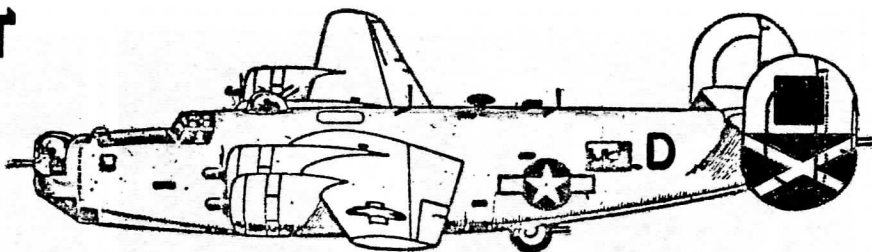


# LIGHTWEIGHT TOWER CALLING



NO. 4

DEC 1969

## MISSION NO 5: EDWARDSVILLE, ILL - ST LOUIS, MO

Edwardsville, Illinois, about 20 miles northwest of St Louis, Mo. was the rendezvous point of the 5th Annual Group Reunion, which was held August 15 - 17, 1969. Directing the event were Mr and Mrs Lester Sutter (831st) of St Louis. The reunion was the biggest with the largest attendance to date.

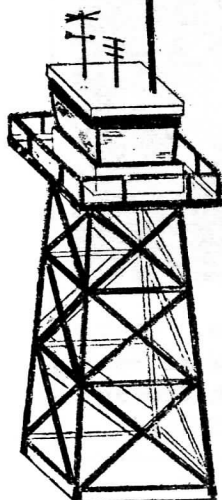
The early birds begin arriving Thursday and by late Friday morn several veterans and their families were settled in at the Holiday Inn and ready to take in the sights of Greater St Louis. A visit to the Ulysses S. Grant farm and the Anheuse-Busch barns was made in the afternoon, where all enjoyed the numerous animal shows, souvenir shops and a cold Bud at the Anheuse-



Viewing the hundreds of historical photos, documents and personal mementos are -L to R- Stanley Turecki, Bernard Rempe, John Calhoun, Albert O'Brien and Karl Anderson.

## VENOSA AIRDROME - 24 YEARS LATER

(Editor's Note: This summer your editor received a letter from Larry Vocino (Gp Hq), in which he noted his recent visit to Italy and the 485th airdrome site at Venosa. At the request of your editor Larry wrote the following story on his observations and sent along the accompanying photos. I am most grateful for his write-up which I am sure you will find very interesting and that it will bring to light old memories of the days at Venosa airdrome.)



'On June 13, 1969, my family and I arrived at the new Leonardo DaVinci Airport in Rome. We were met by my cousin, Angelo Vocino, who lives and works in Rome, as an attorney for the Italian government. Ciampino Airport which we all remember as the landing strip for those going to Rome Rest Camp, is no longer a commercial airport, as it is used by the Italian Air Force. My cousin then drove us to Nettuno, near Anzio where my wife (Cont page 4)

## OKLAHOMA CITY SITE OF 1970 REUNION

The 485th Bomb Group (H) Sixth Annual Reunion will be held August 14 - 16, 1970 at the Ramada Inn in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. This will be the 485th's first reunion west of the Mississippi and will be hosted by Mr and Mrs Bernard Rempe, Route 6, Box 397, Oklahoma City, Okla 73119. Reserve the above date to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of VE and VJ Day with your buddies in Will Rogers Country. Complete details will be mailed in the near future.



828TH EAGLES - F, L to R: Jim McFadden, Ambrose Borgetti, Karl Anderson, Wm Schoultz, Ben Christ and Stanley Turecki. R, L to R: John Calhoun, John Thull, John Waldeyer, Robert Deeds and Carl Gigowski.



829TH EAGLES - L to R: Albert O'Brien, Jim Ball, Charles Duecker, Floyd Swanson, Robert Thompson, Earl Bundy and Bernard Rempe.

#### MISSION NO 5 (Cont)

Following a short business meeting Saturday morning, several veterans continued their sight-seeing. Those with children visited the famous St Louis Zoo while others elected to remain at the rendezvous room - visiting and enjoying refreshments.

As evening approached, thirty-seven veterans had arrived for the event. From the 828th were Mr and Mrs Karl Anderson, Carrollton, Ohio; Mr and Mrs Ambrose Borgetti, Whitting, Indiana; Mr Ben Christ, Lockport, New York and guest Mr 'Doc' LaRoach, a very spry and young WWI veteran; Mr and Mrs John Calhoun, LaDue, Mo; Mr and Mrs Robert Deeds - holly Toledo, Ohio and their youngsters, LeRoy and Nancy; Mr and Mrs Carl Gigowski of Grand Rapids, Michigan; Mr and Mrs Jim McFadden, Philadelphia, Pa; Mr and Mrs Bill Schoultz, Newton Falls, Ohio; Mr and Mrs Stanley Turecki, Passiac, New Jersey; Mr and Mrs John Thull, Ramsey, Ill and Mr and Mrs John Waldeyer, Long Island, New York.

The 829th was represented by Mr and Mrs Jim Ball, Mishawaka, In; Mr and Mrs Earl Bundy, Columbus, Ohio; Mr and Mrs Charles Duecker, Lincoln, Nebr; Mr and Mrs Albert O'Brien, Troy, New York; Mr Merle Sutterby, Iola, Kansas; Mr and Mrs Bernard Rempe, Oklahoma



830TH EAGLES - F, L to R: Jim Ball, Lyle Talbott and Louis Wolf. R, L to R: Albert O'Brien, William Merlo and Ike Greer.



831ST EAGLES - L to R: Otto Meyers, Victor Bone, Don Hasler, Harold Dundon, Howard Woodyard, G. Cleghorn, Ray Heskes, Ralph Summers, Lester Sutter, Albert Paul and H. Richards.

## MISSION NO 5 (Cont)

City, Okla; Mr William Tanner, Pekin, Ill; Mr and Mrs Robert Thompson, Sun Priare, Wisc and Mr and Mrs Floyd Swanson, Wausa, Nebr.

Veterans from the 830th attending were Mr Ike Greer, Colorado Springs, Colo; Mr Wm Merlo, Richmond Heights, Mo; Mr Lyle Talbott, Crooksville, Ohio; Mr Louis Wolf, Sheldon, Iowa and Mr and Mrs Jack Farrell, Grosse Pointe, Michigan.

Out numbering, the other Squadrons in attendance was the 831st with the following veterans attending: Mr Victor Bone, Chicago, Ill; Mr and Mrs George Cleghorn, Shrewsbury, Mo; Mr and Mrs Harold Dundon, New Holland, Ohio; Mr and Mrs Don Hasler, St Louis, Mo; Mr and Mrs Ray Heskes, St Louis, Mo; Mr R R Knight, Dallas, Texas; Mr and Mrs Otto Meyers, Chicago, Ill; Mr and Mrs Albert Paul, Charleston, Ill; Mr and Mrs Harold Richards, Peoria, Ill; Mr and Mrs Lester Sutter, St Louis, Mo; Mr and Mrs Ralph Summers, St Louis, Mo and Mr and Mrs Howard Woodyard, Lambertville, Michigan.

Following the dinner, Louis Wolf, after a little motivation provided by Ike Greer and Jack Farrell, took the group on a very entertaining trip to Italy and the 485th air-drome site at Venosa. Huddled over the slide projector, a stogie protruding from the corner of his mouth, Lou had the gang laughing and reminiscing for the next hour as the color slides flashed across the screen accompanied by a humorous and enlightening narration delivered in a manner equaled only by Groucho Marx. It was interesting to note that at the time of Lou's visit, the chapel was still intact and used as a stable as were a few of the buildings around Gp Hq. Only a wall of Grant's Tomb was still up. Next, it was back to the rec room for more of the high adventure stories and refreshments.

Noticing the reunion welcome on the Holiday Inn sign, Robert L Wells, 7201 Marily Lane, Forth Worth, Texas and Herbert E Treese, 2201 Lovett Dr, St Louis, Mo dropped in for a short visit. Both are AF veterans and were POWs. Thought per chance they might possibly meet a buddie or two they made while in POW camp. They would be interested in hearing from any 485th vet who may have made their acquaintance during internment. On the hot line word was received from Arthur Hurley (828), wishing everyone a heck of a good time.

Midnight - so soon. You could tell the young at heart and the ones who felt young for father time did not disturb them and they managed to continue the merriment until --.

Sunday morning, after gathering in the coffee shop for breakfast, the difficult task of bidding so-long until next time was accomplished within a nostalgic atomsphere and the long sentimental journey home began. ---- Robert Deeds

---- A sincere thank you is extended to Mr and Mrs Lester Sutter for providing another outstanding reunion. And we thank you all for making this reunion a great success. It was a great pleasure meeting all of you wonderful people and will be looking forward to seeing you all in Oklahoma City in '70. (Ed and Staff)

## VENOSA AIRDROME (Cont from page 1)

Gerry and daughter Patricia stayed, while Angelo and I continued on to Foggia where we visited with my Uncle for three days.

Foggia has changed drastically in the past 24 years. There is no evidence of bomb damage and there are new buildings - including many new apartments. We passed the former Red Cross Club where many of us spent some of our leisure time. No one seemed to lack for anything. Foggia is living evidence of what can be done to remove the scars of war by a hard working and determined people.

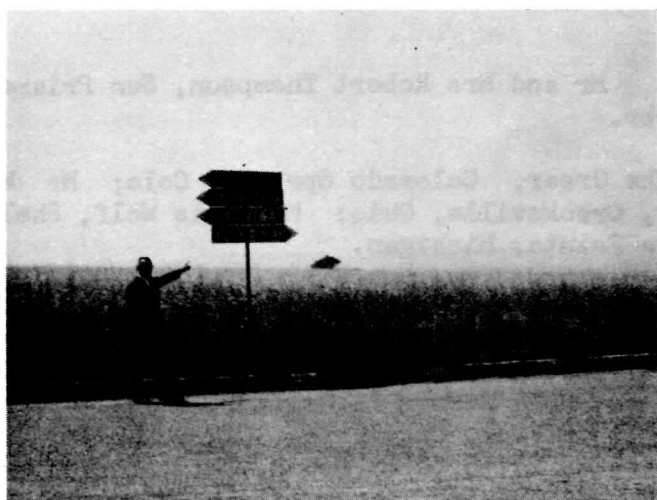


PHOTO 1



PHOTO 2

# VENOSA AIRDROME (Cont)

On June 19, Angelo and I left Foggia in his car for the trip to Venosa. Unfortunately, we chose to take the more mountainous and longer route via Melfi instead of the Cerignola - Venosa road. However, it proved the more picturesque and compensated for the longer and more tedious trip. The Italian country side is still beautiful and the ravages of time has not changed Italy's natural beauty. There is little sign of commercialism except in the larger cities.

We first stopped in Venosa in order to contact one of the Italians who worked at Group Headquarters, so he could take or direct us to the airbase site. We visited the Municipal building and enlisted the aid of the Marshall of Police. He could not offer too much help as he was not in Venosa during the war years. He was however, able to determine that the individual I was seeking, had immigrated to South America. The town of Venosa has not changed much in the past 24 years. It still has the same narrow streets and small town atmosphere. Time has dulled my memory so there was little I could recall of the town itself. However, the people appeared prosperous, well dressed with no signs of poverty.

We then left Venosa for the trip to the airbase site. Along the way we met a small party of men repairing the road. One of them volunteered to accompany us to the airbase site. Before we could depart, the foreman arrived and he agreed to come with us as he



PHOTO 3



PHOTO 4

## VENOSA AIRDROME (Cont)

had worked with one of the outfits (not the 485th) in the area during WWII. The road from Venosa has been repaved and widened with a circle near the entrance to the airbase site (see photo 1). I believe the road at the circle is the road (also repaved) which led to Group Operations (S-3) which was located in a quonset hut. As shown in photo 2 the landing strip area has reverted to its former use, a wheat field. Photos 3 and 4 are of buildings still standing but now abandoned. They were on the right side of the road from Venosa (the area, we occupied, was on the left side of the road from Venosa) and may not be those used by the 485th, as stated by our guide. I must confess that I had difficulty in orienting myself because everything seemed changed. However, I was assured by our guide that we were in the right place and the distance we traveled from Venosa seemed to bear out his contention and was about right as I recall. I had expected to see the Group Hq (S-1) building still standing to reassure myself, but we could not locate it. Nor, could we find evidence of the tufa block buildings some of us at Group Operations built for living quarters. Our guide advised us that they had been torn down. We then left for Nettuno after dropping off our guide.

We traveled part of the time on Italy's Autostrada. This is a superhighway which is an engineering miracle considering the mountainous terrain thru out Italy. Of course, the scenery is beautiful and at times breath-taking. There is no speed limit on the autostrada or any of the congestion we all experience on our parkway and turnpikes here in New Jersey. The autostrada has Howard Johnson type restaurants elevated above the highway to accommodate either north or south traffic - and the tolls are reasonable. Every two kilometers there are facilities to call for help in the event of an emergency.

At Nettuno we picked up my family and continued on to Rome where I rented a car at the Hertz Rent-A-Car Agency (they are number one in Italy) and journeyed to Monfalcone, a town outside Trieste near Yugoslavia, where my in-laws live. From here we made several trips to Yugoslavia and Austria.

I saw a few signs, in the industrial north, demanding that the US remove their forces from Italy and for Italy to get out of NATO. However, I found most all Italians very friendly and helpful and eager to talk to an American. I saw a baseball game between two Italian teams which are part of a baseball league in the north. On each team there are American (AF) servicemen, who are stationed at Aviano AFB in northern Italy.

Two weeks later, I returned by train to Rome while my family remained until Labor Day. The Italian railroads are all electrified and far superior to the US rail system. At the Rome RR station, Angelo met me and we made a quick tour of Rome which was crowded with tourist and heavy traffic. We visited the Vatican and Foro Mussolini which was the site of the Rome Rest Camp. Some hippies were observed in Rome and other parts of Italy, mostly Americans. On July 3rd, I landed at New York - just three short weeks after my departure - after having had a wonderful and unforgettable time. We plan to return to Italy in '71 again. --- Larry Vocino

(Ed note - If one of you recognize the buildings in the photos, please let us know.)

### THIS IS HOW IT WAS

On 16 October 1944, 34 485th Libs, led by Col John Tomhave, attacked the Neudorf Aircraft Engine factory in Graz, Austria. Moderate bombing results were obtained with 12 Libs receiving minor flak damage. On board the 829th Lib, 559, Lt Richard H Boehme was experiencing troubles as he was heard calling Big Fence followed by a MAYDAY call. The last message heard from 559 was the Bombardier, over the Command Radio, ordering the crew to jettison the guns.

Lt Boehme and crew bailed out over Yugoslavia and returned. A month later, almost to the day Lt Boehme was to hit the silk again. On 17 November 1944, nineteen Libs and

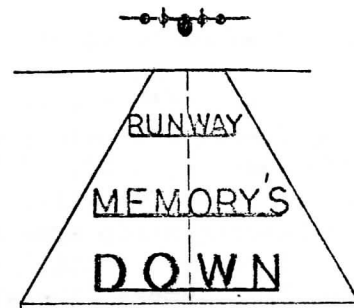
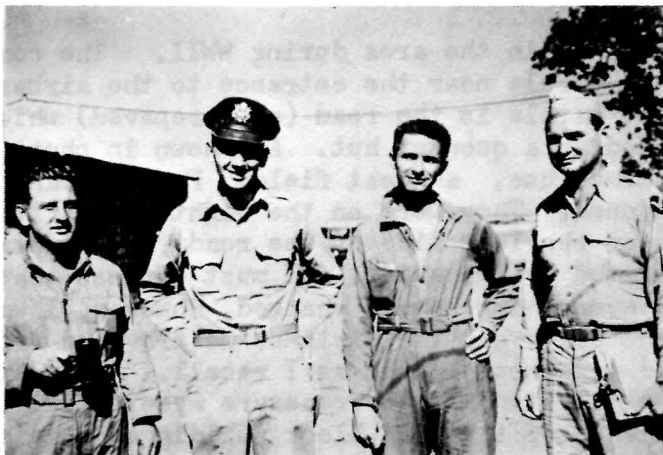


Photo - M Huckleby

L to R - Major Roy L Reeves, Gp Ops Off, Col John P Tomhave, Gp CO, Lt Col William L Herblin, Deputy Gp CO and Major Walter A Ladner, Gp Intel Officer.

Photo - J Ball

830th Crew 44 one of the original crews to complete 50 missions. R, L to R - TSgt Paul Harris, E; TSgt H J Ball, RG; SSgt Albert O'Brien, G; SSgt Edmund O'Neil, G, SSgt Allen B Corbin, G, and SSgt Wm B Beggs, G. F, L to R - Lt Floren E George, CP; Lt Orest A Zorena, N; Lt Robert L Catlin, B, and Capt Vern E Bryson, P. SSgt O' Brien became a POW on July 19, 1944.



USAF Photo



July 8, 1944 A Column of black smoke rises from the Florisdorf railyards and oil storage facilities near Vienna, Austria, from bomb hits scored by the 485th Liberators. In the foreground is Red G, 42-94791H of the 828th. Enemy fighters attacked the formation without success. However, three bombers were lost to flak.

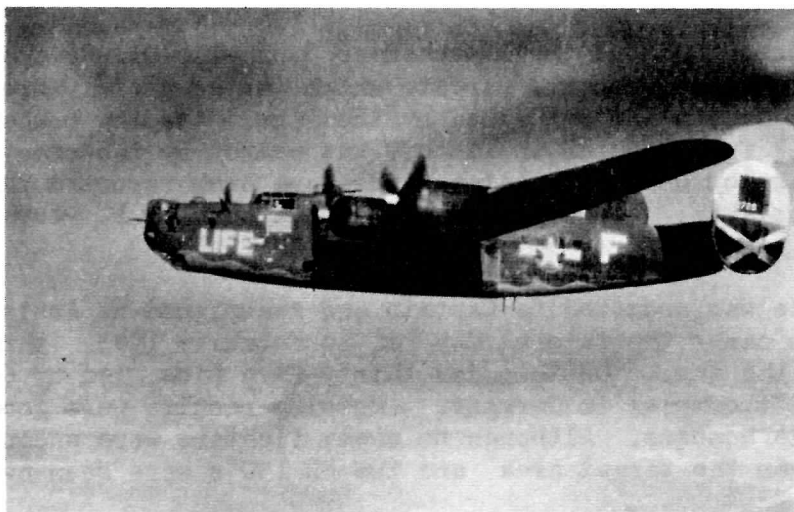


Photo - D Anderson

"LIFE", 830th Liberator (WF) 42-52728H - Possibly, one of the original assigned bombers to survive the war. Thomas Frazier, Jasper, Texas, piloted the bomber on its 100th mission. On 25 April 1945 the Group, flew its final mission of the war to Linz, Austria. "LIFE" received major flak damage and landed at Zara, Yugoslavia. (Unknown if "LIFE" returned to base - ED)

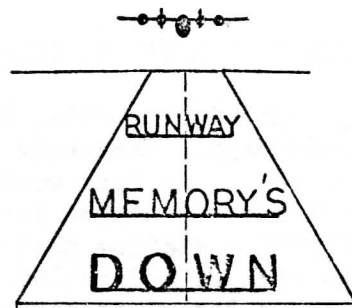


Photo - E Bundy

L to R - Capt Maurice W Boney 829th CO, MSgt Earl L Bundy and MSgt Wm G Tanner of the 829th.



Photo - J Wheeler

828th Crew 14, one of the original crews to complete 50 missions. R, L to R - TSgt Richard Z Selby, EG; SSgt Wm A Minno, G; SSgt Earnest L Johns, G; SSgt Robert L Johns, G; TSgt Gerard W Howard, RG and SSgt John H Wheeler, G. F, L to R Lt Paul E O'Brien, N; Lt Chester K Ballengee, P; Lt Wm H Scott, CP and Lt Peter J Roncz, B. The Lib is ROUGH DEAL LUCILLE.



Photo - M Huckeby

LIGHTWEIGHT Tower at Venosa

## THIS IS HOW IT WAS (Cont from page 6)

by Major Calvin Fite, 828th Ops Officer, bombed the Blechhammer Synthetic Oil Refinery in Germany. Moderate flak was encountered over the target which was completely cloud covered. As luck would have it, no damage was sustained by the Libs. As the bombers continued on course for home, a call from the 829th Lib 899 was heard by the crew on Lib 908 - stating that the bomber was low on fuel. Later, the same crew reported that the crew of 899 bailed out over Yugoslavia. The pilot of 899 was Lt Charles P. Stewart with Lt Boehme as co-pilot.

Lt Boehme made it back to Venosa. He was promoted to Captain and reassigned as Assistant Group Operations Officer. Then came the fateful day of 16 February 1945, three months later and, again, almost to the day. On this day thirty-five Libs, led by Col Tomhave raided the Regensburg Aircraft complex in Germany. Bombing results were good. Some flak damage was inflicted on the bombers. Although no enemy fighters were encountered, two Me 163's were observed over the target area and two FW 190's were seen over northern Yugoslavia.

Enroute to the target, approximately 25 miles west-southwest of Villach, Austria, near the Austrian-Italian border, flak was encountered. On the return flight, the formation avoided the area by flying west of it, only to encounter flak again. Flying the 829th Lib 657 with Col Tomhave was Captain Boehme as co-pilot. In no. 3 position of the same box was the 829th Lib 772, piloted by Lt Carl D. Stockdale. (Reports are conflicting as to the sequence of events occurring in the next few seconds. - Ed). Both bombers received direct flak hits and went down after having collided. After an evasive turn to the right followed by one to the left, 772 hit the top of 657, causing the bomber to break in half behind the ball turret. 772 lost a portion of its wing and went down in a slow spiral. 657 plunged to earth, crashing near 772. Five chutes were seen to open, one from 657 and 3 or 4 from 772. The chute seen from 657 was Col Tomhave, as he was later reported as a POW and killed on February 22, 1945. (See newsletter no 2 - Ed) Thus ended the career of Captain Boehme - three times and out.

You may recall that in the 2nd newsletter we noted that James A. Rideout was on the same mission that Col Arnold and Col Tomhave were shot down and finally was shot down with the 3rd Gp CO, Col Cornet. Three times and out - any significant? Most everyone will doubt that there is, but ---

### MAIL ROOM

We are happy to report that there was an exceptional high amount of activity in the mail room during 1969. As a result of receiving many addresses of former 485th veterans in the mail, we have added over a hundred new names to the mailing list. In some instances, replies have not been received to our initial correspondence. However, we took the liberty of adding their names to the list with the hope of hearing from them in the near future. We thank you all for the many pieces of correspondence and the many Christmas cards, received in '69 and sincerely hope you will continue to keep us busy in the mail room. PS: Please keep us posted on any address changes.

### 485TH GROUP HQ

From high in the Rockies, we received word from M/Gen Walter 'Pop' Arnold, who has retired from the USAF but not in civilian life. Residing in Colorado Springs, Colo, 'Pop' is a busy retiree as his business takes him to Arizona. From the General we received the address of Ike Greer, Fritz Coltrin and Hugh Bayless. Correspondence was received from Minor Huckleby of Denver, Colo, including a photo of the ol Lightweight Tower in Italy. Unable to attend the '69 reunion, Minor hopes to join us in Oklahoma City in '70. He also sent along several addresses.

## MAIL ROOM (Cont)

It was good to hear from Ralph Johnson of St Helena, Calif again. Ralph spent a couple of months in Europe and -- months recuperating from the trip. In Sacramento, California contact was made with Merlin W. Baker, Col, USAF, Ret, who was Group Navigator. And we received word from John Hannan, Jr, Maj, USAF, Ret, also of Sacramento. After 27 years of federal service, John retired and presently works for the State of California. From the City of Carmel-By-The-Sea, Hugh Bayles was found. Hugh was Group Sgt Major and is the City Administrator of Carmel.

In the southwest section of the country, we contacted Mel Goodson in Pheonix, Arizona. Mel served as Group Adjutant and later as Group Executive Officer. Mel sent along several addresses from which contacts were made - plus names of deceased veterans which were added to the roster of Journeys End: Lt Sam Barrett, 830th; Major Wallace Harrison, Gp Eng Officer; Capt William Pratz, Gp PX Officer; Capt Kenneth Gillespie, Gp Bombardier and Lt Col Clarence Reuter, Gp Surgeon.

Received a nice letter from Col Roy Reeves containing several pictures for use in the history. Roy is Postmaster in Sperryville, Virginia. Thanks to Mel Goodson for sending Roy's address, for Lt Col Homer Hale, who flew overseas with Roy, is once again in contact with Roy. Using an old address received from Mel we wrote to William L. Herblin, Col, USAF, Ret and with a lucky strike the letter was forwarded to him in Washington, DC where he is a Stock Broker. Seperated from the Air Corp in 1945, Col Herblin flew the airlines in South America for a couple of years, and returned to the Air Force until retiring in 1961.

From New Hyde Park, Long Island, a very interesting letter was received from Ed Kral, our Gp Personal Equipment Officer. Crew members, especially, should remember Ed, for he and his men were responsible for the survival training given to the combat crews. Through the efforts of the section, the 485th was commended by General Twining for having the finest personal equipment facilities in the 15th AF. Ed sent along several photos and material for use in the history. Another very interesting letter received was from Larry Vocino of Clifton, New Jersey, resulting in the excellent story - Venosa Airdrome - 24 years later.

We also received word from Fran Lombardie, Fayetteville, NY, and Bill Angle, Metuchen, NJ, for the first time. Bill was assigned to Group Operations. During the attack on the convoy carrying Group personnel to Italy on April 20, 1944 off the coast of Africa by German aircraft, Bill was hit by sharpnel.

Carl Gigowski

## 828TH BOMB SQDN

IT IS FOLKS LIKE YOU ...who make being the 828th reporter a pleasure. You have enabled us to grow, you've encouraged us to do a better job. For this we are deeply grateful.

We received three letters and photos of the old airdrome site from Eugene J. McCarthy; a letter and an old map of Italy from Lawrence Hohmann; Robert Beamish stated in his letter he hopes to make the '70 reunion. Letters from Carl Mazzoni, Henry E. Fisher, USAF, CMS, Ret, who retired on August 31, 1969. Short letter from John Thull. Letters from George Ick and Irvin Schroeder. Don Gilbert noted that he enjoyed the newsletter and claims it is getting better with each issue. Short note from Keith R. Mayhew and William L. Brien. Letter from Edmond B. Manning - one of our cooks. (Love that spam Ed - CPG). Ed is looking for addresses of all the 828th cooks. Letter from Ben Christ with photos. Ben, also, is retired. Letter from Clarence L McMaster, expressing his enjoyment of the letter. Letter from Nick Montulli - hopes to make the '70 reunion. A note of thanks from Fred Buzan. From Stanley Turecki - crew members addresses. Lt Col Harold Julin - a change of address. Carl D. Grace sent photos. Letter from Chester D.

## MAIL ROOM (Cont)

Shepherd, our Executive Officer and from David W. Shannon with the address of Jackson Winters. We say Welcome to the following 828th-ers: Frank Kallis, Henry E. Freitas, Lester Cox, Walter J. McDonald and Fred E. Croushore. Received a letter and photos from Herbert Wren. Letter and a copy of SO 61 from Elmer Ellis. (Thank you, Elmer - for your help). Letters from Thomas A. Lanstaff, Edwin A. Sibila and Joseph E. Collins. (PS: Please advise of your Sqdn assignment). And the many inter-office memos from Carl Gigowski, Howard Woodyard, Earl Bundy and Robert Deeds.

Had a nice visit with Fred Croushore and Robert Deeds at my home one Sunday afternoon. Visited with Karl Anderson, who gave us Lester Cox's and Henry Freitas' addresses. Received telephone calls from Ed Manning, Ray Shaffer and Ralph Compton.

The 831st vets have challenged the 828th for next years attendance. This year we tied. (Sorry Bill, the computer tells me that those guys from the 831st beat the 828th by one - CPG). So lets show the 831st a thing or two by our mass movement to Oklahoma City this coming August. This year - as every year - we look forward with great anticipation to another 485th reunion. We hope to see you all in August in Oklahoma City.

'Bill' Schoultz

## 829TH BOMB SQDN

We enjoyed another grand reunion this year in St Louis, mo. I was especially happy to see a number of the 829th members at the reunion and I am looking forward to many more next year. We received many letters from our Sqdn members during the year and have brought them all up to date with the reunion news and plans. With the many new addresses received, I am sure each year will bring many new faces. On December 13, I stopped to Munice, Ind to visit with Fred Heaton and found that he is definitely planning to make his first reunion next year.

This has been an especially busy year for me. This fall I was transferred to Columbus, Ohio and now reside at 649 Woodfield Drive. Traveling from here to the east coast, I am hopeful of finding a good many members of the 829th that live in this section of the country.

We were happy to have the tall and short of the 829th at the reunion this year. Merle Sutterby was the tallest and Bill Tanner was about the shortest in the Sqdn. Neither of them could stay for dinner on Saturday eve so their pictures are not with the group.

Earl Bundy

## 830TH BOMB SQDN

At years end the ol' 830th pigeon hole in the mail room contained more letters than in previous years - which makes us quite happy. Along with the letters from ol' acquaintances were several letters from 830th vets, writing us for the first time. Robert McMann, Ashland, Ky, Instrument Specialist of the Sqdn, was with the Group from the beginning at Fairmont, Nebraska to the end at Souix Falls, S. Dakota. From Bob we received the address of Robert Esarey, also an Instrument Specialist. Bob Esarey noted in his letter that he was assigned to the 52nd Squadron at Gowen Field of which Jimmy Stewart was Operations Officer. Although he saw Jimmy Stewart daily, he was unable to make a flight with him. It was standing room only when he took an aircraft up.

From San Antonio, Texas, a most interesting letter was received from MSgt Chester E. Konkolewski, USAF, in which he related the experiences of the mission to Bratislava marshalling yard in Czechoslovakia, on 26 March 1945. Chet was Flight Engineer on the B-24 piloted by Lt George M. Manuel which was hit by flak over the target. The crew bailed out, were captured and remained POWs until liberated by General Patton's forces

## MAIL ROOM (Cont)

near the end of the war. Sgt Konkolewski is presently assigned to the 6960th Support Group at Kelly AFB, Texas as a Communications Supervisor. Also heard from for the first time were Vito Sakall, Fullerton, Calif; Matti Syrjanen, Maynard, Mass and Charles Bartram, Cleveland, Ohio. Matti and Chuck sent along several photos.

It was good to hear from David H Anderson, Howell, Mich; George T Williams, West Frankfort, Ill and C J Schawalter of Pittsburgh, Pa. Dave sent along several photos including crew photos and of the Lib 'LIFE' - and a 830th patch.

We are most happy to hear from you all and especially, that you enjoy the newsletter and that you express a desire to attend one of the reunions. Keep the letters coming for at the end of '70, I hope to find the 830th pigeon hole stuffed. If possible, we hope to see you all at the reunion.

Carl Gigowski

## 831ST BOMB SQDN

I am more than proud of our record breaking attendance this year at the reunion in St Louis. The 831st had twelve members present - more than any of the other Sqdns. This is a real increase over the past two years when your reporter was just present. Our host and hostess, Mr and Mrs Lester Sutter of the 831st deserve great credit for a most enjoyable reunion from start to finish. Several Group members arrived early on Friday and spent a wonderful afternoon touring the Budweiser Farms, arranged by the host. Everyone enjoyed watching the bird show, the animal show, and lots of displays of wild animals roaming the large estate - and as it was a very hot day, the cold beer, compliments of 'Bud' was a real treat.

We were happy to hear from the following members of the Sqdn: Robert Halling, Robert Hanson, Albert Paul, Leonard Little, Hank Dahlberg, Otto Meyers, John S Jackson, Ken Brown, Cletus Harner and Russel Howard. They all expressed appreciation for the newsletters. New crew names and information was received from several. Russel Howard mailed in some old photos and quite a bit of new info. Thank you, for the many new names which were added to the mailing list.

We finally found the name of the bomber that Sgt Lester York was crew chief of. Bill Schoultz of the 828th found an article about the Lib - 'CHARACTER'. It is an interesting write-up and will have it at the reunion. I believe I am correct in stating that CHARACTER was the only surviving Lib of the original assigned Libs of the Group.

I hope to see you all again next year in Oklahoma City. Let's break the record again. Bring some with you. This next one will be the 25th Anniversary of VE and VJ day - so, see you then.

Howard Woodyard

## GROUP HISTORY PROJECT

As previously noted, '69 was a very busy year, especially in the mail room. Approximately 90 letters were received and about 150 letters mailed by your editor. During the month of October, my wife was hospitalized and yours truly became chief cook and bottle washer for several weeks as the boss recovered. Consequently, work on the history was somewhat retarded. However, work on the project has resumed again.

Thirty-seven crew photos have been received to date. Although some of the photos lack identification, the collection represents a good cross-section of the original and replacement crews assigned to all Sqdns. Originally, 72 crews and bombers were assigned to the Group. Based on materials collected, (unofficially) 114 crews and 134 bombers were assigned as replacements. In response to our request for Sqdn patches, we now are in possession of the 828th, 830th and Gp patches.

## GROUP HISTORY (Cont)

An 831st patch has been located, leaving only the 829th patch to obtain. Copies of SO 61, noted in the 3rd letter and many photos were received. We are still in need of photos of Sqdn Staff personnel of the 829th, 830th and 831st. Also, the written experiences of the men behind the combat crew are greatly needed. As you know, not much has ever been said about these dedicated men and their story should be made known. I know that many hours were spent in the preparation of the mission and I hope I can encourage some of you to write about your activities.

Again, I am greatly indebted to the following contributors: John Hannan, Minor Huckleby, Ed Krall, Roy Reeves, Robert Beamish, Laurel Behnke, Fred Croushore, Bob Kuns, Richard Mattison, Charles Duecker, Bernard Rempe, Jim Rideout, Merle Sutterby, Charles Bartram, MSgt Chester Konkolewski, Claude Sheline, Matti Syrjanen, Lyle Talbot, Ray Heskes, Eugene McCarthy, Ben Christ, Russel Howard, Chester Shepherd, Herb Wren, Elmer Ellis, and Earl Bundy.

If you should come across material which can

### LIGHTWEIGHT TOWER CALLING

Published annually by and for the veterans of the 485th Bomb Gp (H)

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## JOURNEYS END

### Members Deceased Since The End Of WWII

BARRETT, Sam	830	
BARQUIST, Ernie	828	1967
BLACKWELL, Earl	828	1959
BOYER, Henry	828	1964
BRODRICK, Gerald A	828	1969
CHAPMAN, Russel	828	
COREY, Russel	828	
DI MATTEO, Gene	828	1969
ENTWHISTLE, Jack	828	1959
GIBSON, Richard O	828	1962
GILLESPIE, Kenneth	Gp Hq	
GRASS, Alfred W	828	
HARRISON, Wallace	Gp Hq	1945
JENSEN, Willard	828	1962
JOHNSON, Ralph	829	1966
KETCHAM, Frank D	828	1968
O'DELL, Rex	828	1948
PRATZ, William S	Gp Hq	
REUTER, Clarence W	Gp Hq	
ROE, John	Gp Hq	
SHINDLEDECKER, Freeman	828	1965
SOLLINGER, Edward	828	1968
STAGMAN, Orlie M	831	
THOMAS, Homer	831	

be used in the history or the newsletter, we certainly would appreciate using it. I am about finished with the material received from you all and will be returning same soon.

Carl Gigowski

### FROM THE TOWER OPERATORS

We shall remember '69, as the year in which great progress was made in our endeavors ----- progress made possible only by the unexcelled support received from many of you. For this we are most grateful and indebted. Over the year, we have been delighted by the comments and praise that have been received for the letter.

To continue an interesting letter, we shall make some minor alterations, beginning with the next issue. Along with the story of the men behind the combat crews, we will feature a section on POWs of the Group.

Summing it all up, the newsletter is the continuing story of the 485th and reflections on the past, which you are a part of. We know you will continue this story and reminiscences and we know you will continue your unprecedented support of the letter. Thank you all and our best wishes for 1970.