



303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC. NOV 1987

"Might-in-Flight"



HOW GOOD IS YOUR MEMORY?--The above photo of the 303rd aircraft Hell's Angels was supposedly taken at an airport in New York as the then Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia welcomed the crew and aircraft to New York City. The aircraft left Molesworth on Jan. 20, 1944 on a bond selling tour in the U.S. For some very important reasons we would be grateful if someone could name the crew pictured above. (see related photo on page 10).

303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.
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303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.
Might - in - Flight



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Substantial savings are available to our members who wish to apply for Life Memberships. A few of our members have sent in money for 2 or even 3 years at the annual rate of \$10 per year. They should evaluate whether they might be able to save dollars by converting these prepayments to a Life Membership.

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National Archives Project on Schedule

The important work of retrieving the records of 303rd Wartime operations from America's National Archives has begun.

A kick-off briefing attended by seven of our ten volunteer researchers was held at Andrews Air Force Base on July 30. We of the 303rd are indebted to John Sanda for presenting us with tips and wisdom gained during the 28 months he worked single handedly to extract the complete record of his Group, Kimbolton's 379th.

That afternoon General Lyle and I accompanied our volunteers to the Washington National Records Center at nearby Suitland to get some hands-on experience. Can you

imagine a building holding 4,500,000 cartons of government papers?

On average a mission file consists of 75 pages. A typical file contains the field order alerting the Group and specifying all essential matters affecting the mission, target photos, a formation diagram, crew loading lists, strike photos and interpreters assessments, reports of engagements with the enemy, our gunners' claims, reported sightings of bombers in distress, an accounting of our losses, reports of crew interrogation upon return, and more. The whole combat story is there, from A to Z.

Practical limitations will stretch out the task longer than we

would like. We are not allowed to bring in a copying machine, but must share time with other researchers on the two (only) authorized machines. Each classified page must be systemically declassified before it may be copied. One folder only may be open on a desk. It is impractical for more than two of our volunteers to work at a time.

Our task force must live by the house rules or be expelled. We, in turn, need be patient and not ask them for favors.

At last report, work had progressed to early 1943.

Al Lehmann
Archives Project Officer



303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.

Might - In - Flight



"HELLS ANGELS" NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XI NUMBER 1

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

NOVEMBER 1987

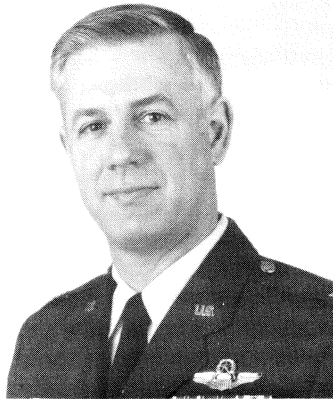
Molesworth Home of the 303rd Once Again

RAF MOLESWORTH--July 23, 1987--The Royal Air Force ensign and the American Flag were raised simultaneously in a ceremony here today to mark the transfer of operational command of RAF Molesworth from the RAF to the United States Air Force.

Attending the ceremony were Air Vice Marshal David Whittaker, Air Officer Administration, HQ RAF Support Command who passed operational command and administrative control of Molesworth to Major General William K. James, Commander US Third Air Force. General James handed a United States flag to Colonel Kent Harbaugh, Commanding 303rd Tactical Missile Wing, to complete symbolically the transfer of the base to USAF administration.

Molesworth was built as a bomber base for the Royal Air Force in 1940. It was first occupied by the Royal Australian Air Force armed with Wellington IV aircraft.

In February 1942, General Ira Eaker and four U.S. Staff members inspected Molesworth for possible American use. Later that year the airfield was extended to accommodate U.S. heavy bomber aircraft.



Col. Kent Harbaugh

In July the first American unit, the 15th Bombardment Squadron arrived. The 15th Bomb Squadron flew the first American World War II bombing operations conducted from the United Kingdom with U.S. built Boston III aircraft belonging to the RAF.

By September 1942, the 15th BMS had transferred from RAF Molesworth to make room for the 303rd Bombardment Group. The 303rd BG, nicknamed Hell's Angels, was assigned to RAF Molesworth from September 1942--May 1945. The 303rd, one of the heaviest tasked WW II units--it flew 364 missions--flew B-17 "Flying Fortress" aircraft against targets

in occupied Europe; including missions to support the Invasion of Normandy and the Battle of the Bulge. In addition to a Distinguished Unit Citation awarded in January 1944, they had two Medal of Honor recipients: 1st Lt. Jack W. Mathis, bombardier and T/Sgt Forreth L. Vosler, radio operator and gunner.

Shortly after leaving RAF Molesworth in May 1945, the 303rd Bombardment Group was deactivated. RAF Molesworth has been transferred back and forth over the years between the RAF and USAF.

The 303rd Tactical Missile Wing was activated on 12 December 1986. Wing personnel will be operating out of newly constructed facilities at RAF Molesworth. The 303rd TMW is entrusted with the 303rd Bombardment Wing history and is temporarily bestowed the 303rd Bombardment Group History. The 303rd TMW is responsible for the employment of four Ground Launched Cruise Missile (GLCM) flights within the United Kingdom in support of NATO objectives.

Located near Huntingdon in Cambridgeshire, RAF Molesworth is scheduled to be fully operational next year.

Molesworth--The Handing Back

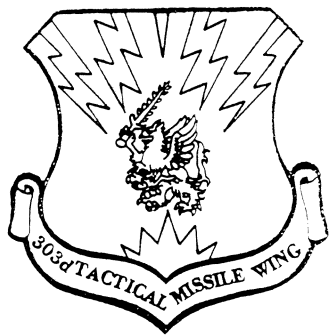
At almost precisely 14.12 hours on Thursday 23rd, July 1987 R.A.F. Molesworth was returned to the Command of the United States Air Force by the Royal Air Force. So, for the third time in its 47 year old history, Molesworth was back in American hands.

I have to confess that it came as something of a surprise to receive an invitation for Theresa and I to attend the change-of-command ceremony, but when the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Royal Air Force Support Command 'requests the pleasure of your

company' one is rather inclined to accept. In fact it was both a pleasure and an honour to do so, I assure you.

It would be dishonest of me not to confess to feeling something of a gate-crasher; I felt that each and everyone of the members of the

Molesworth--The Handing Back continued from p. 1



303rd Bomb Group (H) Assoc. Inc. had a prior right to be in attendance. But, as this could not be, I was very proud indeed, as was my wife Theresa, to wear our 303rd membership lapel badges at the handover ceremony.

Towards the end of Al Lehmann's tenure as your president we had jointly attempted to arrange a small reunion over here and to include on the itinerary a visit to Molesworth to attend the change of command ceremony. However, this was not possible because of the political climate current with a Cruise missile base like Molesworth. The incoming commanding officer, Colonel Kent E. Harbaugh was not, after all, the host on this occasion; it was at the invitation of the Royal Air Force. It was really such considerations that I believe prevented a proper representation, by 303rd B.G. personnel, at this ceremony. Certainly, no offence was, I feel, intended and it is very much hoped that none has been taken.

After the handover ceremony I was privileged to have a private discussion with Col. Harbaugh and I can tell you he is very mindful, and proud, of the 303rd inheritance and is dedicated to ensuring that the memory of the first 303rders who first occupied Molesworth in September 1942. The Colonel has assured me that he would very much welcome a 1988 return visit to the base of as many 303rd B.G. Association members as might wish

to come.

In June 1984 Theresa and I were pleased to organize the 303rd's first U.K. reunion and, if the Association wishes to take up the offer of Col. Harbaugh, we will be only too pleased to offer our services if it is felt we can be of any help in getting something organized for a visit over here around late May next year.

As you well know it had been hoped to schedule a visit this year but, for the reasons I have already explained this was not possible. No doubt this was a great disappointment to all those members who had indicated their interest to come over here in '87 but they can be assured that an even bigger welcome awaits them at Molesworth next year.

Whilst in private discussion with the new commanding officer of Molesworth he mentioned his desire to see a permanent 'memorial' to the original 303rders created at the new base and that he had already ear-marked a room in the building, next to the main administration offices, and which he would very much like to have dedicated to this purpose. No doubt this matter will now be taken up by the associations directors in direct liaison with Col. Harbaugh.

The thought does however occur to me that if there are any 303rd Members who would like to donate any memorabilia to this memorial room, should it come into being, they can be assured that it would be well looked after by the young men who have now succeeded you at Molesworth, England and who today wear with real pride the insignia of the 303rd Tactical Missile Wing of the U.S.A.F. As I have already stated these young men are so very proud and mindful of the fine tradition of the original 303rd Bomb Group (H) and any memorabilia members might donate to be displayed at the new



Molesworth would, I am certain, be in very good hands be well looked after.

Things, by that I mean buildings and facilities, have changed beyond all recognition at the old base; only one wartime hanger and the old water tower remain as familiar landmarks. I am told that even the water tower has now lived its useful life and will shortly be destined for the scrap yard. I guess that what is really important is what lives on in the hearts and minds of men; these are the more permanent ties with 45 years back and today. When, if you can, you come back in 1988 you'll certainly not recognize too much but the feel of the place will still be the same.

The landscape on the horizon will still evoke memories of the 1940's; the familiar towers of the nearby churches which have stood for many centuries are still there to be seen. The so very green English countryside around Molesworth is, for the most part, almost as it was nearly half-a-century ago. The people, although much better fed these days, will have a fond recollection of those 'yanks' who were over-paid, over-sexed and over here! We loved having you over here all those many years ago and, take it from me, we'd love to see as many of you as possible back here next year. I and Theresa want to be the first folks to greet you and say . . . 'welcome back to England.'

Ray Cossey

❖ Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year ❖

HELL'S ANGELS FORUM

HOW MANY MORE HURRAHS?

What a Reunion. I only wish every surviving member of the 303rd could have been there. I shall never forget it even if I did end it up in a wheelchair by order of Mary Klint. It was especially meaningful for us because unless the state of my health improves over what it has been this summer it will be our last reunion and that brings big old lump in my throat, and a deluge of good old fashioned tears unashamedly. I had a bad fall shortly after we came home and fractured my cheekbone and there have been some complications that have not helped. Besides that I will be 79 when the next Reunion rolls around. Most people I know are not too travelable at that age, so I am just being realistic.

The above has made me realize that for the first time really that time is running out for all of us in the 303rd. That is the reason I wanted the two men who became Protestant Ministers to carry on the Office I served when I am no longer able. I just can't think of the 303rd passing out of existence. I hope the enclosed article for the next News Letter will be a challenge for its survival.

You did an excellent job on the Reunion Issue. Thanks for your talent and sharing it with us. I have been in correspondence with Bill Heller. He shares my feeling that Ft. Worth was a moving experience. Trust all goes well with you. Best wishes and God bless. Thanks again for an enjoyable and meaningful News Letter.

"Chappie" Slawson
227 Bocawood Dr.
San Antonio, TX 78228

A CEREMONIAL HANDOVER

I thought you might wish to reproduce the enclosed piece in the next available 'Hell's Angels' News-letter.

Open Letter To The Members Of The 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, Inc.

At the last two Reunions we lost a Buddy at each. Does that tell us something? We have a tendency to become complacent. "It can't happen to me . . ." I was having a ball at Ft. Worth but I finished up the Reunion in a wheelchair via the courteous but firm admonition of Mary Klint.

Math was never one of my strong points but I have dared dabble dabble in some figures which I believe you will find fairly accurate. The average age of 303rders is 66 now. In the year 2000 the average age will be in the vicinity of 79. In the year 2010 it will be 89, by the year 2020 it is 99. And then there were none . . .

God forbid that the 303rd should die. We have Memorial Plaques, Written and Pictorial Records, etc.. But they neither Breathe, Think nor Talk. People do all three. I believe that there are people in our Group with the Expertise to formulate a Plan For The Living Survival Of The 303rd Bomb Group. For example all of us have Sons, Daughters, Nephews, Nieces or Friends. Surely some among these would be interested in becoming Members and carrying on the tradition we created. For example my son commanded a Special Task Force in Vietnam . . . But the shelves of his den are loaded with the things he "Confiscated" from my Memorabilia as well as most every Book On The B-17 ever published. I have no doubt he would be interested in such a Plan.

Of course there would have to be Rules of Interest, etc. You Guys have the brains and you proved it. Think on these things. I dare you!

"Chappie" Slawson

I am also enclosing several supporting documents which you might also wish to reproduce in facsimile.

It was an honour to be invited by the Royal Air Force to attend this Ceremonial Handover of Molesworth and, as an honorary member of the Group I felt compelled to share my experience with all of you who were, frankly, more entitled to be there but could not be.

I hope you find this item an acceptable one for publication.

Kind regards,

Ray Cossey
Honorary Member - 303rd
B.G. (H) Assoc. Inc.
Norwich, England

SANDERS GOOD NEWS

Yesterday, 4 Oct 1987, I spoke to two men I thought were no longer alive. Today I am calling the third man. June 1, 1944, I said goodbye to Molesworth and trucked to

Chorley to rotate home. 43 years and 3 months later the circle closed.

Herbert W. Kennedy
Able G. Guzman
Francis M. Kowalk

I have been searching for these men for ten years since the first reunion I attended in Dayton, Ohio.

We now count 5 alive from Lt. Col. Ken Edwards' crew, 359 SQD.

I know you share my joy at this wonderful news.

Coleman Sanders
Navigator

Ed. Note--Since they were not on the roster, I sent them copies of the newsletter in hope that they will join the association.

A suggestion has been made to hold our reunion yearly. On the off years the get togethers could be held in cooperation with the 8th AF yearly reunion, or could be held separately. What are your thoughts?

HELL'S ANGELS FORUM

DID YOU KNOW MY FATHER?

My father, with the same name as mine, was in the 358th Bomb Squadron of the 303rd Bomb Group. John Hutchinson, the President of the Massachusetts chapter of the 8th A.F.H.S., gave me your name as the person to communicate with in my desire to find someone (or hopefully, more than one) who knew him at Molesworth or elsewhere. I have included copies of our recent correspondence. As I said to John, please feel free to share this with whomever you'd like.

Soon I'll be back to work and my time will be very limited. It sure would be nice to meet people at the October get together but I probably will be unable to go. Other factors besides time are responsibilities we have in church, money and a reluctance of my wife to travel any more than what is necessary.

Write back when you can. Appreciate your being there.

Julian P. Bell
Rte. 143
Peru, MA 0123

Ed. Note: The letter above was written to Al Lehmann and makes mention of correspondence with John Hutchinson, president of the Mass. Chapter of the 8th AFHS. Julian is anxious to find and talk with anyone who knew his father who was a Bombardier with the 303rd and was killed in June of '44. Julian was born in November of 1944.

In his reply, Al Lehmann said, "I remember the June 21, 1944 Berlin raid. I was there, in the 303rd's High squadron. Allen was leading the second element of the low squadron with Way (your father's crew on one wing and Morningstar on the other.)

"We were off the target; bombs were away. I looked down at Allen's element, looked away for a moment (not a minute, but a matter of seconds only), looked back and

the second element was gone. I then concluded the three had blown to bits in the same instant. And that was my belief until 1982 when, as a Historian, certain photographic prints came into my safe-keeping. Only then, after 38 years, did I learn that Allen (and others) had survived and had been taken prisoners. To this day I haven't located Allen."

"We can confirm that the 303rd lost three a/c on that June 21 raid all to anti-aircraft fire. Allen piloted an unnamed 427th a/c, Morningstar flew the 358th's Mairzy Doats, and your father was with Way in 42-32037, an unnamed 358th ship. As Hutchinson has suggested, Way was not flying 'The Floose' that day."

Julian Bell was with the 358th and was on his 29th mission along with Way when he was shot down. I assume he must have been with the 303rd at least five months before that June 21st raid. If anyone has anything to add to what Lehmann and Hutchinson have told Julian Bell's son please contact him direct. I know he will be happy to hear from you.

A LONG TIME AGO

While going through the March Issue of the 303rd Bomb Group Association publication, I came across the picture of you and Frank Weil. I thought you both looked familiar so I got out my old scrapbook and sure enough there both of you were in the picture of the lead crew on the Schwerte raid on March 10, 1945.

I had a copy of the picture made



in case you do not have a copy of this picture. It is enclosed.

I am kneeling in front of Frank Weil. (Fourth from the left)

I do not know the names of the other crew members.

Earl J. Malerich
121 Brownlow Dr.
Decatur, Ill. 62521

Ed. Note: The Pilot (2nd from left back row) Capt. Bob Cunningham from Tenn.; to the left of Malerich was the Bombardier.

GROUND CREW ASS'N.??

I am in the process of starting an association of ground crew personnel within the 303rd Bomb Group. Would you please state in the next newsletter that any ground crew personnel that would like to join to send me their name, address, squadron number, and a one time charge of \$2.00 (two) to handle expenses. It can be sent to Joe Worthington

Joe Worthington
RD-4, Box 312
Chestertown, MD 21620

Ed. Note. See Commentary by Lew Lyle and also item in the Editor's scratchpad.

* * *

Kudos to Bill Heller, Director for the 360th Sqdn. Soon after he took over as Director at the Reunion in Ft. Worth, Bill decided to write letters to all former members of the 360th who are members of the Association. Because of his efforts Bill has been instrumental in tracking down former members of the 303rd who are not members of the Association; he has also been instrumental in getting a number of address corrections for the roster. Following are some of the letters he received.

HELL'S ANGELS FORUM

DO YOU REMEMBER ?



Red Whitney and Ken Zettlemier

Although I finally went over to England in April 1943 with the 94th B.G. and was shot down while flying with the 94th, a lot of my heart and memories are with the 303rd.

Guess I've been a member of your organization about a year now.

I looked up some old papers and pictures recently and came across this address book. I'm a little vague about if it is mostly 303rd names and addresses or 94th but think it was mostly 303rd with a sprinkling of Stalag 17B names and some of those were 303rd, for instance Ken Kurtenbach, the Camp Leader. He was 303rd and I recently heard from him; he owns a flying school and airfield and has remained in flying ever since the war's end.

Am enclosing some photos of pals in the 303rd from Pendleton, Oregon to Boise to Alamogordo to El Paso. Some of the names I do not remember.

Ken and Red and A.C. Shott I first met at Pendleton, Oregon and they were still using B-18s. That was shortly after Pearl and I had just transferred to the 303rd from the Signal Corps. Ken and Shott were waiting for Cadet papers and in all the moves I lost track of them.

The picture of "Recon," the little white terrier, I took the day I left Alamogordo for El Paso. She had been bitten by a rattle snake

and was all swelled up around the throat. I saw her in the spring of '43 after we arrived in England when I visited my old friends at Molesworth and "Recon" was there and had a new litter of puppies. She survived the rattler bite.

In the back of the address book you might be interested in sort of a diary that I began with the 303rd (part way through) until I left them in El Paso early summer of 1942.

Don't recall who in the 303rd Ass'n. I wrote to when I joined but in case you were not the one, I'll tell you briefly why we (some of us) didn't go over with the 303rd. At El Paso it was--I recall--decided that the squadrons would be reduced from 12 crews to 9 crews. I happened to be one of the 12 crews cut and went to Tucson as the 59th Training Group. For a few months we trained new crews for new groups, etc. My engineer Edgar Stevenson and I put in for Cadets and also a cadre out to form a bomb group. The Group came first (94th B.G.) but during our phase training our papers came through for Cadets and Capt. Rawlinson, our C.O. suggested that we go over with the crew and do our 25 and come back to the U.S. for flying training on the government. He also said that they do not shoot down B-17s. So over we went to Bedford and flew a few missions with the 306th and then we went to a place called Earls Colne and then Bury St. Edmunds. We lasted 6 weeks during which time Steve and I were flying with other crews-trying for 25-when our plane was not scheduled. On



(l to r) B. Jurosek & Don Webster and 303rders at Alamogordo, N.M. in 1942



Recon at Alamogordo

May 29th bound for Rennes Naval Storage Depot, we went down. Capt. Rawlinson found a chute or caught one in the air on June 13th, 43 and became a POW also.

After Stalag 7A, 1500 of us (all of us) went by box car (3 days) to Stalag 17B, Krens, Austria and grew to 4500 Krieges. I imagine I was with many, many 303rd original and replacement people but it was hard to keep track because of so many bomb groups represented there. Guess you can tell that I could go on and on but I will close now.

Would like to know the addresses of the following if possible. Bernard Jurosek, A.C. Shott and Ken Zettlemier, all from the original 303rd.

Hoping you can use some of this.

Don Webster
Ormond Beach, FL

Ed Note: More on this in the next issue.

Dear Bill,

Strangely enough, after almost 44 years I remembered your name immediately upon receiving your recent memo on the 360th.

We flew out of Molesworth on Nov 21, 1944. We were shot down and taken prisoner that day. I came back to Molesworth some years ago to an abandoned air field.

Just writing to say hello.

Harold Scheer
Pompano Beach, FLA

HELL'S ANGELS FORUM

WORDS FROM THE 360TH

Dear Bill:

I enjoyed the reunion in Ft. Worth. I did receive some advice from Carl Fyler. He told me to get P.O.W. on my disability card for the V.A. I did go to the V.A. in Long Beach and they are putting me through a complete Physical (with my permission) to better understand the results of being a P.O.W.

I also joined the P.O.W. group and I received a letter from a former P.O.W. who also was in the 303rd Bomb Group. He is Harold Michaels, 917 E. 64th, Tacoma, WA 98404.

He was with the 427 Sqdn. and was shot down Dec. 20, 1943 over Bremen.

I haven't found his name on the roster.

**Ira J. Walter
Long Beach 90805**

Dear Bill,

Do I owe my membership dues? I can't remember if I paid or not. I was with the 360th as a flight engineer on a Capt. Armfields crew from 11/44-4/45 when we completed 35 missions over Germany. A Lt. Martin was copilot, Sgt. Goggins was our ball turret gunner; Sgt. Haynes was our radio operator and I don't remember the names of our navigator and bombardier. Sgt. Hunt was our tail turret gunner. Have you ever known these persons and their present whereabouts?

I have enclosed a map of the area in which I live now. (I was raised in California but have lived in Alabama, since 11/74). Our community is a resort community on the Gulf Coast with numerous tourists lodgings. We are located between Mobile and Pensacola. I am suggesting Gulf Shores Al, as a site for a 303rd B.G. reunion in the not so distant future. A map is enclosed.

**Sincerely,
Jim Lemon Jr.**

Dear Bill:

Thank you very much for your letter and I want you to know that I thoroughly enjoyed the reunion in Ft. Worth. The banquet was one of the most enjoyable I have attended in years. The guest speaker was the most!

I received the Newsletter and the roster and I'm glad that they finally got the right Squadron letters on the B-17. Also everybody loves to see their picture in print, being an OLD newspaper man, Cincinnati Post, I made it on Page 10. I'm between the two guys with the glasses in the back row. I'm happy that Carl Fyler was made President as he is a good man for the job and have known him since 1974 from the Orlando reunion.

Talk about going bananas! The B-17, Sentimental Journey was in Cincy a week ago for three days and I got my kids to go thru it to see what "Daddy" did in the Big War. It was great reliving my 13 missions.

I don't have any suggestions for the reunions, except I hope there are no more Rodeos. Went to the AFEES reunion in San Antonio and spent the whole day at a working ranch and they had a Rodeo. Billy Bob's was interesting, but when you see one Rodeo, you've seen them all.

I enjoyed the gathering of all the 360th men in one room and hope they repeat the same. I think you are wrong in your last sentence of your letter. We're just a bunch of OLD men hanging on to our youth and a common cause we went thru.

**Sincerely yours,
Louis Breitenbach
Cincinnati, Ohio**

Enclosed is a picture of our plane that crashlanded in Wijk Bij Duurstede, Holland on February 22, 1944, the BIG WEEK. Charles Crook was the pilot and did a great job of bringing the plane down. I wonder if

anyone knows where he is? The radio operator from our crew, Bob Hannan, lives in Healdsburg, CA.

Dear Bill,

'Really appreciated the letter sent to former members of the 360th sqdn. Am surprised at how little I remember (aside from Major Casello) of those other than our crew. But I flew only 8 missions (4 of which were over Berlin) with Spindler in the spring of '44-- which brings me to the 3 reasons for writing.

Ben Spindler (also formerly from Nebr.) was/is a great man and lives at 190 East Magnolia St., Hanford, CA 93230; phone 209/584-6056. I believe he once flew as deputy lead for #360. He has not joined the "alumni assn." -- but I thought you might have known him. That's my first reason for writing.

Secondly, I was just a "career" gunner and 10th on the crew. I've never seen anything in writing on this--but in early May 1944 one waist gunner was pulled from every flight crew and the gang was formed into a guard squad. Both Hitler and the Allies knew Eisenhower's landing was imminent --it was reported that Hitler had over 1000 paratroopers available to drop over the American airfields (concentrated closely in England as we were) with grenades and could lob them at the B-17's/B-24's before being captured or shot--thus, stymie the imminent invasion.

Obviously, the grounded waist gunners' pride was also "grounded" and thought to make good guards. We were each given a Thompson machine gun and couple of clips of .45's (shells) and assigned to a B-17 from dusk (about 10 pm there) until the plane's armorers/mechanics showed up in early am. It lasted only until D-Day (June 6th)--and I remember the night sky being full of aircraft, June 5th.

Thirdly, Spindler's 9-man crew subsequently went on a LONG

HELL'S ANGELS FORUM

mission (into Poland, I believe) and received a direct hit (probably an "88" from ground fire--and all came back. It happened on the bomb run (from IP), the sole time in mission when radioman (Willard Uhl--nor is he member of "alumni"--lives in Somerset PA) is not on his chair at his "communications." He visually confirms bombardier's "Bombs away."

The shell entered camera well (blew up plywood floor and lo-pressure oxygen supply), cut upwards diagonally thru his table and radio set (leaving "88" semi-circle cut out of radio), blew plywood door (to bomb bay) out of Uhl's hand (swollen), and knocked out the three minor (trim tab) control cables above his desk (left side of plane)--leaving the 3 major cables (to rudder and elevator) intact.

I can still see that B-17 landing, with electrical wires hanging out the camera well. Uhl had had to scramble to keep from falling out the "bottom hole" caused by the concussion of exploding oxygen bottles and the "88." Never understood why the latter didn't explode on impact, but guess it was a dud or set solely for an altitude higher than the plane.

But Willard was a great man (former Sunday school teacher and highway patrolman from Pennsylvania--just retired from that few years ago) and the crew went on to finish the assigned (35?) missions.

I went on one more mission (flying tailgunner with Lt. Hahn's crew--replacing crew's tailgunner killed on prior mission of that crew) to Weisbaden 8-12 or 8-15 --seems the 358th or 359th got shot up by fighters. I had a "50 yd seat," seeing 9 of 12 (or 13) B-17's shot down in very few seconds.

I was shipped home (via C-54, stopping on every piece of earth in the North Atlantic for re-fuel) but saw, in Miami (R&R) in Sept, one of the EM shot down on that mission.

He'd bailed out and "walked" thru the lines.

So, thanks again, Bill for the recent letter and the "focussing" on the 360 sqdn. All of you officers have done a great job.

My wife and I attended only one reunion (Seattle, 1985). Interestingly, we were going thru the Confederate B-17 (Memphis Belle??) when the local TV crew focussed on our ball turret gunner (Neil McKennon) and myself. (A friend was taping the news in Seattle so sent me a copy from VCR).

Has the Molesworth base become the 303rd Missile Base?

Sincerely,
Bruce E. Babbrit
Orangevale, CA.

DID YOU BOMB MUNICH?

Thank you very much for your letter. I have read with great interest your comments about your missions on Munich.

I am at present working on my doctorate thesis, on air attacks on Munich from 1939 - 1945. I must say that the American response to my request has been very big. I hope to include some of your information in my thesis, but would be grateful if you could send further individual comments on the attacks flown by 8th AF. I have attached a list of these air raids. Perhaps this is useful to your memory.

I have already received through various record offices, maps and official mission reports, and you have been able to help with personal information giving the other side of the story.

In all there were 73 attacks on Munich, shared by the American 8th and 15th and the British RAF, in the late phase of the war also by the American 9th and 12th tactical forces. Munich totalled 6,500 dead from 42-45, which is relatively small compared with Hamburg or Berlin. Forty-five percent of the

city's buildings were destroyed through attacks, however, at the end of the war, a fast rebuilding programme was instigated and put into action. Many of the destroyed buildings were rebuilt in their original style, which means that the city has kept its original charm. I have enclosed two maps of the city, showing its present layout, and if you can remember your target maps, you'll see very little difference.

I have enclosed as well a list of all the 8th AF attacks on Munich. This can be useful for your memory. The series of July 44, consisting of 7 attacks flown by the Mighty Eighth, was the most destructive phase for Munich during the 2nd World War. More than two thousand people died through these air raids, that is one third of the whole sum during the other years! The flying conditions were difficult due to clouds. H2X had to be used and mostly PFF attack has to be carried out. On 24 April 1944 there was an extraordinary raid by RAF during the Night. Number 5 group tested a new marking system on Munich (low-level). I didn't know that another raid during daylight took also place by 8 AF. This is a very important fact for my research. Thank you very much for this information. I would be grateful for more information as to this raid.

Again I'd like to thank you for your help and look forward to hearing from you.

Mrs Irma Permoser
Friedensh. 37
8030 Gröbenzell
West Germany

Ed. Note: I was on the April 24th raid but missed the July raids because I was in between tours. If anyone has any comments on the July raids please forward either to me or direct to the writer of the letter.

HELL'S ANGELS FORUM

MORE ON THE ME 163

There has been a lively debate following the publication of a photograph of the Messerschmitt 163 "Komet" rocket aircraft, erroneously identified as a Me262 jet plane.

May I add a bit of enlightenment on the history of this aircraft and some photographs, having just been accepted as an associate member of your association.

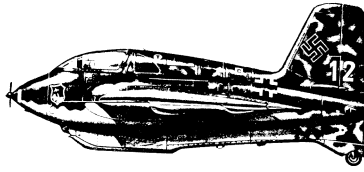
Development of this type aircraft actually goes back to the mid-thirties when the DVL (German Aircraft Research Institute) let a contract to the Hellmuth Walter Co. for a small, 90 lb. thrust liquid-fuel rocket for testing dynamic characteristics. The project at the DVL was headed by a Dr. Baeumker.

Work progressed relatively slowly due to a pronounced lack of interest by the German Ministry of Aviation (RLM) although tests proved that it would be possible to reach speeds of 620 MPH with a 1650 lb. thrust rocket motor and with an aircraft that had the basic appearance of subsequent Me 163: basically a flying wing without a dihedral.

The famous glider pilot Heini Dittmar performed flight tests in 1941 at Peenemuende (with and without power) during which the aircraft showed superb gliding characteristics as well as phenomenal climb rate under power.

A chance visit of highly respected WW I fighter ace and by then Gen. Ernst Udet to the Messerschmitt plant and airfield at Augsburg abruptly changed the official attitude of the RLM when Udet witnessed a demonstration of the capabilities of that experimental aircraft.

However, problems with rocket engine control, especially throttling, postponed delivery of a reasonably controllable engine until 1943, and production was handed over to the Hans Klemm Flugzeugbau at Boblingen, my



Me 163B-1a Komet

former home town. The plant was located right next to my former Gymnasium (German type high-school).

It was not until autumn of 1944 when the first operational test group was formed under a Major Wolfgang Spate at Brandis Luftwaffe Air Base near Leipzig. It was supposed to protect the Leuna synthetic fuels plant nearby.

Another group was stationed at Stargard near Stettin to protect a similar plant at Politz.

Due to its very limited range (max. "burn" approx. 15 minutes) the plane was given an "object protection" role to provide protection to highly sensitive war-oriented industrial objects. In this role it could cover an area with a radius of max. 50 miles.

The "Komets" were supposed to take off upon the approach of an enemy bomber formation, climb in loose formation on a radar vectored course to approx. 1000 meters above the enemy formation and dive into the formation at very high speed. A popular tactic of attack was to dive steeply on the enemy formation, firing during the dive and, after passing through the formation, attack again from 5 o'clock, barrel-rolling through the formation and reverse the whole procedure again. Captain Olejnik had developed this procedure and successfully employed it personally over Altenburg/ Thuringia when he destroyed three B-17s in quick succession.

However, Capt. Olejnik was an experienced pilot and his feat was not duplicated very often since too few aircraft were available in operational condition (probably never more than one hundred) and the younger pilots were woefully

below par on their training and flight experience.

Toward the end of 1944 the aircraft was called Volksjager (People's Fighter) for which the Luftwaffe had planned to train several thousand pilots. The program, however, never really took hold as it was too late into the war.

The aircraft had quite a few serious deficiencies, the major one being its landing gear.

In order to save valuable weight the aircraft had a "disposable" under-carriage. The aircraft was put on a two-wheel undercarriage with which it would make its take-off run. But when the plane lifted off, the carriage would stay on the ground, running to the end of the runway.

Landings had to be made on landing skid and many Komets were lost on landing when the skid shocks exploded and caused secondary explosions of the remaining fuel, destroying the aircraft and killing the pilot. More Komets were lost that way than to actual combat.

Pilots scoffed at the Komet because it became easy prey to Allied fighter escorts during its long gliding phase after burn-out of the fuel. Also, pressure was on to ram Allied bombers in a sort of suicidal attack but by this time morale was so low and the situation absolutely hopeless that no-one was willing to purposely waste his life for a criminal leadership that only wanted to postpone their own Goetterdaemmerung a few more months at the expense of thousands of lives. Doing one's duty as a fighting soldier was one thing but sacrificing one's life for nothing was quite another.

Rex Reichert
former Luftwaffe Pilot

We are still accepting voluntary contributions of \$1 for the July 1987 roster.

FORUM

Thanks for Your Help

I don't know if you remember me, but we met at the Seattle reunion. I was Sg. Navigator in the 359th when I finished my tour, although 24 missions were flown with the 358th. I ended my tour on the Jan. 11, 1944 Oschersleben mission flying as one of the navigators in the lead plane with Gen. Travis.

Any how, why I'm writing is to hopefully help you out on the "Honor Roll" search which you requested in the last 303rd publication. Over the past 18 months I've been corresponding with Brian O'Neill (He's on the Assoc. member roster) who is doing a book on the 303rd using the diary of a Lt. Brown who was a navigator. At my request O'Neill sent me pages from the "Honor Roll" covering my period of combat plus a few more. I hope these pages (enclosed) will be some of assistance to you. Perhaps O'Neill has the complete set and would possibly share them with you.

Keep up the good work on the publication re: 303th. I missed the Ft. Worth reunion but am having a mini-reunion with my original pilot (John Lemmon) and co-pilot (Elmo Clark) at Lake Tahoe, Cal. in early Sept.

Darrell Gust
Weslaco, TX

Was this the end of Miss Lace?

Here is the crew picture that I promised to send. Flying on our 28th mission on Sept. 9, 1944 in aircraft 43-38323 we were hit three times by JU-88s. The last one sent us into a dive. We were over Ludwigshaven, Germany; our target was a synthetic fuel and chemical plant. Drew (Bomb.) was not with us that day. We had a 1st Lt. Charles F. Miller on a makeup mission. (I understand Drew was killed later when two ships collided). Hobgood, O'Leary and I bailed out when the ship started to break up. I came down in the middle of Ludwigshaven and was taken prisoner immediately. I found

NEW ADDRESSES/ROSTER CHANGES

Barriscale, Howard W., 8260 Owen Mouth Ave., Canoga Park, CA 91304
Balcomb, Clayton S., P.O. Box 1081, Porterville, CA 93258-1081
Bruns, William H., Rt. 2 Box 649, Cable, WI 54821
Barton, Paul J., 8817 Pesaro Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89117-1162
Boutelle, Winston E., 16189 Mestro Drive, San Diego, CA 92128-3115
Barnes, Frederick E., 5517 Piedmont Ave., Baltimore, MD 21207
Bierman, Leonard B., 8601 Falmouth Ave. #212, Playa Del Rey, CA 90293

Collom, Edwin E., 1150 W. 15th #206, Eugene, OR 97402-3962
Conklin, James M., 25 Edgewater Square, Lakewood, OH 44107-1808

Daum, Maurice D., 214 Carlton St., Nixa, MO 65714-9246
David, Clayton C., 19 Oak Ridge Pond Rd., Hannibal, MO 63401-9554
Doctor, Gordon C., 16132 Pine Dr., Tinley Park, IL 60477

Elliott, Jesse H., Sandestin Beach Resort, 4288 Beachside #2, Sandestin, FL 32541-4276

Frederick, Lee W., 5271 S.W. 8th St., LaPosada Conv. Home, Miami, FL 33134
Fisher, Stan, 6212 Lincoln Ave, Baltimore, MD 21209

Gargill, William D., 7028 Treehaven Rd., Ft. Worth, TX 76116

Herrington, Glen M. (deceased)
Hodges, Grady H., 1325 N. Nutmeg St., #301, Escondido, CA 92026

Jurgensen, Louis C., P.O. Box 363, Webster, NC 28788-0363
Johnson, Joe B., 4516 13th Street, Lubbock, TX 79416

Kyle, George A., Jr., 9000 Royal Palm Blvd., #E208, Coral Springs, FL 33065-5632

Lund, Jerome O., 613 No. Portia St., Nokomis, FL 34275
Leonard, Joseph F., 279 N. Farm Drive, Dover Plains, NY 12522-9634
Leal, Raymond T., 4859 Galicia Way, Ocean Hills, CA 92056

Mason, Millard E. 203 S. Noble Pl., Azusa, CA 91702-4549
Middlemas, Arthur B., P.O. Box 6276, March AFB, Riverside, CA 92518-6276
Munroe, Linton S. Jr., 203 N. Duval, Quincy, FL 32351
Marsh, Lewis A., Rt. 6 Box 365, Cleveland, TX 77327

Mc Coll, Hermie C., c/o J.C. Brown, RR #1 Box 82, Rock Port, MO. 64482

Owen, Calvin H., 606 W. Park Apt. G3, Savannah, MO 64485
Oakley, Chester H., 8750 E. Cooper #206, Tucson, AZ 85710

Quinones, Francisco, Absecon VLG. #107 Marin Dr., Absecon, NJ 08201

Reese, Bobbie B., P.O. Box 2051, Hurst, TX 76053-2051

Swank, Verden DeVoe, P.O. Box 553, Duluth, GA 30136-0553
Saam, Mrs. Geraldine, 903 Woodland Blvd., Fremont, OH 43420
Schulz, Mrs. Verna, Box 303, Bison, KS 67520
Scheer, Harold, 905 Cypress Grove Drive, Pompano Beach, FLA 33069

Von Behren, Mrs. Delores, Box 6, St. Peter, IL 62880

Wentz, Rollin H., 32 Wimbledon Way, Bella Vista, AR 72714 (OK in roster)
Wiegand, L.D., 18819 N. 95th Ave., Peoria, AZ 85345
Willis, Arnold A., 127 1/2 W. Church St., Evansville, WI 53536-1331

Yonkman, Robert J., 8620 W. 85th, Overland Park, KS 66212
Yannie, Emilio, 303 Maple Heights, Bath, NY 14810

Zarella, Anthony A., 2150 W. Doral Ct., Citrus Springs, FL 32630

New Member:

360 Sq. Col./R Paris Russell C., 15561 Eden, Westminster, CA 92683 (714) 897-2837;
Ball Turret Gunner, Pilot Frank Welchon

FORUM

O'Leary in the POW Camp about two months later. The rest of the crew had been killed. After being released on May 4, 1945, we made it back home. O'Leary died two months later. It was a 1000 plane raid and the targets were: Mainz, Ludwigshaven-Mannheim and Dusseldorf. According to press reports, we lost 23 bombers and four fighters.



Posed in front of aircraft "Miss Lace" are: (l to r first row) Drew (Bomb), Mowatt (co-pilot), Newton (pilot), Lang (nav.), (second row) Hobgood (waist), Reeves (tail), Bricker (ball), O'Leary (radio), and Turner (eng.)

Was pleased to see the recent Newsletter contained a painting by Jim Reeves identifying "Miss Lace". On January 8, 1945 our regular "Rose O'Grady" was being glued back together, and we flew "Miss Lace" as a substitute on a mission to Schweich. Things went beautiful, and on our return to Molesworth we bounced no less than twice on the end of the runway, once on the little road that crossed just past the ditch, and flopped unmercifully on the haystack that was wet and soggy and unrelenting about 150 or so yards beyond the road. We all got out and ran like scalded rabbits through what must have been two feet of mud, and we often wondered if they would ever get the bends and kinks out of the rascal. "Miss Lace" was drooped around the haystack like a Dali witch...As I remember, the plane was number 569.

Al Kemmerer
427th Sqn.
Daytona Beach, FL.

303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION HELP WANTED QUESTIONNAIRE

Your 303rd Bomb Group Association would like your assistance in its day to day operations. Your executive committee asks each member to complete this questionnaire and return it to the Membership chairman at your earliest convenience. The skills of both you and your spouse will be useful in helping keep our organization healthy and viable.

PART ONE: (check your choices)

Can you help in any of the following areas?

- A. Chaplain work. Denomination_____
- B. Constitution/by-laws study and maintenance
- C. Historian assistance
- D. Legal analysis/ risk management
- E. Membership/recruiting drives
- F. Newsletter reporter/editorial assistance
- G. Photography/photo historian
- H. PX assistance
- I. Reunion planning/ coordination
- J. Secretarial/ word processor operation
- K. Staff accountant/treasurer's assistance
- L. Other help such as:_____

PART TWO: (check "yes" or "no" for each question)

1. Would you accept an elective office? Yes No
2. Would you accept an appointive office? Yes No
3. Would you act as a Squadron representative? Yes No
4. Would you serve on an active committee?
As a chairman of a committee? Yes No
Your committee choices_____
5. Would you assist an elected/appointed officer? Yes No
6. Do you have access to a word processor? Yes No
7. Will your spouse help also?
Organizationally? Yes No
Assisting you only? Yes No

Name_____ Spouse name_____

Address_____

City_____ State/Zip_____

Send this completed questionnaire to editor.



The above debriefing of the Hell's Angels crew took place after the Feb. 14, 1943 mission. Can you identify the members of the crew, especially the two on the far right? Are they brothers?

COMMENTARY

By Lew Lyle

WHO WON THE WAR

The 303rd Bomb Group (H) was originally scheduled to be the first Group to arrive in England and become part of the Mighty Eight Air Force.

As reported in the Oct. '87 issue of the 8th AF News, B/G Ira C. Eaker, is reported to have made a statement to Major Matt G. Carpenter, CO 2nd Air Depot Group (stationed at Molesworth awaiting the arrival of the 303rd) as follows: "Since you are the first unit in the theater, it is particularly important that your officers and men set an example which others will model."

Why the 303rd did not go to Molesworth in June of 1942 is a long story but comes down to the fact the aircrew training was deficient and the unit was sidetracked for several months. The actual arrival date for the ground crew echelon was September 1942

followed shortly by the flight echelon which arrived on October 1942. The first combat mission was flown on Nov. 17, 1942.

Without detracting from the outstanding air combat record of our flyers, I would like to point out that the Ground Echelon of our Group never let us down during three and a half years of our wartime existence. The support we had at every level, from the cooks, drivers, guards, clerks, administrators and our chaplains, plus the intelligence, armament, bomb loading and supply personnel was outstanding. And who could ever forget the magnificent support we received from the Depot Group and the line maintenance people.

In reviewing our records over the past few years it is obvious that the records set by our ground echelon and particularly those associated with supply and

maintenance at all levels was probably the best in the 8th AF.

A look at the aircraft available for dispatch into combat and the number of airplanes actually dispatched shows the 303rd Bomb Group as the highest of any B-17 outfit in the 8th AF. "We-all" who flew, owe a real debt of gratitude to those dedicated men who produced the equipment and gave us the will and the incentive we needed for combat.

In the Group's future endeavors to get recognition for those who were overlooked for recognition during the war, we certainly will be looking for non flyers to be honored. Maybe it is time to focus a little more on what "those who came to stay for the duration", did to make the 303rd record one we are all proud of.

"My hat is off them."

IN MEMORIAM

Perhaps Lew Lyle was thinking of Elmer Fessler who passed away on September 12, when he penned his piece on how much all of us flyers owe to the people who gave us the best airplane possible when we were off on a mission.

Though most of you knew of the hard work Elmer and Jean Fessler did in managing the 8th AF clearinghouse, few know what Elmer did during the war.

Elmer enlisted in the Air Corps in August of 1940. In October of that year he was sent to the Casey Jones School of Aeronautics in Newark, N.J. for six months training as an A & E Mechanic. Afterward he was assigned to the 43rd BG, first at Langley Field and then at Dow Field, Bangor, Maine. In February 1942 Elmer joined the cadre that formed the 303rd BG at Gowan Field, Boise, Idaho. There he worked in aircraft inspection in the 359th BS Engineering Office.

The 303rd took him to Murock, Alamogordo, Biggs Field, Ft. Dix and Gourock, Scotland (via the Queen Mary). He arrived at Molesworth at 12 September 1942. Elmer stayed with the 359th BS and the aircraft inspection job until the end of the war, moving with the Group to Casablanca with ATC until August 1945. Elmer joined Eastern Airlines in 1951.

Elmer is survived by his wife Jean who also came from an Aviation family.

Col. Constantine J. Duros, 360th Sqdn, 8600 Waukegan Road, #503, Morton Grove, IL, passed away several weeks ago. He is survived by his wife, Katherine.

George W. Luke, 65, of Silver Spring, Md, died May 23, 1987. He was a B-17 pilot (360th) shot down in May 1943. He joined the French underground before being captured by the Nazis. He was the first POW

to enter Stalag I. He is survived by his wife, Mary, two sons, a daughter, a brother, a sister, and six grandchildren.

O. Lawrence Vell, (360th) died in 1982 of a brain tumor which he had for 15 years. He is survived by his wife Rosalae and a son who still likes to hear about the activities of the 303rd Bomb Group. They live at 4333 Valmonte Dr., Sacramento, CA.

Harry J. Hall, a bomb loader in armament with the 358th Sqdn, died on Feb, 14, 1987 from heart failure. He had been ill for the past 2 1/2 years. He is survived by his wife Ruth. Harry served at Molesworth from 1942 to 1945.

Joseph F. Emmerth, Jr., of the 360th Squadron passed away in 1985.

Glen M. Herrington, 360th Sqdn, passed away on April 11, 1987.

From the Editor's Scratchpad

One of the feature stories of this issue of the newsletter has to do with our next formal reunion at "Norfolk by the Sea" in Sept. 27-Oct. 1, 1989. Several members have suggested that we hold reunions on an annual basis and have suggested such places as Chicago, England, Tucson, Albuquerque and Boise, Idaho in 1992, the 50th anniversary of the 303rd. As we get up in age, the idea of an annual reunion has merit.

Right now I am working on my own Reunion for 1988. Although during my two tours of combat in 1943-45 era I visited Berlin, 5 times; and Frankfurt, 5 times, my toughest missions were to the Big O's: Oschersleben and Oberpaffenhofen, just outside of Munich.

Sometime in the next year I hope to take advantage of Col. Harbaugh's and Ray Cossey's invitations to visit Molesworth and then from there go on to visit some of the German areas, like Munich, that I only saw from 25,000 feet straight up. From Munich I hope to visit Berchtesgaden, take a trip on the Danube, take another look at Lake Constance--the first glimpse was from 25,000 feet when there was a doubt if we could make it back to England and Switzerland was temptingly just on the other side of the Lake. I'd also like to take a trip down the Rhine. Sound exciting? If anyone would like to join me maybe we can dream up a trip to cover other places. We could start the trip from Molesworth just like we did on our missions. Let me know what you think.

* * *

In the Hell's Angel Forum section of this newsletter I ran a letter from from Joe Worthington who is "in the process of starting an association of ground crew personnel." Since this is your newsletter and everyone is entitled to express his thoughts I ran the letter even though I am against the fractionization of the 303rd. The

303rd was a top unit during wartime because we were a close knit team and I believe we should stay that way. But this is your organization and you are free to make your own decisions.

* * *

Ed Giering's book, "B-17 Bomber Crew Diary" received an excellent review in Military Magazine. For information on how to get a copy contact Ed in Clinton, CT. Ben Smith has authored a book about his 303rd experiences. If there are any other books written by 303rd members please let me know the name of the book and include a short synopsis. I'll run the list in the next issue of the newsletter and also where it can be purchased.

The next issue will also contain an article on Ed Giering's recent promotion to Lt. Col. retroactive to 1972 for date of rank. Since Ed retired from active duty in 1973 you can understand his happiness about the whole matter. Actually he is waiting for Senate confirmation and the President's signature.

* * *

The Imperial War Museum at Duxford Airfield near Cambridge is in the process of erecting an illuminated display of WWII Eight Air Force unit insignia adjacent to their B-17 and the Eight Air Force Exhibition. Initially they are limiting the cover to Group Insignia. In order to achieve a high standard of accuracy they wish to obtain color prints or 35 mm transparencies showing the insignia of the 303rd Bomb Group. Any material loaned will be carefully handled and returned after copying. If anyone can assist Duxford in this matter you can send your photos through Carl Fyler or mail direct to E.O. Inman, Keeper of Duxford Airfield, Imperial War Museum, Cambridge CB2 4 QR, England. (Ed. Note. I attended an air show at Duxford in 1986. It was well worth the visit.)

According to 303rd President, Carl Fyler, the 8th AF lost between 44,000 and 50,000 in WWII. Of the 98,000 POWs imprisoned in Germany, the Air Force was a big group. He also reports that the Pentagon has postponed delivery of the POW Medal until after the first of January 1988. It is a four color ribbon; red, blue, white and black. He also reports that the 303rd turnout in Pittsburgh for the 8th AF Reunion was small. (I believe the way it was set up with four hotels and the prices may have had something to do with it.) Of course we had an excellent turnout for our reunion in Ft. Worth in June. He also reports that the resident agent has been named and the corporation papers done and the bank account has been transferred to our new treasurer for the 303rd Charles S. Schheltzer. I think our former Treasurer, John Ladd, did an excellent job.

Late news from the 8th AF Reunion . . .

According to Carl Fyler he and Lew Lyle coordinated in setting up a POW display . . . Gen. Lyle wants to help 8th AF people correct their records and also help the POWs get the new medal they have waited almost three years for. Now looks as if it won't be out before March of '88. The 8th AF Historical monument planned for Dayton is out. Estimates went from \$6 million to \$18 million. There is a new plan to put the 8th Air Force Memorial Education Center at Barksdale AFB, La., HQ, for today's 8th AF. The 8th AF Historical Society business meeting was "closed down." Further details will be forthcoming in the next newsletter. Past President of the 303rd, Joe Vieira attended the meeting. He appreciated the plaque presented to him in absentia at the last 303rd meeting. Jean Fessler will continue to run the 8th AF clearing house even with Elmer's death.

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.

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 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.

TAKE THE HASSLE OUT OF XMAS SHOPPING --DO YOUR SHOPPING HERE ON THIS PAGE.

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: _____

Norfolk by-the-Sea in '89

The reunion site selection committee has picked Norfolk, VA as the spot for the 1989 reunion of Hell's Angels. Log in the dates now - September 27 - October 1, 1988. Members Gene McCutchan and Marvin Fink have agreed to ramrod this reunion. They are already at work formulating plans for another memorable get-together. There will be more information in future newsletters. All you need to do now is block out the dates; 9/27 - 10/1/'89 and plan to join your fellow Angels at Norfolk by-the-Sea.

G.I. Sheets

You flew with me on my first mission - 11 Dec. '43 - to Emden in your airplane, "G.I. Sheets," On 29 Jan. '44, I used it again on a mission to Frankfurt. I didn't return it; it broke! First the turbo on No. 2, then No. 4 stopped running windmilling; and the Germans were very unfriendly. They shot us full of holes; shooting out no. 3 and setting us on fire. We crash landed near Solre-St.-Gery, Belgium.

Bob, recently I obtained some photos of the crash. I am told the two clear ones were taken by the Germans and the fuzzy one by the Belgium underground. Thought you would like to have copies.

**James Fowler
Mullins, S.C.**

Ed. Note: The above letter was written by James Fowler to Bob Sheets of the 427th. Recently the people of Solre-St-Gery erected a monument to commemorate the occasion to honor those who helped liberate their country. Five members of Fowler's crew who are still living--Fowler, Rawlings, Taylor, Zimmer and Dinwiddie--with wives attended the unveiling on 27 June '87.

Fowler's 427th Crew (l to r) Lt. Fowler, pilot; Lt. Rawlings, c/p; Lt. Taylor, bomb; Lt. Thompson, nav.; (kneeling, l to r) T/sgt Finley, eng.; S/Sgt. Arrington, ball; T/Sgt. Dinwiddie, radio;

THE 425TH AIR SERVICE GROUP

During the waning days of the war in Europe, Eighth Air Force Headquarters directed that all support and service units assigned to, or attached to each combat group be consolidated into a single air support organization. Accordingly Special Orders #74, AAF Station 107 were cut on 15 April 1945. This order established the 425th Air Service Group. Maj. Ben B. Ramsey, the original S-4 officer of the 303rd Bomb Group, and later the CO of the 444th Sub-depot was named as commanding officer.

The 425th Air Service Group was organized with 623 men assigned or attached as:

Hq and Base Svce Sqdn	20 Officers
227 Enl men	
675 Air Materiel Sqdn	6 Officers
127 Enl men	
851 Air Engrg. Sqdn	6 Officers
237 Enl men	

The following organizations or attached units were inactivated by the orders:

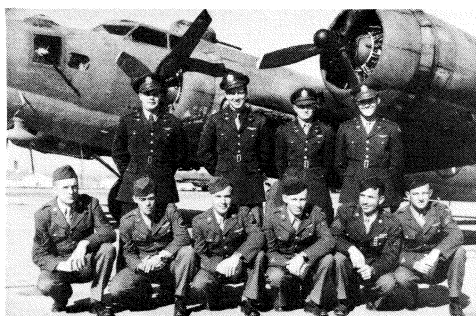
3rd Station Complement Sqdn
8th AF Dental Unit
18th Weather Sqdn
202nd Finance Section
244th Medical Dispensary
444th Sub-depot
863rd Chemical Company
1114th Quartermaster Company
1119 Military Police Company
1681 Ordinance S&M Company
2097 Eng F/F Platoon

As a result of these orders, Molesworth was left with 3 Administrative Organizations:

303rd Bomb Group (H)
425 Air Service Group
41st Air Combat Wing; each of which was now a part of 8th Air Force Bomber Command.

This is the last newsletter for 1987. Along with my wishes for a Happy Holiday Season go my thanks to the membership for the outstanding support given me throughout the year. I enjoy your letters and even though I was at Molesworth from October of '43 to May of '45, I now realize how much more I've learned about the 303rd since I've been putting out the newsletter. Each bit of information that you send adds to the realization that the accomplishments of the 303rd are even more amazing than I had ever imagined. In most cases your achievements since the war have been even more remarkable, that's why we are asking you to please fill out the questionnaire on page 10. Please pay your dues for 1988, I want to see if we can up our circulation to more than 1500 in 1988.

Hal Susskind



S/Sgt. Zimmerman, waist; Sgt. Jackson, waist and t/g, unk.



The tail of "G.I. Sheets"