to go on. The seas were rough for ditching and with less than two good engines it would have been extremely hazardous to attempt turning to look over the freighter.

When finally we cleared the English Coast, we were directly over a new air base at Ipswich. Worthington had to crank down the main landing gear.



Gen. Travis pins Silver Star on Sgt. Rein.

The tail wheel refused to come down. The pilots made a two wheel near perfect landing. As the plane stopped we pushed and pulled one another to safety as quickly as possible, fearing the plane would burst into flames.

John Parrott kissed the ground. Reid noted, "This is enough to make a man think about giving up flying."

Every gunner, flying to the rear of the bomb bay, was wounded and hospitalized. All recovered to resume

flying status. We ended our tour a few months later as a crew of seven. As lead crew, an officer of Squadron command or higher rank flew in the co-pilot's seat. Consequently John Parrott left us to finish his tour as first pilot of his own crew. Becker also finished his stint flying with other crews.

Our original bombardier, John Petrolino, was not so lucky as we. He was flying with Carl J. Fyler when they were downed by flak this same day over the target and Petrolino survived to become a P.O.W., as did Fyler.

November 29, 1943 was truly our day. For this mission we collected five Purple Hearts. Rein received a Silver Star. Brinkley and Ferguson were each decorated with a D.F.C.

Ironically our next raid, for those of us who had sufficiently recovered, was back to Bremen. It was our 13th mission on the 13th day of December. Thank God it was a milk run.

Guy A. Lance  
Stephenville, Texas

Hello Guy,

Nice to receive you letter. I enjoyed hearing about my father and all of you who fought together. You all are heroes in my eyes and I am deeply grateful for all who fought for America in WWII.

As to your request--I would be honored if you tried to get my lyrics published--feel free! You can also mention my relationship to my father and how I wrote it for him and for all of you.

God Bless,  
Bill Parrot

**All the Fine Young Men**

My father was a pilot in the big war  
But he doesn't talk much about it anymore  
When I open up his memories for a while  
I can't believe the things he saw  
And the things that he survived  
For just one in three ever made it home alive

To all the fine young men who flew the skies  
You will always be heroes in my eyes  
And I owe to you my life this very day  
For you flew to meet the devil  
And you met him face to face  
And so today we still have freedom in this place

When he went to fly he knew his chance was slim  
That he would ever see his family again  
When I ask if he was scared it's plain to see  
That the terror of those moments is still a harsh reality  
But he did it so his children could be free

To all the fine young men who flew the skies  
You will always be heroes in my eyes  
And I owe to you my life this very day  
For you flew to meet the devil  
And you met him face to face  
And so today we still have freedom in this place

Sometimes he has a far off look within his eyes  
And I know that he's re-living all the times  
All the times he saw his friends go down in flames  
And he just kept right on flyin'  
Though he'd never be the same  
And Dad I am so very proud to bear your name

To all the fine young men who gave their lives  
You will always be heroes in my eyes  
And I owe to you my life this very day  
For you flew to meet the devil  
May you now be in God's hands  
Because of you we still have freedom in this place

By Thomas "Bill" Parrot



Revs. Gravrock and Slawson, Bill Heller and Rev. Rice



Father Skoner and Bob Finley

# COMMENTARY by Lewis E. Lyle

## Recognition for service with 303rd Bomb Group during WW II

The response to my offer to push for action on overdue awards through the Air Force Personnel Center at Randolph AFB resulted in 30 or more letters. Several hours were spent at the Center with the Command Section and the responsible staff. Success of the venture in terms of getting a positive response for those who wrote was inadequate for several reasons.

1. Except for the early part of the war (Aug. '42-June '44) automatic awards were prohibited. Even when the award should have been automatic based on missions flown, aircraft shot down, etc., the proper paperwork had to be submitted requesting the medal.

After that period, not only was it necessary to request the award but a detailed justification and citation was required. In most cases brought to my attention, the proper request was never made. To put it bluntly, we did not do a very good job administratively for those people.

2. Many people were awarded a medal for an act and while it may deserve to be upgraded, Congress has dictated that it cannot be done. (On May 3, 1950 Congress enacted Public Law 501 which established time limitations for submission of recommendations to recognize services performed between Dec. 7, 1941 and Sept. 2, 1945. However, there is no time limitation imposed for recommendations submitted in a timely manner but subsequently lost in processing channels or through inadvertency.

3. Without proper documentation, i.e., written authenticated proof from military records, not much can be done. Unless we find the records and get the responsible people to submit or verify a request, the Personnel Center cannot take corrective action.

What your Group plans to do is outlined in the following section.

### Unit History - Records

The long range need for accurate records before we can compile an indepth history of the 303rd became a more urgent problem as a result of the many requests we received concerning recognition and awards. As a result the President of the Association and the Board of Directors have authorized an initial expenditure of \$5000 to research the 303rd records now being held by the National Archives in Suitland, Maryland. The documentation of the group's participation in combat in England is

contained in some 25 large containers. Al Lehmann and several volunteers have agreed to meet with me in Washington, D.C. the last week in July to get the research project underway and subsequently make the information available to all who need it or want it. This will take approximately one year as we have some 364 missions to research. Due to the condition of the records much cross-checking will be required.

In the meantime the group's Board of Directors have unanimously agreed that we should make every effort to give proper recognition to all of our members for their outstanding contributions to the success of the 303rd during wartime.

After the records are reviewed, even if the Air Force cannot give us a favorable reply to our requests for overdue and well deserved awards, we are planning to create some type of Group Award to be given to each individual signifying his contribution to the war effort at Molesworth between 1942-45. It is hoped that this award will be ready for distribution during the 1989 reunion.

### Permanent Home for Records

One of the most pressing problems facing our group is what to do with the materials we accumulate by researching the National Archives and through contributions by our members.

What are we going to do with the information and how can we make it available to our members and also to those that need and want to know all about the 303rd Bomb Group; and the heroic acts of its members including

those who made it back and also those who made the supreme sacrifice?

For the past three years on behalf of the 8th Air Force Historical Society and its units, I have been working with the Air Force Museum to give us all a home. The Museum has now proposed to build a facility at Dayton which would be called the 8th AF Memorial Education Center and IMAX Theater. This facility would not only provide for a much needed education program for the youth of our country but also enhance the museum's ability to increase its attendance and prestige. Moreover, the facility would also house the records of the 8th AF and all its units. The facility would provide us with a permanent home for all the 303rd documents.

The 8th AF Association has already put up \$125,000 to indicate that we want to be a partner and raise \$1 million or more to help fund what could be a \$4-6 million facility. Studies are now being conducted and we expect and hope for a go-ahead in time for the 8th AFHS and unit reunions to be held in Pittsburgh, PA. in the fall.

Please be patient and hold onto those valuable documents and memorabilia until we can tell you where to send it for proper storage, utilization and recognition. There will obviously have to be a fund drive and as the group with largest number of members belonging to the 8th AFHS, I am sure we will do our part. A pilot demonstration project will be available at Pittsburgh to show members more about this proposed facility and what it means to our unit.

In a letter to Lew Lyle, Major General J.B. Davis, Commander Air Force Military Personnel Center said, "To assist you in your efforts to ensure appropriate recognition of former members of Eight Air Force, we have provided a copy of Air Force Regulation 35-7, 4 August 1948, outlining the requirements for a nomination package and extracts from our current awards and decorations regulation, which will assist your members in resubmitting recommendations."

We realize a number of years have passed and former members of Eight Air Force may need to contact former recommending officials, obtain flight records and other military documents, and obtain copies of unit histories and military personnel records in order to substantiate a recommendation for decoration. We have compiled a listing of agencies that can assist in these efforts.

**UNITED STATES AIR FORCE HISTORICAL RESEARCH CENTER:** (Information recorded in unit/group history) - USAFHRC/RI, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama 36112

**AIR FORCE SAFETY AND INSPECTION CENTER:** HQ AFISC/Serr (Aircraft Incidents) and/or HQ AFIS/ADDF (Flight Records) Norton Air Force Base, California 92409

**NATIONAL PERSONNEL RECORDS CENTER:** (Morning Reports/Personnel Records) NPRC/NCPMA-O., 9700 Page Blvd., St. Louis, Missouri 63132.

**HQ AFMPC WORLDWIDE LOCATOR:** This office maintains an address listing of retired Air Force members. You may forward a letter (s) to a retired member by placing your letter in a sealed envelope and enclosing that envelope inside another addressed to HQ AFMPC Worldwide Locator, Northeast Office Place, 9504 IH 35 North, San Antonio, Texas 78223-6636. Please include a note indicating the name, present/former rank, and other known information about the individual you are attempting to reach. Locator personnel will forward your letter or return it to you if they don't have the forwarding address you need.

Once a member has obtained the necessary documentation and recommendation for the appropriate award, the nomination should be forwarded to us at HQ AFMPC/DPMASA, Randolph Air Force Base, Texas 78150-6001. We will work with each veteran and the award Authority to ensure appropriate recognition.

**Exerpts from Minutes of the 303rd  
Bomb Group (H) Association Meeting  
Held on June 6, 1987  
at The Hilton Hotel, Ft. Worth, Texas**

Meeting was called to order at 13:30 by the President E.C. Lehmann.

The Chair requested dispensing with the reading of the minutes of the last meeting. This was unanimously agreed to by those in attendance.

The Board of Directors recommended changes to the By-Laws were read to the membership in attendance. After much discussion, the By-Laws as amended were approved. (A copy of the By-Laws as amended is carried in this issue of the newsletter)

Fr. Edmund Skoner led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

John Ladd, Treasurer, read the financial report. As of June 2, there was \$3299.72 in the operating fund and \$15,528 in CDs in the Life Membership account. Life membership went from 3 at Seattle to 300 at present. The report was approved unanimously.

At least three cities made bids to host the 1989 Annual Meeting, they were Albuquerque, N.M., Tucson, Arizona and Norfolk, Virginia. The proposals were turned over to the Reunion Committee for action (The membership will be kept up to date on the progress of the Reunion Committee through the Newsletter)

The election of new Officers and Directors followed. Here are the results:

- President: Dr. Carl J. Fyler
- Vice President: Harley E. Cannon
- Treasurer: Charles S. Schmeltzer
- Secretary: Carl L. DuBose, Jr.

The squadrons having elected their respective representatives as Directors, listed the following.

- 358th Walt Mayer
- 359th Mort Luman
- 360th William Heller
- 427th Edward J. Giering
- 444th Melvin T. McCoy
- Hq. Mel Schulstad

A recommendation from the floor recommended that in the future when publicizing 303rd meetings we also send releases to the VFW and American Legion Publications.

Fr. Edmund Skoner was congratulated for his celebration of the 50th Anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

Bud and Mary Klint and the members of the reunion committee were recognized for the outstanding work they did in putting on the Cowtown Roundup '87. Joe Vieira was honored in absentia. A model B-17, painted in 303rd colors was presented

**Pilot Locator**

The Aviation Cadet Alumni Association is seeking former pilot cadets. Send Flight Class, primary, basic and advanced locations to Maj. Bob White (USAF Ret.). Purpose: help others locate former classmates. Effort is non-profit and will not be commercialized. Include stamped envelope for specific class information. Address: Robert C. White, 54 Seton Trail, Ormond Beach, Florida 32074

**303rd Bomb Group Newsletter**

- Editor.....Hal Susskind
- Graphics...*Italics Inc.*
- Printing...Grassroots Mktg.

to Vieira for his outstanding contributions to the 303rd Association over the years.

Chaplain Slawson closed the meeting with an appropriate prayer.

Motion for adjournment carried and the June 5th Meeting of the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Hell's Angels Association was adjourned at 16:30 hours.

**Officers elected in Fort Worth on June 5, 1987**

- President: Dr. Carl J. Fyler  
300 Yorkshire Rd.  
Topeka, KS. 66606  
Tel. (913) 357-7706
- Vice President: Harley E. Cannon  
8 No. Louis St.  
Mt. Prospect, Ill. 60056  
Tel. (312) 255-8045
- Treasurer: Charles S. Schmeltzer  
E. 2903 Hoffman Ave.  
Spokane, WA. 99207  
Tel. (509) 487-7983
- Secretary: Carl L. DuBose, Jr.  
2601 Loma Vista  
Victoria, TX. 77091  
Tel. (512) 573-9226
- Directors: 358th Squadron 359th Squadron  
Walt Mayer Mort Luman  
Rt. Box 118A 3015 S.W. Underwood Dr.  
Cheney, WA. 99004 Portland, OR. 97225  
Tel. (509) 299-3250 Tel. (503) 292-2135
- 360th Squadron 427th Squadron  
William Heller Edward J. Giering  
P.O. Box 3006 47 Long Hill Rd.  
Half Moon Bay, CA. 94019 Clinton, CT. 06413  
Tel. (415) 726-6686 Tel. (203) 669-5204
- Headquarters 44th Sub Depot  
Mel Schulstad Melvin T. McCoy  
3518 208th Ave. N.E. 655 Rogue River Hwy.  
Redmond, WA. 98052 Gold Hill, OR. 97525  
Tel. (206) 808-6893 Tel. (503) 855-1712
- Adviser: Lewis E. Lyle  
Belverdere Cnty Club #207  
Hot Springs, AR. 71901  
Tel. (501) 321-1956



**FINE GROUP** - Pictured is just a portion of the 303rd ex-prisoners of war who attended the Reunion. Far right kneeling is Ed Giering, "perennial commander" Conn. Chapter American Ex-POWs, also far right, back row, is Dr. Carl Fyler, former National Jr. Vice-Commander of Ex-Pows. Many others attended but failed to make the photo session.

**303RD BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION  
BY-LAWS  
as Amended, June 5, 1987**

**Article I - Organization**

- A. The name of this organization shall be: The 303rd Bomb Group Association, Inc.

**Article II - Purposes**

- A. To perpetuate the history of the 303rd Bomb Group, Eighth Air Force, during World War II, in training and combat, and to memorialize the same by appropriate memorials.  
B. To arrange for reunions of the surviving membership at the pleasure of the membership.  
C. To memorialize and perpetuate the memory of lost comrades.  
D. To provide social, educational, patriotic and recreational activities for its membership.  
E. To publish a newsletter for the information and pleasure of the membership.  
F. To seek out and reunite former 303rd Bomb Group members.  
G. To carry on the business of the corporation.

**Article III - Membership**

- A. Membership in the association shall be open to all who were members of, or were attached to, the 303rd Heavy Bombardment Group during World War II either in training or overseas.  
B. Spouses, widows or widowers of those who served in the organization during World War II are entitled to be members upon the death of the original member. Members in this special category will not be required to pay dues and may vote.  
C. Persons interested in the history, aims and goals of the association may become associate members with all privileges of regular members but may not vote.  
D. Honorary membership may be granted to others upon approval of the Board of Directors.

**Article IV - Voting**

- A. Any member in good standing may vote either in person or by proxy (where proxy vote is appropriate).  
B. At all meetings voting shall be viva voce for the conduct of business.  
C. For the election of officers and directors voting shall be by secret, written ballot.  
D. Associate members may not vote.  
E. Honorary members may not vote.

**Article V - Meetings**

- A. A membership meeting of the association shall be held during the National Reunion. A notice shall be mailed to every member in good standing, and a like notice shall be placed in the Newsletter, stating the time and place of the meeting.  
B. A majority of the members in good standing present at the membership meeting shall constitute a quorum. A quorum shall be necessary to conduct the business of the association. A simple majority of those present shall carry the motion.  
C. A member is in good standing when he has paid his current dues, meets the requirements for membership in the association and is regularly enrolled on the roster of the association.  
D. Only questions stated in the call may be voted on at Special Meetings.  
E. At any regular membership meeting any question may be voted on if a majority of the membership so requires. Otherwise business shall be conducted according to an agenda furnished by the Secretary in advance of the meeting.  
F. Roberts Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of all meetings. The President with the approval of the Board of Directors shall appoint a Parliamentarian who shall hold office at the pleasure of the appointing authorities.

**Article VI - Order of Business**

- A. Call to order.  
B. Reading minutes of preceding meeting.  
C. Reports of officers.  
D. Committee reports.  
E. Unfinished business.  
F. New business (Agenda)  
G. Invocation  
H. Adjournment

**Article VII - Officers, Directors and Other Functions**

- A. The elected officers of the association shall be: President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer and each shall be a Director of the Association. The President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer shall constitute the Executive Committee.  
B. Terms of office shall be two years. An officer may serve two terms, not necessarily consecutively.  
C. No person may hold more than one elective office at the time.  
D. Officers shall attend all Board of Directors meetings and are members of the Board of Directors with right to vote.  
E. The President is the Chairman of the Board of Directors and shall preside at all Membership Meetings and Board of Directors Meetings.  
F. The President shall be the chief executive and shall exercise general supervision over the affairs of the association. The President, with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee may:  
1. Remove officers from the Board for failure to fulfill their duties and  
2. Appoint, on an interim basis, replacements for officers who, for any reason, have vacated their position on the Board of Directors, or who have become incapacitated and can no longer serve.

- G. The Vice-President shall exercise the functions of the President, in his absence or upon his incapacity. The Vice-President shall carry out special assignments from the President. The Vice-President shall oversee the positions and functions of the (1) Reunion Manager, (2) The Historian and (3) The Unit Contact Person. The functions of these positions are set forth in these by-laws and may be expanded or altered from time to time by the direction of the President.

- H. The Secretary shall keep the minutes and official records of the association. He will file all certificates required by law and shall be responsible for giving all notices necessary to the conduct of the business of the association. He will be the custodian of the records and seal of the corporation. He shall mail copies of all minutes, agendas and financial statements to the Board of Directors. He will conduct all correspondence of the association except special messages from other officers or directors.

- I. The Treasurer shall have the care and custody of all monies belonging to the association. He shall pay routine bills and make such other expenditures as may be authorized by the Board of Directors. He shall make deposits of monies and invest the funds of the association with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors. He shall render annually, or at such other times as the Board of Directors may direct, a written accounting of the finances of the association, which accounting shall be affixed to the minutes of the Board of Directors meetings. He shall make certain the President has a signature file card from the depository in which association monies are deposited so that the President can carry on the fiscal affairs of the association, temporarily, in the event the office of Treasurer is vacated or the Treasurer is unable to carry out his duties.

- The Treasurer shall oversee the functions of the (1) PX Manager, (2) The Membership Manager and (3) the Budget and Ways and Means Committee.

- J. The President, with advice and consent of the Board of Directors, shall appoint to serve under the oversight of the Treasurer the following positions with functions indicated.

1. **PX Manager** - The PX Manager will manage and carry on the business of the PX which will be to sell merchandise of interest to the membership during reunions and by mail. PX funds resulting from sales will be transferred to the Treasurer when they exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000).

2. **Membership Manager** - The Membership Manager will serve at the pleasure of the President and seek out and enroll former 303rd Bomb Group members. He shall coordinate his activities with the Roster Manager.

3. **Budget and Ways and Means Committee** - This committee will determine the amount of money required for operation of the association on a year by year basis, including a forecast for at least four (4) years in advance of each scheduled reunion and recommend a budget to the Board of Directors for appropriate action. The Committee will simultaneously recommend the ways and means, including changes in the membership dues to acquire the funds to meet the approved budget expenditures.

- K. The President, with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors shall appoint to serve under the oversight of the Vice-President, a Reunion Manager or Reunion Committee, a Historian and a Unit Contact person. These persons will serve at the pleasure of the President and perform the following functions.

1. **Reunion Manager or Reunion Committee** - Develop and implement plans for forthcoming reunions at least two (2) years in advance of the date the reunion will be held and make every effort to project reunion plans to a four (4) year time schedule. This function will include the responsibility of seeking out and visiting prospective reunion sites for the purpose of determining the suitability of such sites and providing the Board of Directors with appropriate information. Reunion sites are subject to final approval of the Board of Directors.

2. **Historian** - The Historian shall maintain the history of the association and shall collect all pertinent data, articles, memorabilia, photographs and other documents pertinent to the history of the 303rd Bomb Group and its component organizations. He shall serve an indefinite term at the pleasure of the President and the Board of Directors.

3. **Unit Contact** - Will be the liaison person between the association and the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and for all other inter-organizational purposes. When directed, the Unit Contact will attend National reunions of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and will be the representative of the 303rd Bomb Group association on the Unit Advisory Council of that organization. He will keep the Eighth Air Force Historical Society advised of his current address and telephone number.

- L. The Newsletter Editor shall be appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors and shall prepare and publish the official news organ of the association. He may also serve as the Press Secretary of the association to handle news releases and publicity. He shall serve an indefinite term at the pleasure of the Board of Directors, reporting to the Secretary in his capacity as News Organ publisher and to the President in his capacity as Press Secretary for public relations.

- J. There shall be a Chaplaincy, served by two or more chaplains appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors. The Chaplaincy shall be responsible for all Spiritual matters and religious observances pertinent to the affairs of the association.

**Article VIII - Elections**

- A. The President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected during the National Reunion Membership Business Meeting. Elections shall be by the membership. A nominating committee shall submit a slate of candidates to the membership for election. Nominations may be made from the floor by any member. Nominations from the floor shall not exceed three (3) for any office.

The nominee receiving the highest number of votes from the membership shall be elected. Written ballots shall be prepared and used for all elections with a write-in space.

- B. Elections to Board of Directors shall be conducted in the same manner as elections for officers but shall be conducted on the unit level, and voting shall be confined to the membership of the unit. The units who may elect Directors are: the 358th, 359th, 360th and 427th squadrons, the 444th Sub Depot and Headquarters. All other service units shall be attached to Headquarters for election purposes.

**Article IX - Board of Directors**

- A. The business of the association shall be managed by a Board of Directors consisting of the elected officers and one representative elected from each of the combat squadrons of the 303rd Bomb Group (358th, 359th, 360th and 427th), one representative elected from the 444th Sub Depot and one representative from Headquarters (303rd). Membership of the Board shall not exceed twelve (12) persons. Term of office shall be two years. A member of the Board of Directors may serve successive terms if re-elected. At least one Director or officer shall be resident of the State of Florida.
- B. Candidates for Board of Directors must have been members of the 303rd Bomb Group Association for at least one year prior to the election.
- C. The Board of Directors shall have control and management of the business and may establish rules governing its meetings, conduct of business and procedure as it may determine necessary, not in conflict with the Articles of Corporation and By-Laws.
- D. The President with the advice and consent of the Board of Director shall commission an independent audit to be conducted during the National Reunion.
- E. Meetings of the Board of Directors shall normally be held in conjunction with the General Membership Meeting at the National Reunion and may be held immediately prior or subsequent to the General meeting. The President may conduct Board of Directors meetings by telephone conference, provided such meetings are approved in advance by the Executive Committee and duly recorded.
- F. Each Director shall have one vote and voting may be by written proxy.
- G. The President shall be Chairman of the Board of Directors.
- H. In case of need the President may call for a vote of the Board of Directors by mail, provided each director is polled.

**Article X - Combat Squadron Representatives**

- A. Combat Squadron and Service Organization Representatives shall be selected in squadron/caucus meetings prior to the general membership meeting. Each Squadron or Service Organization shall elect a primary and alternate representative to serve as Director on the Board of Directors.

**Article XI - Salaries and Compensation**

- A. No officer or director shall receive a salary or compensation for his duties.
- B. Officers and/or directors and those other persons directed to perform functions for the association may be reimbursed for expenses directly related to the conduct of their office. Expenses in excess of \$500.00 shall be approved by the President

- with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee.
- C. No officer or director may engage in any conduct which represents a conflict of interest between his office and his personal affairs.
- D. Compensation paid for any service to the association must not be in conflict with the tax exempt status of the association.

**Article XII - Committees**

- A. Committees of the association may be established by the President and may be dissolved at the conclusion of their business by the President.
- B. Standing committees may be established by the President with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors. Members of standing committees are appointed for indefinite terms, but may be dissolved or changed by the President with the advice and consent of the Board. Standing Committees will include, but not be limited to the following:
  - 1) A Nominating Committee
  - 2) A Constitution and By-Laws Committee
  - 3) An Audit Committee
  - 4) A Budget and Ways and Means Committee
- C. Ad Hoc Committees may be appointed as appropriate by the President. Such committees shall cease to exist at the expiration of the term of the President making the appointment unless reappointed by the incoming President.

**Article XIII - Dues**

- A. The dues of this association may be determined from time to time by vote of the membership. The Board of Directors will receive reports and recommendations from the Budget and Ways and Means Committee and in turn recommend dues and fees to the membership for approval by vote at National Reunion Meetings.
- B. Life Memberships may be created by the Board of Directors and dues may be established for such memberships.

**Article XIV - Amendments**

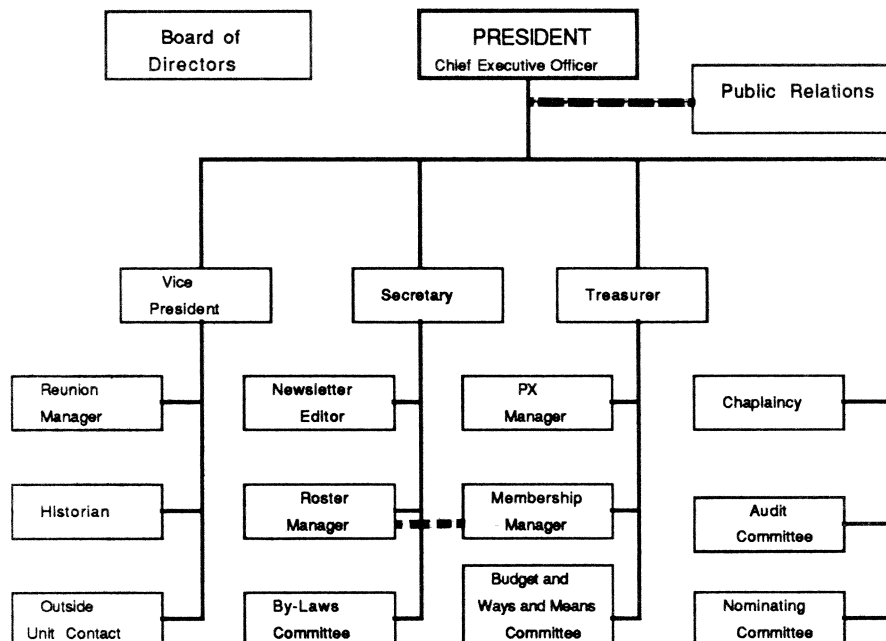
- A. The Board of Directors may propose or recommend changes in the By-Laws to the membership.
- B. By-Laws, or changes proposed, may be passed, amended, or rescinded, in part or in toto, by a three-fifths (3/5) majority of the membership in attendance at the business meeting held during the National Reunion or at any regular meeting of the association.

I certify that these By Laws were approved by a vote of the General Membership of the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association meeting in Fort Worth Texas on 5 June 1987.

Mel Schulstad, Chairman  
By-Laws Committee

Note: Diagram-Guide to the Organization and Functions of the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association is an appendix to these By Laws and is attached hereto.

**ORGANIZATION/FUNCTIONS  
303RD BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION**



THE 303RD P.X. OFFERS THEIR MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES THE FOLLOWING ITEMS FOR SALE AT A VERY MODEST PRICE, NONE OF WHICH ARE BEING OFFERED BY ANY OTHER GROUPS AT THIS TIME. COMPLETE THE ORDER FORM BELOW REQUESTING YOUR DESIRED ITEMS. SOME PICTURES OF ITEMS FOR SALE CAN BE SEEN ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS FORM.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

CHECK DESIRED ITEM IN BOX ON LEFT AND QUANTITY IN RIGHT COLUMN.

ITEM	QTY.	DESCRIPTION	COST EA.	TOTAL
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	4" EMBROIDERED "MIGHT IN FLIGHT" PATCH	\$ 3.50	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	4" INTERIOR/EXTERIOR ALL WEATHER "MIGHT IN FLIGHT" DECAL	\$1.50	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3" INTERIOR/EXTERIOR ALL WEATHER 303RD/8TH AF DECAL	\$ 1.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	B-17 FRANKLIN MINTED COIN (38MM) VERY RARE AND LIMITED	\$12.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	"FIRST 300" MISSION BOOK OF 303RD	\$ 7.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	1" CLOISONNE' 8TH USAF SHOULDER PATCH. . . THE ORIGINAL!! (PIN)	\$ 3.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	1" CLOISONNE' "MIGHT IN FLIGHT" 303RD INSIGNIA (PIN)	\$ 3.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	1/2" CLOISONNE' MEMBER PIN (TIE)	\$ 3.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	3/4" CLOISONNE' MEMBER PIN (LAPEL)	\$ 3.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	** _____	1/2" CLOISONNE' LIFE PIN (TIE)	\$ 3.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	** _____	3/4" CLOISONNE' LIFE PIN (LAPEL)	\$4.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	38MM (DOLLAR SIZE) CLOISONNE' USAF INSIGNIA (NOT A PIN)	\$4.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	38MM (DOLLAR SIZE) CLOISONNE' 303RD/8TH INSIGNIA (NOT A PIN)	\$4.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	B-17 BELT BUCKLE "50TH ANNIVERSARY" (NUMBERED & LIMITED EDITION)	\$20.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	SILVER OR GOLD MONEY CLIP WITH B-17 COIN (CIRCLE ONE)	\$21.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	SILVER OR GOLD MONEY CLIP WITH 303RD/8TH AF INSIGNIA (CIRCLE ONE)	\$14.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	SILVER OR GOLD BOLA TIE W/STRINGS 303RD/8TH AF OR USAF INSIGNIA. TIES: BLUE-BROWN-GOLD-SILVER . . . . PLEASE CIRCLE ONE ON EACH LINE	\$16.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	SILVER OR GOLD BOLA TIE W/STRINGS B-17 MINTED COIN. TIES: BLUE-BROWN GOLD-SILVER. PLEASE CIRCLE TWO OF THE ABOVE. COLORS DESIRED.	\$22.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	LADIES 1-1/2" PENDANT NECKLACE W/ 303RD/8TH AF OR USAF INSIGNIA	\$12.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	LADIES 1-1/2" PENDANT NECKLACE W/ B-17 MINTED COIN	\$22.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	ENGLISH LEATHERS: 4" X 8" BRASS ON BLACK. (CIRCLE ONE) B-17 OR 8TH AF PATCH	\$10.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	LEATHER KEY FOBS 1-1/4" X 1-1/2" WITH 303RD/8AF INSIGNIA	\$ 2.00	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	LIFE MEMBERSHIP PLAQUE WITH NAME ENGRAVED: 4"X6" BRASS ON WALNUT	\$12.50	_____

SEND THE ORDER FORM WITH CHECK ENCLOSED (NO CASH PLEASE) TO;

ROBERT E. (BOB) KIDD  
P.X. 303RD B.G.  
P.X. ADMINISTRATOR  
13214 D FIJI WAY  
MARINA DEL REY, CA 90292

ALL ORDERS MUST BE PAID IN ADVANCE AND NO SUBSTITUTIONS PLEASE IN THE EVENT THE MANUFACTURERS' SUPPLY OR STOCK IS DEPLETED A REFUND OF THOSE ITEMS WILL BE MADE.

PLEASE NOTE ORDERS OF LESS THAN \$20.00 REQUIRE A CHARGE OF \$2.50 FOR POSTAGE AND HANDLING .

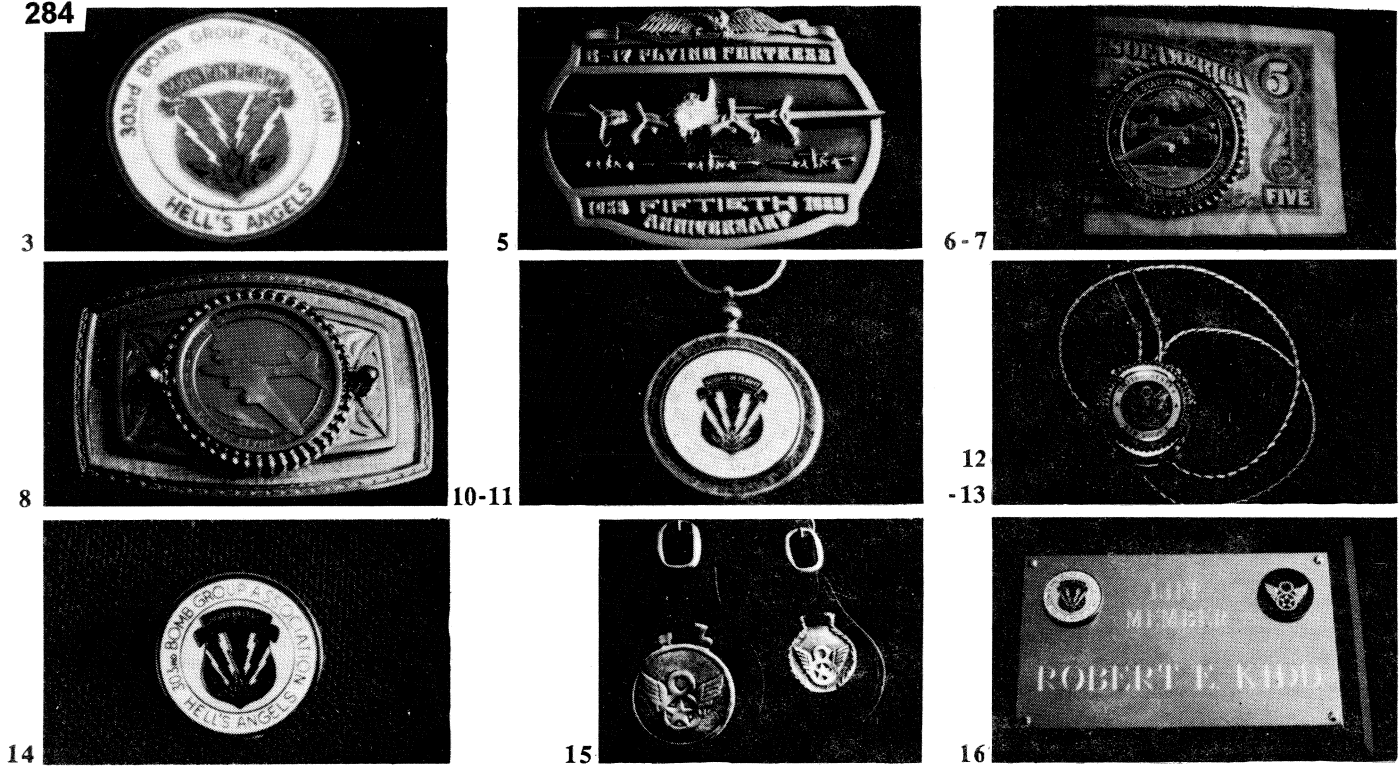
SHIPPING/HANDLING  
TOTAL ENCLOSED

TOTAL AMOUNT PURCHASED

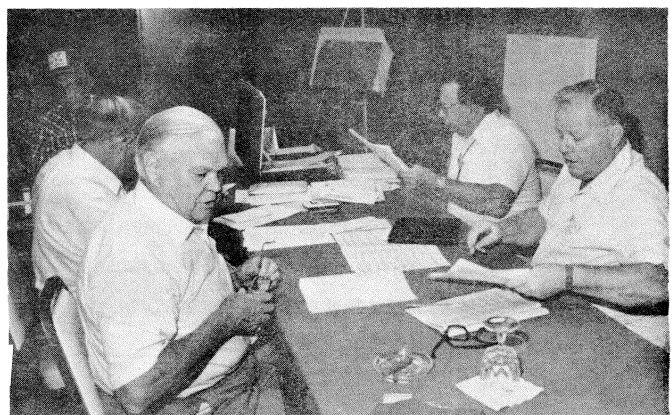
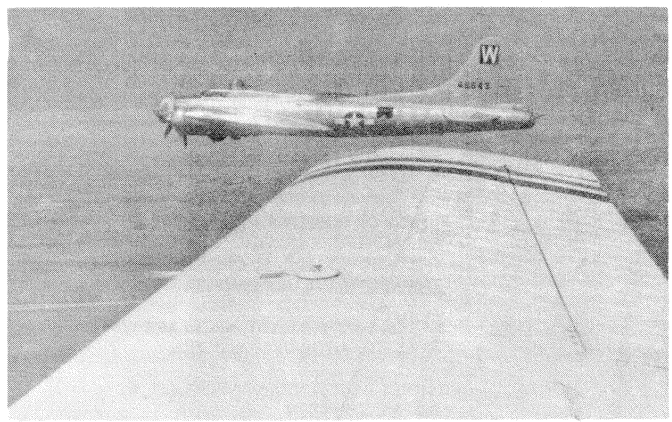
\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*\* ABOVE MEANS SALE ITEMS TO LIFE MEMBERS ONLY!!!

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_



NOTE: 1. GOLD AND SILVER ITEMS (OTHER THAN COINS) ARE PLATED ON BRASS AND ALLOY CASTINGS.  
 2. ALL AIRCRAFT COINS WERE DESIGNED AND CAST BY THE FRANKLIN MINT. A LIMITED NUMBER ARE STILL AVAILABLE TO US—AS THIS WILL BE ALL. THE DIES NO LONGER EXIST FOR CASTING.  
 3. ENGLISH LEATHERS (AS THEY ARE CALLED) MAY BE SEEN ON HORSES THROUGHOUT ENGLAND AT THE PALACE—PARADES—MILITARY POLICE—ETC. . . ESPECIALLY DESIGNED BY OUR ENGLISH FRIEND FOR US. . .



Part of the capacity crowd at the annual meeting. Other reunion photos will be run in the next issue of the newsletter.

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