



LIGHTWEIGHT TOWER CALLING



No. 24

February 1991

Little Rock to Host '91 Reunion

'90 Reunion Successful

By Carl Gigowski

Once again the 485th Eagles accomplished a mission to the Dayton, Ohio area. It was during the weekend of September 4-9, 1990 that 247 Eagles descended on Dayton enmasse.

Thus the 25th reunion of the 485th became the largest to date. Twenty-three years ago they came to the areas with about 20 veterans in attendance.

Although the event started on Tuesday, September 4, your reporter did not arrive until Thursday. By then the veterans had taken over Dayton; well, at least the Stouffer Center Plaza Hotel. Entering the lobby I was surprised to see such a large gathering of veterans.

There were many I recognized immediately and there were several I did not recognize. As it was late afternoon the veterans were awaiting the arrival of transportation to take them to the La-Comedia Dinner Theater for an evening of fun.

Fortunately for me a room was found on the floors occupied by the group and I did not have to take a suite in the high rent area. After settling in my room I ventured out and found the hospitality rooms filled with veterans. With a tonic in hand, I joined the group for an evening of reminiscing of the days in Italy and the good ol' days.

Friday morning arrived with cloudy skies for our trip to the Air Force Mu-

(Continued on page 2)



Reunion location — Camelot Hotel, Little Rock

Mission Number = 27

Date = 9-11-91 through 9-15-91

Initial Point = Little Rock, Ark.

Target = Camelot Hotel

Time = When you get there.

Bomb load = What ever you bring, and can handle.

We, George E. "Cotton Belt" Katy Dyer, and the entire staff of the Camelot Hotel, extend to all members of the 485th Bomb Group, their wives, children, in-laws, guests, and widows of deceased members of the 485th, a special invitation to attend our 27th annual 485th Bomb Group reunion.

We will be staying at the Camelot Hotel, which has 303 rooms. The hotel is located at 424 W. Markham Street, alongside the Arkansas River. It is only 10 minutes from Little Rock's private, and public airports, and is in walking distance of many

fine shops, and restaurants. All the rooms offer beautiful views of either the Arkansas River, or downtown Little Rock.

Special services, amenities, and features are:

1. The Camelot has recently completed redecorating all the guest rooms, public areas, and meeting rooms.
2. The housekeeping department has the recognition for being the best in Little Rock.
3. The banquet staff will certainly

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Dayton

(Continued from page 1)

seum. Buses and more buses were loaded with veterans, wives and friends to take part in the 485th Bomb Group Day at the museum. Approaching the museum the sight of the large new hangars housing the aircraft is inspiring. Up to this time the largest hangar I had ever seen were the ones at Rapid City AF Base which held two B-36s.

For the next couple of hours we followed the history of aviation, viewing the more than 200 aircraft and major missiles on display, exhibits and memorabilia. It was difficult to select the aircraft which is most impressive, but not the one which is most memorable, the B-24, Liberator.

Competing the tour, it was time to stop by the cafeteria for a snack. The next stop was the gift shop where one could purchase a great variety of items as mementos of the visit. If one is an aviation enthusiast as I am, well, you leave the gift shop loaded. We visited the Memorial Park and had a brief ceremony at the 485th Memorial marker.

As the weather became a little more threatening we posed for the most unusual pictures, panoramic pictures. The camera used, dates back to the early 1900s and is the ultimate in Synchronization between the camera movement and film movement. The group picture came out 59 inches long and 10 inches wide — a masterpiece.

Returning to the hotel it was time for us old timers to rest, at least some of us. Later we joined the action in the hospitality rooms and visited the Memorabilia Room. Here, many photo albums were on display along with other memorabilia, including mannequins dressed in the uniforms and flight clothing of WWII.

At 9 a.m. Saturday, Bob Benson called the business meeting to order. Bob carried on for Earl Bundy, who was not feeling up to par and did not make the reunion. Linda Hanson read the previous business meeting minutes which were readily approved.

Our host, Ed Nett, welcomed the group to the reunion and noted that he received calls from Cal Fite and Art Hurley, who were unable to attend the reunion. Reviewing the events of the reunion, Ed noted that extra buses were required to transport the group to the various func-

Registration Desk at Dayton



tions, as a result of the outstanding attendance.

George Dyer, of the 830th, invited all to the next reunion which is scheduled to be held in Little Rock, Ark. during September 10 thru 15, 1991. Tentatively, the reunion for 1991 will be hosted by Ken and Irene Wall at the Peabody-Marriott Hotel, Boston, MA from September 30 thru October 6.

The 831st did it again. They had the largest attendance with 72 veterans. The 828th had 67 veterans; 829th had 46 veterans; 830th had 46 veterans and Gp. Hq. had 14 veterans.

Three crews had six members in attendance: Bill Fritz, 828th; Hugh Garrett, 830th, and Angus Phelps, 831st. Twenty-six ground crew members were present: 828th, 14 members; 829th, 6 members; 830th, 6 members and 831st, 2 members. Lynn Cotterman traveled the farthest to the reunion, coming from Hawaii.

Meeting your buddies that you worked with or flew with in Italy is the most memorable experience of the reunion. The most beautiful event of the reunion is the dinner-dance. Entering the ballroom it was very impressive to see the group, about 450, dashinglly attired for the occa-

sion. Following the dinner and the awards ceremony, one could dance or just enjoy the great music of the WWII era.

The closing event of the reunion was the 485th BG Memorial Brunch Sunday morning. The memorial observance was dedicated to our friends and comrades who now rest in honored glory. The service was beautiful as Al Martin led us in the prayers and gospel songs. Thus ends another chapter in the saga of the 485th veterans.

All of us extend our most warm and sincere gratitude to Ed and Jo Nett for providing us a wonderful time. It will be remembered forever. Likewise, to all who worked so hard behind the scene, assisting in the workings of the reunion, we extend our thank you.

Some of those I can recall were Bob and Linda Hansen, Earl Bundy, Howard and Margarire Woodyard, Bob Benson, Al Martin, the ladies who took care of the registration and the old eagles who tended the hospitality rooms.

It all is another example of the wonderful esprit de corps of the 485th veterans. Hopefully we shall meet again next year at the reunion in Little Rock, Ark.

Sam uncovers vets with 'Wanted' ad

By Sam Schneider

One never knows who will call when you put a free ad on cable television. My ad said: "Wanted: 15th AF personnel with the 485th Bomb Gp. on B-24 Liberators based in Venosa, Italy for up and coming reunion at Dayton, Ohio. Call (813) 629-2935."

Time lapse — then, "bingo."

Call #1. Albert Neal, bombardier, 831st. Just moved to Punta Gorda, Fla. and had cable hooked up and saw the ad.

It was great to talk about the 485th, but also sad mentioning the Paul Hamilton sinking with 831st personnel, Merchant Marine and Navy gunners. Hopefully, we will get together to do more reminiscing. Neal expects to attend the reunion.

Shortly after another call from a Michael Hons, a 37-year-old history teacher from Pardubica, Czechoslovakia. He was visiting his uncle in El Jobfan, a town west of me.

Michael saw the ad and, although he spoke broken English, we managed to understand one another. He was very interested in the 485th because the Pardubica Air Museum had some memorabilia of the 485th from crashed planes.

Coincidentally, S/Sgt. Leonard Little, tail gunner on Lt. James Mulligan's crew (831st. Sqdn.) and flying Flak Shak III, was shot down.

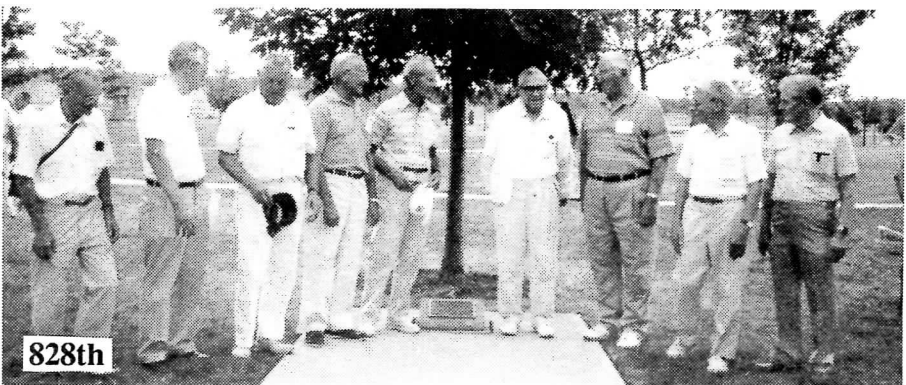
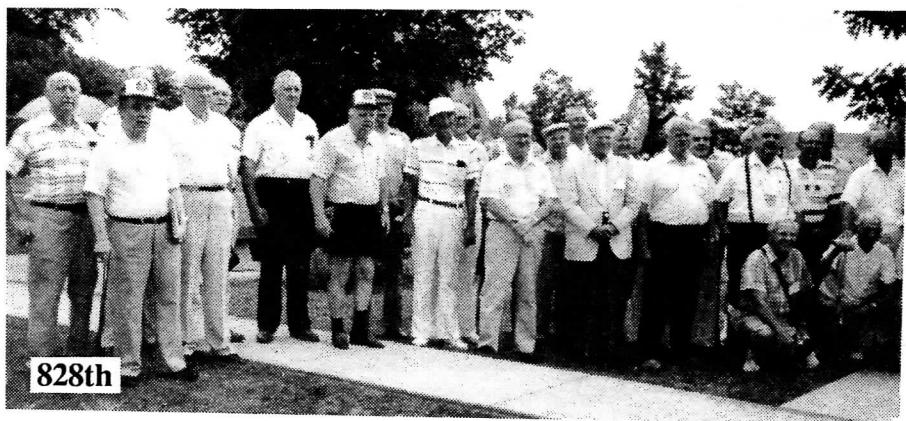
Newsletter #7, Dec. 1972, has Leonard's story about his capture and hospital stay. Also his revisit to Pardubica with his wife 28 years after his bailout.

Michael Hons told me that his interest in aviation brushed off on his 10 and 11 year-old students. They all have home-made models of B-24s. Hons also has souvenir radio parts from a crashed B-24.

In Len Little's story, he tells of Pardubica locals going out in the rain and digging up the crash spot and finding pieces of aluminum with fasteners. They were given to Len as souvenirs.

If anyone from Lt. Mulligan's crew wants to correspond with Michael Hons, his address is: 1624 Vraji Rd., Pardubica 530002, Czechoslovakia.

Informal Squadron Pictures (Taken at 485th Memorial at Dayton)





485th veteran writes letter to the editor

What follows is a letter to the editor from the 485th's Ray Heskes, of St. Louis, Mo., to the editor of the Dayton Daily News following the September reunion. The letter is self-explanatory.

Dear Sir:

I had the pleasure of visiting Dayton during a reunion of the 485th Bomb Group, Sept. 4th thru the 9th. We are veterans of WW II and many of us had not seen each other in 46 years.

Our hosts were Mr. and Mrs. Ed Nett, of Dayton, and because of their efforts we found Dayton to be a wonderful place. Beautiful airport, great malls, and, since we stayed at Stauffers downtown, enjoyed being able to stroll around the area, at all hours of the night, unafraid!

So I wish to thank all of you Daytonians for making this visit such a pleasure! Now please, I have two more reasons for writing you.

#1. I was a member of a B-24 bomber crew of 10 men that flew 50 missions from our base in Venosa, Italy. Mailed to us were many Red Cross gift parcels of candy, cookies, books, etc. that were made up and donated by . . . Guess who?? "The Frigidaire Girls Club" of Dayton, Ohio.

I'm so sorry that we failed to take time to thank each and everyone of those wonderful people, through an ad in your paper, or in some other manner. Their gift packages really did help us to get through those difficult times. So on behalf of my crew and all the other recipients I wish to say "Thank You" to all of those considerate people who did this for us back in 1944.

#2. A crew mate of mine needed to catch his departing flight at 6:10 A.M. Sunday (9-9-90) so my wife and I drove him to the Airport.

On our return trip, we had to stop for a red light on the I-75 down ramp at Main St., the time was 6:00 A.M. It was raining hard and here comes a pedestrian who approached my side of the car, hands raised above his head as though surrendering!

He was drenched, he was on the verge of tears, and he was black. He pleaded with me not to drive away, he said



"please, just listen to me, I mean no harm, I won't hurt you, I'm a Christian with a job in a hospital. But Sir, my wife and two year old child are in our car which broke down on the I-75 highway, some time ago." (They waited for the police to come to their aid.)

When the police came by, they said "because this was not an accident situation they couldn't do anything for them, and they should contact a towing firm." Needless to say at that time of the morning in that rain storm finding a public phone was a problem, but he contacted a towing service. "Sparkys" or some such name who told him the cost, of which he was \$8.00 short.

So this poor unfortunate person stood there begging for help, for the sake of his wife and child, promising to repay somehow, somewhere, sometime!!! Did I help him out? You bet I did. I gave him money for the tow. Did I believe his story? Yes I did, but I would hope he was the biggest liar on two feet. I would prefer a liar or a "con man" who took me for an easy mark. You see, I don't want to believe a police officer or anyone else could abandon a family in this kind of predicament.

Maybe, just maybe, his mother or grandmother may have been one of the "Frigidaire Girls Club" members, and in a small way I said "thanks" to her.

Ray Heskies

LIGHTWEIGHT TOWER CALLING

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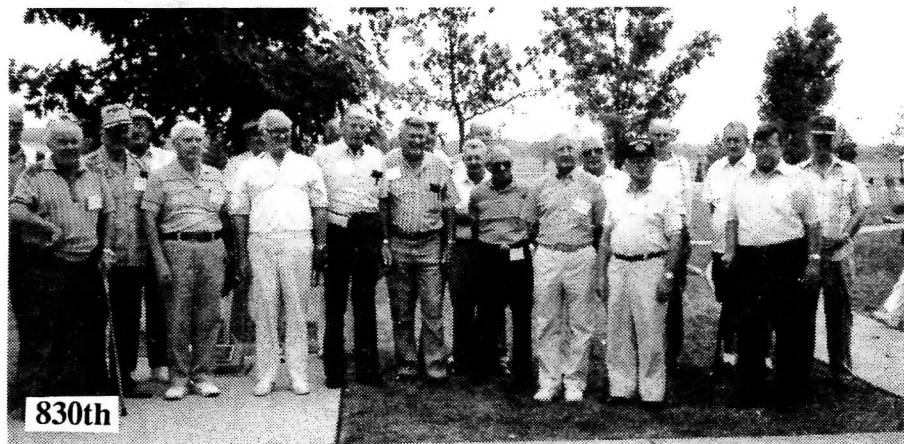
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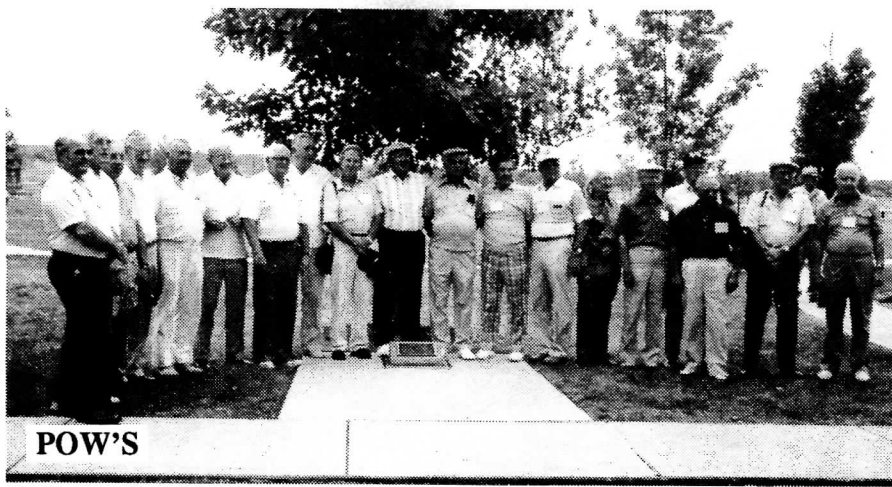
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Daughter seeks information on father's record

A Mrs. Susan Pickett is a daughter of Del L. Rogers, who was a crew member of Roger L. Nichols crew #3 member with the 828th Squadron.

She was 10 years old and never got a chance to know much about his military achievements.

As she was paging through the "History of the 15th Air Force, she noticed a picture of Clarence "Deacon" Miller, who was the engineer-gunner on Glen Jone's crew in the 830th Sqdn., and associated his name as the "Miller" in the photograph taken with her father way back then.

She then contacted Clarence by phone and asked him if he knew her father. He told her he did not know him.

She then wrote to Deacon Miller and enclosed copies of two photographs showing her father with some buddies: Tony Pastor, a Donnelly, a Miller and a Poulin.

Deacon, who has been doing research on the 485th, uncovered names of Roland H. Poulin and Ernest R. Donnelly, members of Capt. Roger J. Jones' crew No. 4 of the 828th.

Del Rogers originally hailed from Hartford City, Indiana.

If any of you guys can shake those cobwebs from your minds and try to recall Del Rogers and do recall him, then contact Mrs. Susan R. Pickett, 3907 NW 21st., Gainesville, Florida 32605, or Phone (904) 378-7673. She will be grateful for this info and a favor and memory to her father.

While you are contacting her, Deacon Miller, 144 Hillcrest Ave., Souderton, Pa. 18964, would appreciate you letting Chet Konkolewski, 830th Sqdn. reporter, know. Thank you, fellas.

and my crew's name are recorded on the Liberator.

There are two other Liberators on flying status. One is the Confederate Air Force "DIAMOND LIL." It is the oldest B-24 in existence (an LB-30, number 18 off the production line). It has been modified to represent a B-24D.

The other Liberator is Dave Tallichets' B-24J, "DELECTABLE DORIS."

B-24 — a sight to behold



By Carl Gigowski

It was a sight to behold.

On the ramp at Kent County International Airport stood a B-24J. The right rudder carried the markings of the 465th Bomb Group, 55th Bomb Wing of the 15th Air Force. The bomber was the Collings Foundation B-24 which was completely restored.

The Liberator was built at the Consolidated Aircraft Company's Fort Worth, Texas plant during August 1944. It was delivered to the US Army Air Force and in October 1944 it was transferred to the Royal Air Force.

It was used for patrol and bombing missions in the Pacific theater of operations. At the end of the war it was abandoned by the RAF in a grave yard at Ka-

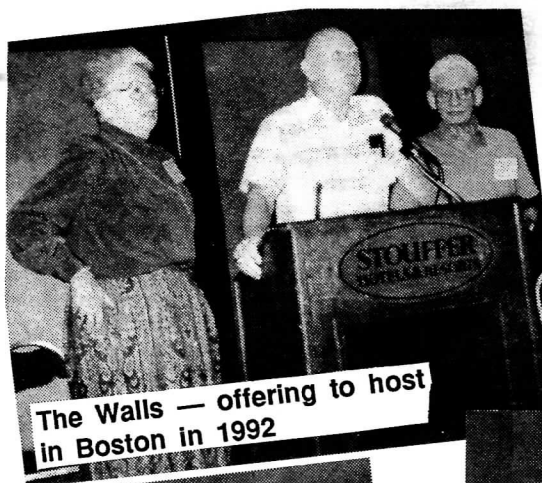
hanpur, India. It did not fly again until 1948 when it was one of 36 B-24s restored by the Indian Air Force.

It flew for 20 years with the Indian Air Force and was retired in 1968. In 1981 it was bought by Doug Arnold, of England, and was advertised for sale in 1984. It was acquired by the Collings Foundation and restoration began in 1987.

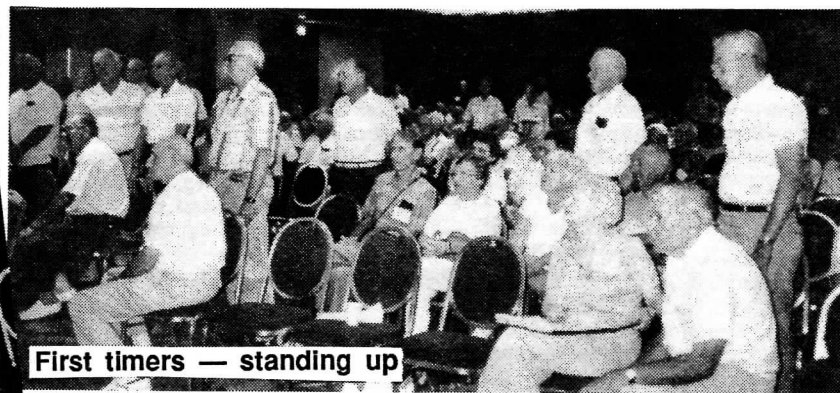
The Collings Liberator was named "ALL AMERICAN" in honor of a 15th Air Force B-24 with the same in WWII. The original "ALL AMERICAN" set a record when its gunners shot down 14 enemy fighters in a single raid over Germany on July 25, 1944.

Thru the generosity of Rick Dekostic, whose father, Lt. Edwin Dekostic was bombardier of my crew, Lt. Dekostic's

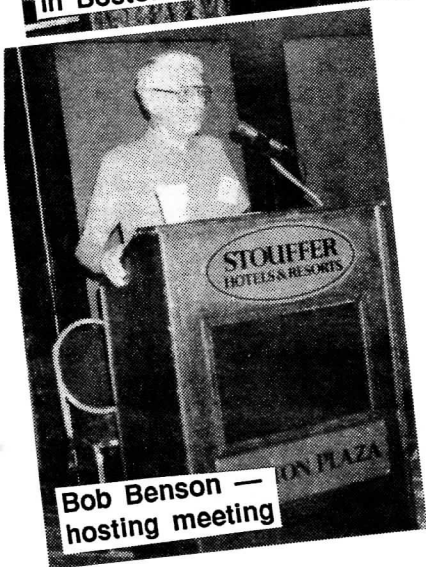
Snapshots taken at Dayton Reunion



The Walls — offering to host in Boston in 1992



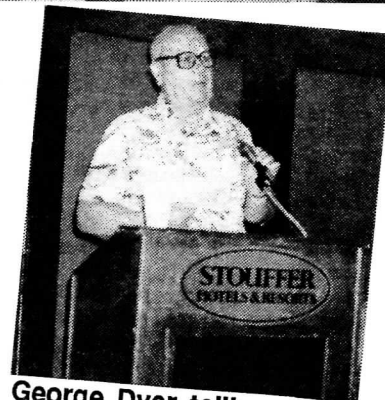
First timers — standing up



Bob Benson — hosting meeting



Barbershop quartet — entertainment at Welcome Buffet



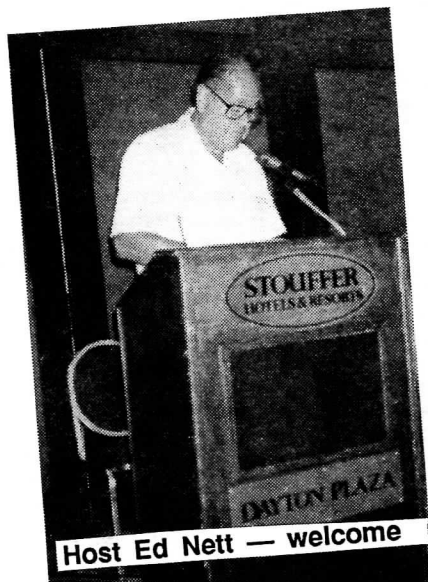
George Dyer telling us about Little Rock — 1991



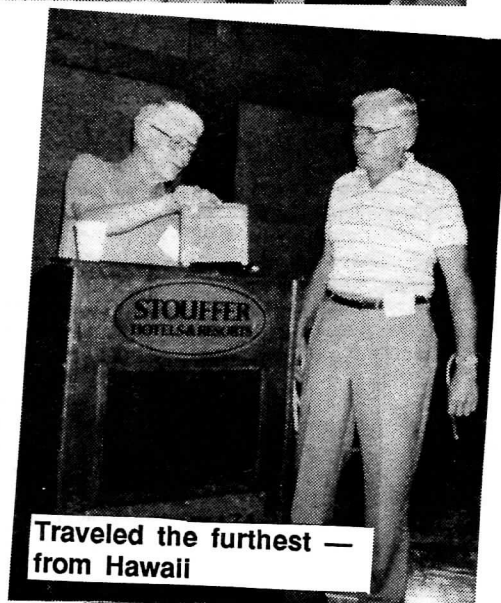
Flying crew with the most members present.



Posting the colors at the Memorial Breakfast



Host Ed Nett — welcome



Traveled the furthest — from Hawaii

Gen. Arnold details evacuation of Allied POWs

(Editor's Note — The following is an account written by the 485th's own Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Walter E. Arnold, with the assistance of writer Mike Spence. It was written in April 1945. It details the evacuation of Allied POWs from Nurnberg to Mooseberg and should be considered an important part of the history of the 485th.)

THE BEGINNING

By Aug. 27, 1944, the Allied thrust had moved deep into France.

In the north, the British I Corps reached the mouth of the Seine that day, while Canadian II Corps began to cross the Seine between Elbeuf and Pont-de-l'Arche. The U.S. XX Corps (3rd Army), with the 7th Armored Division in the lead, reached the Marne at Chateau-Thierry on its advance towards Rheims. The U.S. XII Corps advanced from Troyes north-eastward toward Chalons-Sur Marne.

In the south, the U.S. 3rd Division, moving along the Rhone Valley, neared Montelimar. The American 45th Division pushed on from Grenoble toward Lyons. At Marseilles, the German garrison asked for surrender terms.

The Allies bombing offensive continued around the clock from bases in Britain and Italy — Americans bombing by day and British bombing by night.

It was on this day that 31-year-old Col. Walter E. Arnold, the group commander of the 485th Bomber Group of the U.S. Army Air Corps, set off on his final air raid of World War II, and began an odyssey that would end with him leading 1,875 prisoners of war on a 100-mile march to a safe haven where they would spend the final days of the war.

THE MISSION

Arnold was to lead a group of 42 B-24 bombers on a raid from its home base in Venosa, Italy, to bomb the synthetic oil plants at Blechhammer, located in eastern Germany.

Arnold's group encountered little trouble on the way and reached the target area on schedule. Once over the target, however, the bombers experienced heavy flak, which grew more intense as they began their bombing runs.

Arnold was in the lead ship of the formation. His airplane received flak hits in the left wing, left nose section and bomb bay seconds before it dropped its payload. All bombs got away on the target, but the aircraft was heavily damaged.

"Flak hit the two left-side engines and set them on fire," Arnold said. "Then it hit the left side of the airplane's nose. That's where the navigator and bombardier were. I was in the pilot's seat on the left-hand side. The flak broke all the glass and all the instruments."

Arnold didn't realize at that moment that he too had been wounded.

"I felt like somebody hit me over the leg with a baseball bat," Arnold said. "It felt like a charleyhorse, but I really didn't mind it."

Arnold was more concerned with trying to guide his aircraft to safety. He put the aircraft into a steep dive, losing 2,000 feet of altitude before leveling off. One by one, crew members began to bail out.

"All the gunners and the engineer said they were leaving the airplane," Arnold said. "Then the navigator and bombardier came

back and went out the bomb bay. That left myself and my co-pilot, Maj. Bob Smith."

By that time, the airplane was out of control and had fallen out of formation. That was also the moment Arnold realized he had been seriously wounded.

"Maj. Smith looked at me and said, 'You're hurt pretty bad,'" Arnold said. "I looked at my left leg. It was nothing but blood from hip to toe."

Arnold and Smith decided it was time to bail out. The two men made their way to the bomb bay, where ruptured fuel lines were spraying gasoline in every direction. Arnold told Smith to jump, and once Smith was safely away, he left the aircraft, too. He watched the fiery airplane sink from the sky and crash.

TAKEN PRISONER

Arnold parachuted into a forest, where he landed in a pine tree, several feet off the ground.

"I knew I had to get down to stop the bleeding," Arnold said.

He used his teeth to unhook the medical kit from his shoulder strap and dropped it to the ground. He worked his way out of his parachute harness and grabbed a smaller tree nearby. The tree bent under his weight, dropping Arnold closer to the ground. He swung down and dropped on his right side.

"By then I was losing sight," Arnold said. "The pine needles were the same color as the medical pack. But I finally found it and opened it up." The morphine tube in Arnold's medical kit had been punctured, so he could do nothing to ease the pain as German troops closed in on him.

The Germans quickly picked Arnold up and took him to an old farm, where they put him into a turkey pen for about two hours while awaiting transportation that would take him to a field hospital.

During his wait at the farm British POWs talked the Germans into giving them some disinfectant water. They undid Arnold's bandages and washed out his wounded leg.

Arnold was transported from the farm to a field hospital, and then to a small hospital in the town of Cosel, where he remained bedridden for three and one-half months.

RECUPERATING

Once he was safely at Cosel, doctors told Arnold that all but one muscle had been shot away in his thigh. A doctor taped the muscle together and put a splint on the leg.

"He told me not to move for at least two weeks," Arnold said. "He said I would walk again if I didn't move to let the muscle grow."

A few days later, a cast was put on the leg to ensure that Arnold's leg remained immobile.

THE BOMBING

While being transported from Cosel to Frankfurt, Arnold found out first hand how devastating the Allied bombing offensive was.

Arnold was being transported on a train, when American bombers approached.

"We were in the middle of a marshalling yard, and the train came to a dead halt," Arnold said.

The Germans quickly disengaged the car carrying Arnold and left it standing in the middle of the yard.

"The people in my car, plus my escort, eva-

cuated and walked away, leaving me locked up in my compartment alone," Arnold said.

During the next hour, bombs rained down, eventually derailing the car.

"There was fire and smoke all around the marshalling yard," Arnold said. "When all was clear, my escort came and released me."

Arnold was shaken but unhurt.

FROM CAMP TO CAMP

By November 1944 reports of heavy guns could be heard at the hospital indicating that the Russian front was moving toward Cosel.

In accordance with the Geneva Convention, the Germans evacuated Arnold. First he was taken to an interrogation center at Frankfurt, where he remained for five days and nights in solitary confinement. He was then taken across town to a dulag, where he was given new equipment. From there, he was sent to Sagan, arriving there Dec. 3, 1944.

Two months later, Arnold was evacuated again. This time to the large POW camp at Nurnberg.

MORE BOMBS

Arnold had been in Sagan for nearly three months before it was again necessary to move because of the enveloping Russian front. Marching orders came down on Jan. 27, 1945.

Because of his severe leg wound, Arnold was among the sick, crippled and wounded left behind when the 10,000 to 12,000 POWs at Sagan were marched further west.

"We were put in barracks, Arnold said. "Right then, I was still pretty sick. My leg was stiff, and I was down to 100 pounds or so."

Eventually Arnold's group was loaded on a train for a trip from Sagan to Nurnberg.

"About two or three days out from Sagan, British or American fighters strafed our train," Arnold said. "They incapacitated the engine and set fire to several box cars."

The car ahead of the one Arnold was riding in caught fire and the fire began to spread to Arnold's car.

"The cars were jammed to capacity," Arnold said. "The POWs all scrambled to the small side doors which were full of smoke. It was kind of one for all and all for one."

Arnold's leg prevented him from making a quick dash to the door. Instead, he sat and waited at the rear of the car for the rest of the prisoners to clear out.

"I got stepped on and trampled on in the scramble," Arnold said. "As the crowd got thinner, I made my way out and got clear of all the explosions."

The two air raids left an indelible impression with Arnold, one that would shape a crucial decision he would have to make two and one-half months later.

During his imprisonment at Nurnberg Arnold served as commanding officer of one of the camp compounds. It was during this period that yet another bombing raid created an indelible image in Arnold's mind.

The raid by the Royal Air Force occurred during the night of Feb. 27, 1945.

A curfew was in effect and all prisoners were inside their block houses. Lights have been turned off and the men were preparing to bed down for the night.

Suddenly sirens sounded, warning of a bomber attack. Soon, Arnold could hear the

sounds of bombs exploding in the distance.

"The bombing got louder and louder, closer and closer," Arnold said. "You could see fire from the explosions through the cracks in the wall and through small windows. The block houses were trembling and vibrating each time a bomb exploded."

Arnold rose from his bed and walked to the end of the blockhouse where there was a door. He wanted to get a better look at what was happening outside.

"When I turned the door knob and opened the door to a slit, a huge explosion occurred, shoving the door closed, then sucking it out and me along with it," Arnold said.

Arnold quickly glanced at the guard tower. If spotted by a guard, he would be shot. But there was no guard. The tower was empty.

"The sky was bright as day with fire and smoke, and the compound was in chaos," Arnold said.

The German camp commandant gave permission for the prisoners to leave their blocks during the raid. Arnold organized his men and ordered them to dig slit trenches with whatever tools they could find. Soon all prisoners were digging trenches, until there was a long slit trench.

"I passed the word to lay low and for the men to cover heads with whatever they could find to avoid being hit with falling debris," Arnold said. "The sky was being lit up. You could see airplanes on fire, breaking apart. You could see parachutes coming down. Some in full bloom and 'streamers,' parachutes on fire."

Arnold said fear, fright and panic swept through the men. He worked his way up and down the trench trying to bolster the men's nerve.

"I saw men crying, yelling, wailing and praying, out loud and on their knees in silence."

As Arnold continued his way up and down the line, a young airman came weaving up to him.

"He was whimpering and crying," Arnold said. "He threw his arms around my waist and fell to his knees, hugging my legs."

Soon, two others came up to Arnold.

"They were in the same distress, completely lost and frightened, not knowing what to do," Arnold said. "They needed help, condolence, assurance, pacifying. As the camp commander, they came to me."

Arnold gathered the three boys in and hovered over them.

"I put my hands on their heads, hugged them in and told them that all is okay, nothing is going to happen to you. Jesus Christ is here. He will protect us. He will help us and we will not be harmed."

Arnold's words had a calming effect on the three boys.

After the raid, Arnold found out that none of the three boys knew how to pray.

"They evidently had no religion," Arnold said. "This proves that when everything is going well, there is probably no need for spiritual help. On the other hand, when a person encounters disaster, fright or possible death, and the chips are down, the average man seeks out supernatural help. He needs someone, something — a symbol, a mother, a God — to go to for protection and help."

CLOSING IN

By April 1945, the Allied stranglehold on Hitler's Third Reich was drawing tighter with

each passing day.

On April 1, the U.S. 9th and 1st Armies joined up at Lippstadt, closing the circle around the rich industrial region of the Ruhr, trapping Field Marshal Walter Model's Army Group B and two corps of the 1st Parachute Army. On the Eastern Front, the 3rd Ukraine Front captured Sopron, a major road junction between Budapest and Vienna, near the Austrian frontier southwest of Lake Neusiedler.

As the Allies advanced into German-held territory, Hitler's armies were forced into an ever-shrinking perimeter.

Thousands of Allied prisoners of war were caught up in the confusion of the Nazi's mass retreat. In accordance with the Geneva Convention, the Germans evacuated the prisoners deeper and deeper into their own territory to keep clear of the battle lines that were closing in on Berlin.

By early April, it was apparent that the massive prison camp at Nurnberg would have to be evacuated soon.

MARCHING ORDERS

The prisoners at Nurnberg received word on April 4, 1945, that they would have to evacuate their compounds. Their destination would be Moosburg, another prison camp located 160 kilometers (100 miles) from Nurnberg.

Arnold was in command of one of the Nurnberg compounds. In his charge were 1,875 prisoners of war — all of them downed aviators — including approximately 500 members of the British Royal Air Force.

When the march orders came down, Arnold was asked to supervise the evacuation of his compound by his commander, Col. Darr Alkire.

"He asked me if I could handle leading the march because I was wounded and had a bad leg," Arnold said. "My leg was stiff. There was a question whether I could walk that far or not. I had lost a lot of weight. I was down to 95 or 100 pounds. But I was healthy."

Alkire, concerned about Arnold's physical condition, wanted to put Col. Bill Kennedy in charge of Arnold's group. Kennedy, who was planning to escape, didn't want his plans foiled by having to supervise an evacuation. Kennedy and Alkire agreed on a compromise. Kennedy would go along on the evacuation for one day. If Arnold was physically able to handle the job, Kennedy was free to make his escape attempt.

Arnold demonstrated quickly that he was capable of commanding the evacuation. Kennedy made his escape attempt. Ironically, he was captured, and spent the rest of the war imprisoned at Moosburg.

REFUSING A RIDE

Arnold roused his command of the compound and organized the prisoners into blocks (a platoon-sized group). Each block had its own commander responsible to Arnold.

The prisoners were to be escorted by 87 German guards and about 20 to 25 sentry dogs. The Germans provided a wagon with two horses to carry equipment for the guards. They told Arnold he could ride in the wagon if his leg gave him problems. Arnold eschewed the offer, however, and marched along leading his command.

"I gave the order to march and we marched about two to three miles," Arnold said. "Then we halted. The German commander of my column, Capt. Galadovich, started talking to me. I asked him where we were going. He

said, 'We're taking the column down to the railroad station and we're going to get on boxcars, and take the POWs to Moosburg.'"

Arnold adamantly refused to go along with the German evacuation plan.

"I didn't want to do that. I thought that was too dangerous based on my previous experiences," Arnold said, thinking back to the two bombing raids he had endured in previous evacuations. "I told Capt. Galadovich our job is to get everybody to the destination safe and sound."

The refusal surprised Galadovich, who told Arnold he would have to confer with his commander, Oberst (colonel) Braun, who was waiting in a town a half a mile or so down the road.

Arnold ordered his men off the road and under the cover of the forest while they waited for Galadovich to return.

When Galadovich came back, he informed Arnold that Braun wanted to meet with him in the town.

"He said Oberst Braun would be in the restaurant, for me to come on in there," Arnold said.

Galadovich, his assistant Oberfeldtwebel (master sergeant) Reilman, Arnold and two assistants walked into the town.

"When I got in there, I told them I'm not going into the restaurant. I may not come out alive," Arnold said. "This was understandable at the time, and doesn't need any explanation. You couldn't tell what might happen. I told them I would meet Oberst Braun out in the street."

To Arnold's surprise, Braun came out. He had been informed by Galadovich that Arnold did not want to transport his men in boxcars.

"We went over that again, and why," Arnold said. "Oberst Braun understood. And he said that marching to Moosburg would be okay because he didn't think there would be enough boxcars anyway. There would be some delays. We would be in the boxcars for who knows how long before we got moving. He agreed with me and he gave us every assistance he could. He gave us maps. He told us of the perils and dangers of the SS troops, who would murder anything, plus the retreat of the German Army."

After the conversation, Braun and his staff got into their cars and drove away. Galadovich and his staff, who were supposed to accompany Arnold and his men on the march, got into their cars and also drove away. Arnold never saw either man again.

That left Arnold and Reilman to supervise the march to Moosburg.

MR. REILMAN

Although Reilman was a member of the Nurnberg staff, he and Arnold had only a passing acquaintance.

During the march, however, the two men worked closely together. Arnold kept his men moving in an orderly fashion. Reilman did what he could to facilitate the needs of the column.

"Mr. Reilman would go ahead of the column and smooth things out with the townspeople along the way," Arnold said. "He would scout out places for the men to sleep which was a big help to me."

Each night Arnold and Reilman would make sure all the men and their German guards had a place to sleep. Then they would find a place for themselves, and plan the next

(Continued on next page)

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day's march.

"We shared a blanket the whole trip," Arnold said. "We worked together well. I considered us fortunate that a man like Mr. Reilman was in charge of the guards because he was a good man."

THE PLAN

Avoiding the retreating Germans and aggressive American fighter pilots, who would strafe anything moving along German roads, were Arnold's main concerns.

"I talked it over with Mr. Reilman," Arnold said. "I said our job is to go through the back roads, where there's forest. It would give us cover. I said we'll proceed at a moderate rate because we wanted to get everybody there alive. He agreed."

Arnold marched the column of prisoners through a little town and found a good place in the forest to bivouac for the night.

"That gave me a chance to have a meeting with my block commanders," Arnold said. "I told them how we would march. Every night we would stop before a little town. Mr. Reilman would ride his bicycle into town and talk to the mayor. He would tell them who we were and that there would be no danger. I wanted the men to stay in barns and sleep on hay to keep warm."

The next day, the column marched approximately six miles. At the end of the day, Reilman drove into a nearby town as planned, talked to the mayor.

"He introduced me to the mayor and everything went okay," Arnold said. "They weren't belligerent. We weren't belligerent, and we got along fine. We moved along quietly with 1,875 guys, the dogs and the German guards into the town. The people received us. We were put up and bedded down in old buildings, barns and stables."

THE MASSACRE

Two days into the march, Oberst Braun's warning about the retreating German Army and roving bands of SS troops proved to be prophetic.

Reilman, who scouted ahead of the column on his bicycle reported back to Arnold with some disturbing news.

"He told me that at the town ahead of us, the German Army was retreating through," Arnold said. "Mr. Reilman said we had to stop the march and get the men off into the pine trees and hide. He said he would go back up and look at the situation. I told him I wanted to go with him."

Arnold took an assistant, Bob Cox, on the trip to the town with Reilman. Just outside the town, the three men got on their hands and knees and crept up to a vantage point where they could assess the situation.

"The Germans were retreating," Arnold said. "You could tell they were Army because they had yellow patches on their laps, according to Mr. Reilman. Right in the middle of town, some of the army troops were retreating. SS troops, you could tell by the red patches on their lapels, according to Mr. Reilman, told them to stay there. The army troops wouldn't stay. We saw a massacre, a helpless killing."

"There was one group of, maybe a dozen army soldiers in the middle of the street. We heard a lot of machine gun and rifle reports.

And we saw these men fall to the ground."

Reilman, Arnold and Cox hurried back to the column. They spent an anxious night waiting to see if the retreat or the SS troops would run into them.

"We stayed in the trees. We gave orders to keep quiet. We couldn't do anything but stay there," Arnold said.

The retreat missed the column, however, by the next day, the German Army soldiers and the SS troops were gone.

"Once they were gone, we knew the town was open and safe," Arnold said. "We proceeded on through it. We marched through there pretty damn fast."

TYPICAL AMERICAN GI

By the third day of the march, the German guards and their American prisoners realized that they were in this ordeal together.

"These guards were older men, who had fought the war, and now were back on guard duty," Arnold said. "They were getting tired. Their food was getting low. And feeding the dogs was a chore."

To no one's surprise, the American prisoners soon took their German captors in.

"The typical American GI is ingenious and adaptable. He is understanding and friendly as heck," Arnold said. "It wasn't long before the German guards were part of us, and the dogs too. We all went as a group. There were no more sentries or dogs to bother us. Now we were just one big group."

THE MASS

Four days into the march, Arnold noticed that on either side of the road were statues of the Virgin Mary and the Holy Jesus Christ. Curious, he asked Reilman about the significance of the statues. Reilman told him there was a lot of Catholics among the local residents and that they were very religious.

"Me being an Episcopalian, I felt good about that," Arnold said.

The column entered one town in the area around midday on Sunday. The significance of the situation wasn't lost on Arnold.

"I felt there was a need for some kind of prayer," Arnold said. "I decided to stay in that town for the night. I told Reilman I wanted to find a church."

The two quickly found a church, but the door was padlocked.

"I asked Mr. Reilman to try to get the church open," Arnold said. "I wanted to give the boys an opportunity to go to church."

Reilman located two Catholic priests and brought them to the church. Arnold asked them for permission to use the church. He asked the priests to say mass.

"They were apprehensive and suspicious. They wouldn't open up the church and refused to give mass," Arnold said. "I was disappointed. I didn't know exactly what I was going to do." Arnold kept talking. "I told them there were many Catholics among us, and that they would like to receive mass; that this church was a house of God and should be open to all; that they had no right to deny us the chapel and prayer," Arnold said. "I told them it would be a sin not to open the doors and that they were committed to say mass."

Despite Arnold's words, the priests remained reluctant.

"I said, 'Okay, if you won't give us mass, unlock the doors, and open up the church, and I'll give the sermon,'" Arnold said.

By that time, word has spread among the

column that there was going to be a church service. The men began gathering around the church.

"I knew I'd be a poor substitute for a Catholic priest or protestant minister, but I felt I could give a lot of comfort to everybody once inside the church," Arnold said.

It wasn't too long thereafter the priests relented and opened up the church. They filled the fountain with holy water. They welcomed the men into the church and offered worship to the congregation of many religious backgrounds. The men filled the church and overflowed into the churchyard.

"It was a glorious day," Arnold said. "The men felt good to be in the house of the Lord—even in a foreign country during wartime. Afterward, the priests apologized and told Mr. Reilman they have never given mass to so many. The typical GIs had made their impression."

FEEDING THE MEN

Although the column did not have an abundance of food, there was never a serious problem providing the men with enough to sustain them.

"Everybody knew how to handle the food situation," Arnold said.

Midway through the march, the food situation improved greatly once the column managed to have Red Cross packages diverted their way.

"Because we were taking the backroads, we missed a couple of days of Red Cross parcels, which were being trucked from Switzerland on the autobahns," Arnold said.

"Once we discovered this, we got some of the trucks diverted our way and pretty soon we had more Red Cross parcels than we could carry."

The prisoners used the extra parcels to trade for eggs and fresh vegetables and the like with the local townspeople and farmers. Sometimes, the prisoners just gave them their extra parcels.

"It created a lot of good will," Arnold said. "From that point on to our destination, we had a lot of food."

THE CASUALTY

Arnold divided his time between leading the march and monitoring the progress in the middle and trailing ranks.

"I would go off on the side and let the column go by," Arnold said. "I wanted to talk to the rear point and see how the boys were doing."

Near the end of the march, it became apparent that one of the men was suffering badly.

"There was a navigator in the column who was really hurting," Arnold said. "The boys had been taking care of him. But he was getting awfully tired and sick."

Arnold had the ailing navigator sit down on the edge of the road to rest.

"I sat down with him and stayed with him, maybe an hour or so," Arnold said. "He died right there. He died in my arms. I blessed him."

The boy's body was wrapped up and loaded onto the wagon. It was taken into Moosburg, which, ironically, was only a day's march away.

He was the only death recorded during the march.

ARRIVING IN MOOSBURG

The column reached Moosburg on April 15, 1945.

Led by Arnold, the prisoners marched through Moosburg up to the gates of the enormous prison camp.

"When we came to the main gate, Mr. Reilman talked with the German guards," Arnold said. "He came back and said to me, 'They have barracks and they have tents.' The barracks were old and dirty and crowded. I told Mr. Reilman we weren't going to go into those buildings. I said we wanted the tents. But I wanted a lot of straw and hay brought into the tents. They did that for us. They came in there with large bales of hay and distributed them to each tent. We marched in. That's where we stayed until the end of the war."

MOOSBURG

The column of prisoners arrived at Moosburg prison camp on April 15, 1945. The war was coming to an end and prison camps in north and central Germany were evacuated to the south to get out of the way of advancing American and British forces.

Moosburg was a collection point, and the camp was a large one, holding 30,000 POWs, including U.S. Army Air Corps, as well as French and British soldiers.

The American commander of the camp was U.S. Army Col. "Pop" Good. He had organized the American POWs into six battalions. When Arnold's column arrived, it was designated the 7th Battalion.

LIBERATION

On April 29, 1945, U.S. Army Gen. George Patton's troops liberated the prisoners at Moosburg.

"He drove through the main gate, standing straight up in his vehicle, with two pearl-handled pistols on either side of his hips, wearing his helmet with four stars across the front," Arnold said. "What a sight! Other combat vehicles followed and they were completely surrounded by all the POWs. Everybody was laughing, waving their arms, with all kinds of happiness."

Although liberated, the former Allied POWs were kept together and remained in the camp for the next 10 to 15 days, until Patton's army had cleared to the east and an orderly disbandment could be executed. The French POWs were evacuated first, followed by the Americans and the British.

REILMAN'S FAREWELL

A few days after Patton's troops took over the camp, an Army captain walked up to Arnold loaded with German equipment.

The American officer handed over to Arnold a sabre, pistols and a pistol belt, and told Arnold he had been asked to deliver them by a German guard named Reilman.

Arnold asked the officer to take him to Reilman, and the two set off to a gate at the far end of the camp.

"By the time we got there, Mr. Reilman had already been taken away," Arnold said. "I never saw him again. I thought it was sad that we didn't get to say good-bye."

Arnold said he thinks often of Mr. Reilman. "I knew he was an insurance salesman before the war, but I really didn't know much else about him," Arnold said. "I never even knew his first name."

Little Rock reunion

(Continued from page 1)

impress you with their "white glove service."

4. The Camelot bellmen provide complimentary transportation from the airport to the hotel, and return. This service will also be provided if you come by train, or bus. Just call the hotel.
5. For the health conscious guest, you will be provided complimentary passes to Gold's Gym, located one block from the hotel.
6. If you arrive by car, you will be provided free parking, beneath the hotel.
7. The hotel will provide you with a safety deposit box if you desire one, complimentary of the hotel.
8. The hotel has a physician on 24-hr. call, and also has 911 service.

LUCK OF THE DRAW

It was left to Col. Good to decide the best way to evacuate the Americans. Good decided to leave the camp one battalion at a time.

"He called the seven battalion commanders to a meeting," Arnold said. "I was battalion commander No. 7. He told us the battalions would leave by a draw of cards."

"He held up a deck of cards, and said the highest card would go first, the next highest would go second and so on."

Two British padres were each asked to shuffle a deck of cards. They placed the shuffled decks on a long table, where the battalion commanders, one through seven, were sitting next to each other in numerical order.

Good selected one of the decks, and asked the padres to each shuffle the deck and place it in front of the battalion commander No. 1.

Arnold was the last commander to get a card. When his turn came, Good drew the king of spades. It was the highest card, giving Arnold and his men the privilege of leaving the camp first.

GOING HOME

U.S. Army trucks started the evacuation early the next morning. They drove the troops to a small air strip at Landshut, about 10 kilometers northeast of Moosburg.

From there, Air Corps C-47s flew the POWs to Paris, where all former prisoners went through a U.S. Army processing center called Lucky Strike. After processing, they were sent back to the United States by ship.

9. All guest rooms feature first run, in-room movies.
10. FAX services available daily.
11. Federal Express available.
12. Laundry-valet services.
13. Limited secretarial services.
14. With proper notice, special diets will be provided.
15. If you have pets, the Broadway Animal Kennel is located at 906 S. Broadway. A few blocks from the hotel. (501)-374-7569.
16. R.V.'s can either go to Burns Park, or to the KOA Kampground that provides all necessary hook-ups. Will provide more detailed information on this at a later date.
17. The 3:00 p.m. check-in, and 11:00 a.m. check-out times will be waived as per room availability.

18. The hotel has (2) handicapped rooms, and has hopes of having more soon.

19. The hotel has (22) non-smoking rooms.

20. The hotel will honor our group rates (5) days prior, if you care to come early, and (5) days after our reunion, if you care to stay.

21. At the present time we have 225 rooms reserved.

All events, menus, times, prices, dates, have been established, and will be sent to each member at a later date.

Just a personal word to each of you. Katy and I feel like we have a very nice reunion planned for you. We are hoping you will come, and enjoy the fruits of our labor. See you in Little Rock.

Respectfully yours,
George E. and Katy Dyer

George and Katy also reminds all those who are planning to attend the reunion in Little Rock to please make your hotel reservation as soon as possible after reservation forms are sent out.

Also they ask that you make reservations early for all of the events you plan to attend during the reunion.

Al Martin's story told

(Editor's Note—This story [longer in its original form] appeared in the Community Standard, of Louisville, Ky. as a Veterans Day feature. It concerns Al Martin, a 485th pilot and is re-printed with the permission of the newspaper.)

Al Martin lives a quiet life in his modest home on Ferndale Road in Fern Creek. A retired white haired gentleman, one might see him regularly at the nearby McDonald's or see him at his church where he is an active member.

But a little over 45 years ago, Al Martin was in all the Kentucky newspapers. He had completed quite a feat. For then T/Sgt. Alvin L. Martin laid claim to being one of the first Kentuckian to enter recently captured and war ravaged Berlin, Germany. On the day that most Americans call V-E Day, T/Sgt. Martin was there to help assist in the official surrender of German to the allies.

The story of Al Martin is typical of many veterans. He happened to be the right age at a time the country was in peril. He willingly went to serve and with some skill and a great deal of luck, he lived to tell his story.

Martin volunteered to serve in the Army Air Force, as it was called then, in February, 1943 soon after he turned 18. "I wanted to be a pilot more than anything else in the world," said Martin. "But they discovered I was partially color blind and I didn't qualify."

But he was still accepted and went instead into training to be a radio operator on bombers.

Martin went overseas in March, 1944 and was assigned to the 15th Air Force 485th bomb group in Venosa, Italy where he flew in B-24 bombers in 31 combat missions.

"I remember my first combat mission was to bomb a railroad yard in Yugoslavia," said Martin. Martin kept a sporadic diary of his time in the bomber group. Reading through it's yellowed pages tells a personal story of the realities of war and how luck is a much a part of surviving as training.

Martin's group would fly a mission every other day. The diary tells of bad weather, missed targets or direct hits. But one part of the diary tells a compelling

story. Martin still talks about it with pain and emotion in his voice.

On July 8 I went to the hospital to have an operation to have a cyst removed," said Martin. "They had a replacement for me. That day my plane was shot down."

His diary tells it more succinctly:

July 8, 1944

I went to the hospital today to be operated on for a cyst.

Today, the best bomber crew in the air force went down over Vienna. They were MY CREW! Sgt. E. R. Mack was flying with them in my place.

In September, 1944 Martin was assigned to Major General Barr in France. He was part of the crew that would fly the general wherever he needed to go. Gradually as the war front moved to Germany, Martin's crew was stationed in Heidelberg.

Here he got to see some of the big names in the war.

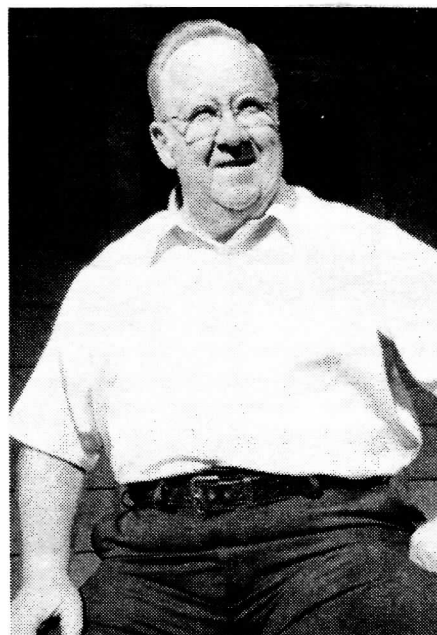
"I remember we flew the nephews of Winston Churchill and queen (then Princess) Elizabeth back home to England," said Martin. "They had been prisoners of war. The whole royal family was waiting there when we arrived."

On something of a secret mission, Martin tells of the time when they picked up a man in a long overcoat and his hat was pulled down over his face. "That turned out to be Franz von Papan," said Martin. Von Papan was the Chancellor of Germany before Hitler and later helped Hitler to take over Germany. Von Papan was later one of the Nazi war criminals to be put on trial in Nuremburg.

But the big day for Martin was May 7, 1945 when Martin was in the crew that flew French Gen. de Latre de Tassigny, commander of the French First Army to Berlin to accept the formal surrender of the Germans.

"I remember standing outside the building and has to step aside to get out of the way of (German) Field Marshal Keitel and Admiral Friedelburg," said Martin. They had come to sign the final surrender. Friedelburg committed suicide a few days later. Keitel was later tried and executed at Nuremburg as a war criminal.

The Russians had captured Berlin so



Al Martin

the first Americans to get there were the flight crews who flew in the big brass," said Martin.

When the war ended, Martin flew back home and was discharged in November, 1945. He had flown 31 combat missions, some of them the most important of the war. He had been awarded the Air Medal with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, the European Operation Medal, the European and Mediterranean Ribbon and a presidential citation. He had seen history. He had also seen many of his friends perish.

He came back home, eventually settled in Fern Creek and worked for a uniform rental company for 25 years before retiring. He is a quiet unassuming man but a man who has paid a price for the everyday freedoms we enjoy. A similar price has been paid by all the veterans in this country.

"I feel sorry for the servicemen over the years because I don't feel that our country is behind them," said Martin.

Martin may have a point there. Veterans day comes each November to recognize the veterans who have served and paid a price for freedom. But the day goes generally unrecognized now. Veterans groups and some towns and cities still have some activities on Veterans Day but when I took a poll of people around the area more than half did not even know what day it fell on.

Martin's scrapbook of his combat service is worn and faded with age. So has our memory of those years.

Additional Sightseeing Trips on Arkansas

Below are listed a few of the side-trips those planning to attend the Little Rock reunion can take, either before or after the reunion:

1. **Hot Springs National Park** — Located just 50 minutes away, your delegates will enjoy a day's outing to Hot Springs, Arkansas. While there, they might want to visit the famous "Bath-house Row" where they can relax in the warmth of mineral water piped directly from underground springs.
2. **Barbecue/Catfish Fry at Winrock Farm Estates** — Just an hour's drive away, your delegates would love to experience a good old-fashioned Southern barbecue and catfish fry among the lush greenery atop Petit Jean Mountain.
3. **Toltec Mounds State Park** — Situated in the midst of the modern Arkansas River Valley farmlands are the remains of a large group of prehistoric earthworks known as the Toltec Mounds.
4. **The Ozark Folk Center and Blanchard Springs Caverns** — Located in Mountain View, Arkansas, the Ozark Folk Center is a literal "living" museum, where the people are the "displays". You will see the old time craft operations performed as they have been for ages past and hear the sometime plaintive, sometimes playful, often joyful tunes of the mountain musicians.
5. **Crater of Diamonds State Park** — Situated in Murfreesboro, Arkansas, delegates can enjoy the thrill and excitement of digging for diamonds in North America's only diamond field.
6. **Tour of Wiederkehr Wine Cellars** — Located in Altus, Arkansas, this Alpine village atmosphere, enhanced by vineyards and the famous Weinkeller Restaurant, will make your trip memorable for a lifetime.
7. **Eureka Springs** — Visit the many museums and shops in Eureka Springs long known as the "Little Switzerland of America." Explore the wonders of a living cave or marvel at a spring which has been flowing for eons.
8. **Buffalo National River** A trip to the

Buffalo River, America's first national river, is always enjoyable. Arkansas' most popular float stream is among the Natural State's greatest treasures.

9. **Dogpatch, U.S.A.** — Enjoy the fantasy world of Dogpatch U.S.A. presenting fun for kids of all ages. An array of thrilling rides, Ozark entertainment, arts & crafts, and beautiful scenery can be found as you step into the panels of Al Capp's famous "Lil Abner" comic strip.

JOURNEY'S END

Hal Berman (831st)	
Victor Bone (831st)	Nov. 25, 1989
Chas. E. Branstetter (830th)	Sept. 6, 1990
Leo Czachorowski (Hgs.)	1990
Sidney Cooper (831st)	
"Red" Devlin (831st)	
LaVerne (Bud) Fora (830th)	June 23, 1990
R. J. (Pappy) Greer (830th)	Nov. 11, 1990
Henry (Hank) Hillyard (830th)	Feb. 28, 1990
Albert B. Homan (829th)	Nov. 1990
Morris Lipman (831st)	Jan. 13, 1990
Stanley Zach (Hgs.)	1990

MAIL ROOM

485TH BOMB GROUP HQ —
Bob Benson



And a grand time was had by all! And, Dayton may never be the same again, after more than 500 — 485th Bomb Group vets, wives and guests invaded its city limits for their 1990 reunion. When there wasn't a special event to attend, the hotel lobby was filled with our people visiting.

I'm convinced that there were times when at least 15 different conversations were going on. By the time everyone was ready to pack-up and head for home, there were many, many tired tongues.

It was really great getting together again, and we thank Ed and Jo Nett for all their efforts. The Welcome buffet, the Dinner-Theater, the Air Force Museum, the Dinner Dance and the various side-trips for shopping and sightseeing all made for an enjoyable reunion.

We had an even dozen vets from group headquarters in attendance. First-timers were Howard Cherry (Group bombardier), Ben Cook (engineer, Gp. Hq., who was with "Pop" Arnold on the day he was hit and went down) and Sherman Peters (Group operations) and his wife, Shirlee.

It had been many years since Bill Herblin (Group dep.

commander) and Kathryn, and Bob Bimmler (Group photo) and Alice last attended one of our reunions, and it was good to see them again.

Others from group headquarters who attended were: "Pop" Arnold, Doug and Lil Cairns, Bill and Hilda Angle, Bob Marland, Warren and Joyce Sortomme, Loyd and Evelyn Towers and I — "Big Bob" and Dorothy Benson. In addition, we were honored by having Carol and James Goodson, widow and son of Mel Goodson (Group exec. officer), as guests. Our other guests were Bob Cairns and Mimi Brooks, son and daughter of Lil and Doug Cairns, and their spouses, Terry and David, respectively, and they are always good company.

It was a pleasure to meet for the first time Carol and James Goodson, Kathryn Herblin, Alice Bimmler and Shirlee Peters. We hope you will be with us again this year at Little Rock. Dorothy and I also enjoyed the visits we had with Al and Jane O'Brien (829th), Roy and Madeline Anderson (829th), Earl and Lill Isaacson (829th), Ed Meyer (829th — and how did you like that free breakfast we had at Stouffer's, Ed?), "Sandy" and Mary Sanborn (830th), just to name a few.

During the past year we have been successful in locating ten more group headquarters men: Fred (Fritz) Coltrin (Group. exec. officer), Howard cherry (Group bombardier), Charles Morgan (Group operations), and Frank Drueding, Lester Klopp, Orville Krattli, Walter McKin-

ney, Harvey Schmidt, Peter Venson and George Yagle (all in Group photo). We look forward to their support.

However, we are saddened by the losses this past year of Leo Czachorowski (Group dentist) and Stanley Zach (Group operations), and we extend our very sincere sympathy to their respective widows, Stephanie and Teresa, and their families. May God bless each of you.

The Memorabilia Room at the reunion was, once again, a very popular attraction. It was filled with photos and souvenirs from when we were in N. Africa and Italy. I wish to thank Carol Goodson, George Ostic and Pete Venson for the many photos that they made available for our viewing. They were appreciated.

Thanks very much to those of you who, over the past year, have phoned and/or written to me. I do appreciate it very much. Also, thanks very much to those of you who have contributed toward my expenses during the past year. That is also appreciated, and I thank you very much for your continued financial support.

We definitely missed not having Earl and Martha Bundy at our Dayton reunion, but I feel certain their health problems will soon be cured and they both will be at the Little Rock reunion in '91.

We are now looking forward to the 1991 reunion at Little Rock, Arkansas, September 10-15. George Dyer, our host for that reunion, has been working hard to make that get-together another enjoyable and successful event. Mark your calendar now and plan to be with us.

God be willing, Dorothy and I will see you later this year at Little Rock. Hope you all have a wonderful 1991.

828TH BOMB SQDN —

Bob Deeds



Your reporter has finally settled down in the mail room and already the mail is pouring in. It has taken a little time to get use to pounding the typewriter. The typewriter is going to take a little longer getting acclimated as it still makes errors. But it is good to be active again and interesting hearing from you all.

Also I am working on the Group history again. In November I received a call from Bob Beitling, 8AF B-24 crew member and B-24 historian and archivist. His current project is very interesting. Bob has obtained a complete listing of all B-24 serial numbers with their final disposition. Now he is adding more information to the listing which includes original assignment of crews and squadrons.

Presently we are working on the list of original B-24s of the 485th which is complete except for one or two crew assignments. As Bob co-authors unit histories, I hope to engage him in our unit history.

I received a most interesting letter, including a crew photo, from A.T. Alford, nose gunner on John Treble's crew. John's crew was the first crew to be assigned to the 828th as a replacement crew. In the next issue of the newsletter I will have the story of the crew. Right now there are

a few more details needed to complete the story. Six members of the crew are on our mailing list. A.T. could not make the Dayton reunion, but certainly hopes to make the Little Rock reunion.

Larry Hohmann, who is holding at 82, sent in a most informative letter. He recalled that Sammy Schneider and I were associated with the B-24, The Lady. Sammy, a member of C J Eden's crew, which was the original crew and my crew as the last crew to fly The Lady. Now, there is a reason why my crew was the last crew to fly The Lady. Being a most modest individual I do not want to talk about it.

However, if you are interested about the last flight of The Lady, Karl Andersen, crew chief, can fill you in on the details and give you an assessment of new 2nd Lt. pilots. All I can say is the ground crew sure did love their Lib. Larry is still in touch with another ordinance friend, Bob Kaiser. Our correspondence started in 1967 and Larry is the one who furnished the details on the loss of 485th personnel on the trip to Venosa.

Another veteran I have corresponded with a long time is George Ick. George was a prop specialist and I remember one job I made for him. On take-off for a mission our Lib had a runway prop. We kept the rpm below 2700 by using the feathering button, bring the rpm to around 2000 rpm. Once the rpm climbed again to 2700 rpm we used the feathering button again and again to keep the rpm within limits. I must say it was a little exciting, landing a fully-loaded Liberator.

I received many Christmas cards containing messages for which I am grateful and sincerely thank all of you for taking time out to write the message. Cards received from John Di Russo, who hopes to make the Boston reunion in '92; Sam Schneider, Bill Angle, Frank Buck, Lyle Talbott, Ted Manning, Bob Deeds, Judge C. J. Eden, Howard Sanborn, Joe Apalka, who remember us young guys traveling together on the European trip, and Joe Coker. Yes, there were more which I have replied to and will do so with the rest.

It is wonderful to receive the many pieces of mail and to reminisce about the past, the golden days of aviation. Likewise, it was heart-warming to meet so many veterans at the reunion. We are planning on attending the reunion in Little Rock and certainly hope to see many of you there. Thank you very much for your correspondence and contributions to the newsletter.

829th BOMB SQDN. —

Earl Bundy



The reporters met with Ed Nett last spring to make plans for the 1990 reunion. Little did we know how big it would be. It broke all records.

I have had a bad year and, at the last week, I had to cancel out as I still couldn't see. I have hopes of surgery about February 1 to get my sight back.

I had lots of letters during the year; then at Christmas a

lot more cards and letters. Thanks for all your mail donations.

I was pleased to get Bob Benson to fill in for me at the reunion. Then I asked Al Martin to write up the newsletter information for the 829th. I am thankful to him for a good report.

What follows is Al Martin's Mail Report:

Another great reunion of the 831st-ah-er. I mean 485th Bomb Group — way to go Woody — is now history. The target for the groups' last mission, which was hit with pin point accuracy, was the Stauffer Inn Hotel in Dayton, Ohio. Thank you so very much Ed and Jo Nett. It was our largest reunion to date with 247 veterans, their wives and friends, 33 of the veterans being at their first 485th reunion.

Just a reminder to the first timers — attending these reunions becomes addictive. Greatest groups of people in the world and always the best weekend of the year. Someone asked one of our members how long our group would continue to hold reunions? "As long as there are two of us left" was the answer.

The memorabilia room was great with all of the photo albums and other material. Wish I had copies of some of the photos.

One of the "first timers" of the 829th was Mack A. Lundy, of Arcadia, Fla. His crew, Ray Daniels pilot, was the first crew of the 829th and the second crew — by about an hour — of the 485th to go down in combat. That was on May 29, 1944. Lundy, Charles "Chuck" Ludalff, my guest and I were together through radio, gunnery and radio refresher schools in 1943. So good to see them after so many years.

Our chairman, Earl Bundy, was sorely missed at the reunion because of an illness. Earl and Martha's tireless efforts in helping make all of our reunions so successful were missed and we sure hope it doesn't happen again. (Go see Doc Pinnell Earl!) Bob Benson "flew" in Earl's place and did a super job — thanks Bob.

All of the activities at the reunion were enjoyed by all and the efficiency and courteous hospitality of the hotel staff was very much appreciated.

It is impossible to see in one or even two days all of the exhibits at Wright-Patterson. That was sure great to see. It makes one proud to be an American and to have been a very small part of the greatest Air Force in the world. The delicious food at the banquet and the barber shop quartet were sure great — and I like "eatin meetin's," ya know. Ha! And seeing those smooth, suave, "light on their feet" Fred Astaires (Dan Sjodin and Ray Carpenter) on the dance floor.

Reports are out that George Dyer has already done a great job in getting Little Rock ready for us and all are eagerly awaiting our trip there. Also looking forward to Ken and Helen Walls' '92 reunion in New England.

Well I had better save Woody and little space so "See you in Little Rock" You too Monahan!

Sincerely —
Alvin (Al) Martin

830TH BOMB SQDN —
Chester Konkolewski



The graying eagles descended upon the Stouffer Hotel from all points of the compass to attend the 485th Bomb Group, 26th Reunion in Dayton, Ohio. This gathering broke all previous attendance figures with approximately 247 present.

A bit more graying, aching bones and all, some with canes, but yet the spirit has not diminished with the passing of time. However they came to share the pleasure and companionship, to share and swap a few war stories and just have fun.

The Squadron made a good showing with approximately 47 veterans present in fact this was the most present than in previous reunions.

It was a great pleasure in meeting all 830th buddies again. To you first timers; Albert Alfieri, Simon Baytala Jr., Ev Banker, William Cummings, Dick Fedell, Frank Hammett, Carl Hirschman, James Kelly, Herb Kohlhorst, John McCarthy, John Schill, welcome aboard. Like I previously stated I once again enjoyed chatting with you all, to some of the first timers that I have been in contact, it doubled my pleasure in meeting with you and sharing your company.

On a sad note I wish to report that we lost some good buddies who made their last flight into eternity, Henry "Hank" Hillyard, whom I corresponded with in the past, Laverne "Bud" Foran, whom I had gotten to know real well, and Charlie Branstetter, whom I met for the first time at the San Antone reunion. He sure enjoyed himself and had his heart set on the Dayton Reunion. May they rest in eternal peace.

The reunion was an enjoyable one and everyone, seemed to be having fun a drink here and there, making new friends. That's what it is all about, companionship and fellowship. A very nice tour of the Air Force Museum and Memorial Park. Believe it or not, Bob McAlpine, Hugh Garnett and I were so busy walking through the museum that we missed out on the photo session. How about that?

The 830th Mail Box was certainly very busy this past year, a whole bunch of correspondence from a lot of you, and at Christmas time all those cards.

I and Stella thank you most graciously. I do enjoy reading your letters, notes, etc. It sure gives quite an insight to all those times on Venosa. I pigeonhole the correspondence because from time to time I will make some mental notes to myself. Thanks a million, guys.

I want to thank you for your generosity in donating towards the newsletter fund and stamps, without your donations it would be very tough on us reporters because without you we would have to take this out of our own pockets for the mailouts.

The Christmas greetings to all of you came out of my own funds, however I appreciate what you have been doing these past few years. I cannot name all those that gave because of so many names (I will cover this in my letter to you with the next mailout or sooner). Thanks.

Now we must start preparing and making plans for Little

Rock. George Dyer has been keeping me posted on what's what. Believe you me, he sure seems to have things well lined up. I will be providing you with the itty bitty in the very, very near future.

I am hoping to see you all in Little Rock, God willing. To you and yours, I wish you the best of health, many good wishes, good luck and may the good Lord be with you and keep you safe, cheerio.

831ST BOMB SQDN —

Woody Woodyard



The Dayton reunion was the largest yet! Ed and Jo Nett sure worked hard in planning this affair. The Air Force Museum, of course, was a big drawing attraction.

The 831st had the most members attending — 72 men and one widow. As the panoramic pictures taken at Dayton cannot be printed in our newsletter, due to their large size, we are listing who attended.

We had 16 first-timers — Roy Bulls, William Haas, Earl Hall, William Highbee, Theodore Lombard, Fred Moore, Angus Phelts, Artie Poulos, Ernest Prinitis, Peter Saab, Chris Schaefer, Al Shelby, Ed Siantz, William Todd, Burt Van Dellon and George Collins, NOTE: George Collins has been on the 831st roster since 1981, and he reported to us after he got home, that he had talked to Doug Cairns who told him that he had been transferred to the 830th in April, '45 because he outranked the C.O. Ceely. So — he is now in the 830th roster. Interesting what we learn at these reunions!

In addition to our first-timers the following men attended: Lewis Baker, Robert Baker, Carol Bostrom, John Bremer, Robert L. Brown, George Byrd, Frank Chaffin, Vern Christensen, Richard Conklin, Lynn Cotterman, Homer Cotton, Hank Dahlberg, Robert Dietrich, Harold Dundon, Bob Edinger, Don Evjen, Tom Fry, John Godfren, Bob Halling, David Hansen, Bob Hansen, Cletus Hamer, Bill Hedgpeth, Ray Heskies, Rodney Hufstader, Mrs. Walter Iwinski, John S. Jackson, John M. Jones, Richard Kingsbury, Jesse Ledbetter, Vincent Lee, Robert Lewis, Leonard Little, Michael Lupoli, Eugene McCarthy, Warren Meyers, Steve Mlinaz, Bob Monahan, Jack Nagle, Frank Nardi, Leo O'Brien, Lamond Parker, Ned Peirano, Lloyd Proudlove, Ralph Raines, Robert Rector, Harold Richards, Andrew Salazar, Jim Scheib, Louis Schoeneman, Dan Sjodin, Les Sutter, Luke Terry, Don Webb, Cliff Woodbury, Woody Woodyard, Ed Wroblewski.

Thanks to all of you who have sent me cards, letters, financial support for mailing and phone calls in the past year. Got a note from Niran Kellogg stating that he had been a first-timer in San Antonio, and we failed to list him. Sorry about that, Niran, and appreciate your check.

Paul Airy advised me of Alonzo Reyna's address, and we now have him on our roster; hope you make one of our reunions. We were happy to welcome Hank Dahlberg, after missing several reunions. He volunteered to take the reunion plaque and have it corrected and updated. Thanks

Hank.

We still have some of the 831st leather patches at \$11 each if you are interested, please advise.

Albert Paul had to cancel his reservation in Dayton due to ill health, but he reports that both he and his wife are doing well and plans on attending next year in Little Rock.

We regret to report the passing of Victor Bone on November 25, 1989, and Morris Lipman on January 13, 1990. We also have been advised that Hal Berman died in 1978, "Red" Devlin in mid '70's, and Sidney Cooper in 1985. We extend our sympathy to their families. We have added Mrs. Jim (Ruth) Shivel to our mailing list. We were not advised as to the date of her husband's death.

Be sure you all keep writing, and send any articles you would like published to me or to Don Webb, our editor, direct. any photographs also. They will be returned to you after publication.

In October we visited with George and Katie Dyer (our 1991 hosts) when we were down in Arkansas visiting some of my family. He has a great time completely planned for us. Hope to see many of you there.

The Fighting Men of the 485th

(Editor's Note — This poem was written by Donald Stevenson, who is the son-in-law of Laura and Bernard Rempe. Laura was secretary for the 485th until her death in 1987.

The poem has been chosen to be read at the end of all business meetings and reunions of the 485th. Several have asked for copies. Thus, it is being published in the Lightweight Tower.)

Few words can tell just how I feel,
To have known the men of Steel.
You laughed, you fought a lot,
But when they called, you cried not.

Through rain, mud and long cold nights,
You kept America secured and tight.
From American to Italy in one quick sweep,
You did it all so very neat.

It was a war of wars to tell it all,
But you stood there so very tall.
With bombs exploding all around,
You stayed there and held your ground.

But now it's over, sleep warm and tight.
For do not fear, it's my turn to fight.
But even with new weapons that shake the earth,
Your memory lives on for all it's worth.

Your record a hand to shape and mold,
This fighting man, so I am told.
The "Bell of Freedom" rings loud and long,
And it plays the music of your song.
And it plays the music of your song.

So enjoy life with its fun and bliss,
You courageous men of the 485th.