

43RD BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION, INC. "KEN'S MEN"



NEWSLETTER 108th EDITION OCTOBER 2008

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Headquarters Squadron
C. Fred McAllister (2009)

63rd Squadron
Roland T. Fisher (2009)
James C. Dieffenderfer (2010)

64th Squadron
Arvid J. Houghum (2009)
Charles F. McClenny (2010)

65th Squadron
James W. Eide (2009)
Lehman C. White (2010)

403rd Squadron
Robert P. Mangan (2009)
Jack Strange (2010)

Past Presidents
Robert Butler 1981-1984
George L. White 1985-1987*
William H. Wilson, Jr. 1988-1991*
Dale F. Barr, Jr. 1992-1993*
Max Osborn 1994-1995*
James T. Murphy 1996-1997*
Samuel F. Commons 1998-1999
Max M. Axelsen 2000-2001
Roger T. Kettleson 2002-2003
Charles Rauch 2004-2005
Jim Cherkauer 2006-2007
James Thompson Jr 2007-2008
*=Deceased

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As you read this, you maybe surprised to see my name in it. In June, President Jim Thompson resigned effective July 1, due to health concerns. As Vice President, I assumed the duties of President. At the Reunion I was honored to be elected President. Don Marsaglia, one of our contemporaries in the 65th Squadron, was elected vice President. Roger Kettleson, 64th Squadron, was elected Treasurer, replacing our beloved William "Bill" Wilson who answered the "Final Roll Call" August 20, 2008.

Since many of us have just returned from another fine reunion in Atlanta, hosted so well by Amy Nally, assisted by her father Sam Commons, we are well aware that many of you were unable to attend and enjoy the great Southern Hospitality.

Also, in July, news came that Roland "Smokie One" Fisher, the venerable Chaplain of the 43rd Bomb Group Association, who had planned to host the 2009 Reunion in Portend, OR, could not do so due to health problems within his family. At the Board Meeting, Max Axelsen, a former President and Reunion host, offered to host another in 2009 in San Antonio, TX. This plan was approved unanimously at the General Meeting.

As this country will soon elect a new President of the United States, I feel so proud and honored to be elected as President of this fine veteran's group with a total absence of any campaign rancor or discord of any sort. Very seriously, as an original 1981 member of this group, I am truly honored by this affirmation. I have served the association as Historian for many years and I will do my best to maintain the fine tradition of my predecessors. Plans for the 2010 Reunion and details will appear in future newsletter

Eldon Bud Lawson

*******BOARD OF DIRECTORS*******

Minutes of the board of directors meeting on Wednesday September 17, 2008, 7:00 PM at the Crowne Plaza Atlanta Airport, 1325 Virginia Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia, submitted by Edward Gammill.

Attendees: Eldon "Bud" Lawson, Vice President; Edward Gammill, Secretary; James Dieffenderfer, 63rd Director; James Eide, 65th Director; Leaman White, 65th Director; Joseph Snyder, 403rd Director; Max Axelsen, Past President; Sam Commons, Past President and 2008 Reunion Sponsor; Roger Kettleson, Past President and acting Treasurer; Charles Rauch, Past President and Amy Nalley, 2008 Reunion Host & Coordinator.

Absent due health, death and weather: Roland Fisher, 63rd Director; Arvid Houglum, 64th Director; Charles McClenny, 64th Director; William Solomon, 403rd Director; William Wilson, Treasurer.

The acceptance of the resignation of President Jim Thompson was the first order of business, after which Vice President Lawson conducted the directors meeting.

REPORTS

1. A motion, to approve the 2007 Board Meeting minutes as published in the October 2007 Newsletter, was made, seconded and passed.
2. The following treasurer's report was presented by acting treasurer Roger Kettleson:

**43rd Bomb Group Association
01-01-2008 to 09-11-2008**

Income

Dues	\$	1,130.00
Life Member	\$	700.00
Donations	\$	1,790.00
Interest	\$	1,240.61
Refund on '08 Reunion	\$	-
Total	\$	4,860.61

Expences

Printing	\$	2,353.36
Postage	\$	616.52
Bulk Mailing Yearly Fee	\$	175.00
Web Site	\$	239.40
Office Supplies	\$	104.17
Contract Labor	\$	324.00
Gifts for '07	\$	248.36
2008 Reunion Advance	\$	6,500.00
Donation		
Total	\$	10,560.81

Net

1/1/2008 Beginning Balance	\$ 13,202.91
09/11/2008 Ending Balance	\$ 7,502.71
CD Canyon Investment Co.	\$ 30,000.00
Net Worth	\$ 37,502.71

3. Sam Commons and Amy Nally presented the physical and financial status of the 2008 Atlanta, GA Reunion. The report revealed a well organized program, which appears to be under budget. Approximately 50 will be in attendance. There have been several cancellations due to flooding in the Midwest.
4. Max Axelsen reported the death of our long serving and beloved treasurer, Bill Wilson. Max provided a floral tribute in the name of KensMen. Roger Kettleson read the response from Bill's family and Bill's right hand lady, Elian the 43rd "ELF," which are included in the Memorial section.
5. "Bud" Lawson, Group Historian reported continued trouble finding a suitable placement for our historical data. One who will display, maintain and keep it.
6. Ed Gammill, Group Recruitment, reported issuing 20 invitations and gaining 4 new members (2 members and 2 associates).

NEW BUSINESS

1. The Nominating Committee, composed of Past Presidents presented a list of candidates for the 2009 Executive Board Officers, which will be presented during the General Group Meeting.
2. The Chair reminded the 64th, 65th and 403rd Squadrons of Board members whose term expired December 2008. They were inform to elect a person to fill that vacancy at the September 18th Squadron Meetings. They were reminded that the By Laws of the Association require the Board to be composed of thirteen members and precludes a board member of having a dual roll.

Minutes of the General Group Meeting on Friday, September 19, 2008 at 9:00 AM at the Crowne Plaza Atlanta Airport, Atlanta, Georgia.

The meeting was called to order by the Vice President Lawson at 7:10. "Bud" greeted all in attendance and lead the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

REPORTS

1. Secretary's Report - A motion from the floor to accept the minutes as published in the October 2007 Newsletter was seconded and passed with the thanks from a grateful Secretary.
2. Treasurer's Report- The Association financial status as of September 9, 2008 as shown in the Directors meeting was presented by Acting Treasurer Roger Kettleson.
3. The Nominating Committee presented the following as candidates for the respective offices shown.

President - Eldon "Bud" Lawson
Vice President - Donald Marsaglia
Treasurer - Roger Kettleson
Secretary - Edward Gammill

Call for nominations from the floor yielded no response. Hearing no further nominations, the Chair declared the slate elected by acclamation.

4. Max Axelsen reviewed his activities concerning Bill Wilson's interment and read the letters from the Wilson family and Elain Pierce.
5. The Historian and Membership Committeeman gave their reports.
6. Amy Nally reported status of the 2008 Reunion.

7. The group was informed that the 2010 Reunion will be hosted by Max Alexsen in San Antonio, TX. Since this is a new arrangement due to the withdrawal of Portland, the planning will take sometime. A future newsletter will include the schedule of events, activities and hotel arrangements. Max requests patient!

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. The 64th Squadron reported the extension of **Arvid Houghlum's** term as a Board Director to 1/2010.
2. The 65th Squadron reported the extension of **James Eide's** term as a Board Director to 1/2010.
3. The 403rd reported the election of **Robert Mangan** as a Board Director to 1/2010 and the election of **Jack Strange** as a Board Director to 1/2011.

The meeting was closed with the following message from Roland Fisher.

HEY! DUDE!

The vernacular of today's youth is replete with terms that, in past years, had a different use. One may hear our kids utter some thing similar to, "--Dude, it was, like, totally gross--it was cool." In our youth we were taught "gross" meant coarse or obscene. "Cool" referred to temperature. And a dude was an extremely fastidious man. Today, our youth seem to apply "dude" to all, regardless of gender. It is commonly used by the young to address anyone.

During the recent presidential primaries, an event occurred that, at first, I thought was quite funny. But then it brought me to some serious reflection. After some of Barack Obama's speeches, beginning with the ones in Germany, John McCain's people published an ad that linked Obama, Britney Spears and Paris Hilton. It mocked Obama as a self important celebrity along the likes of Spears and Hilton. The ad made a zero mention of McCain himself. It starts off with a picture of Obama while a narrator says, "He's the biggest celebrity in the world". Then shifts to shots of the two young female pop icons amidst paparazzi. The scene suggests that we are looking at the world's three top celebrities whose renown rests more on frivolity than on the important substance of national leadership. The Narrator increases that concept by asking "But can he lead?" There is the implication that all three celebrities are about equally unqualified.

Because so many people saw this, it was publicity made to order for Paris Hilton and she began a spoof—she thrust herself into the campaign with a "PARIS FOR PRESIDENT" TV spot. Reclining on a lounge by the pool, barely covered in a revealing bikini, blonde hair and alabaster skin shining in the sun, she delivered a reply to the McCain ad. It began with references to McCain, such as—how old he is. She said: "He can remember when they thought it was a sin to dance. When they drank beer out of a bucket". Then it pictured McCain.

The part of this that I thought so funny was how began. "Hello America, I'm Paris Hilton---that wrinkly old white haired guy just used me in a commercial about running for president. So, hey—old white haired dude, I want you to know, I'm, like, totally ready—". And she launched into details of her platform.

It was just a revengeful spoof. And I laughed—it was funny!

But then I heard her words again—"That wrinkly old white haired guy— Hey! Old white haired dude"—and there was a tone of condescension—maybe outright belittlement. The image that she cast was that we old white haired dudes lacked importance in this world.

It is true that when one looks at a gathering of 43rd veterans one will see many white thatched heads—some just a fringe of white with a shine top! But that surface image does not begin to define who and what we are. So—politics and Paris Hilton's fresh beauty aside—this writer is compelled to stand up for white haired old dudes. We have several advantages over others. For example: We can drink coffee straight from a mug. We don't need to sip through a little hole in the top of Starbucks's plastic cup to make it taste good. As we grew up, phones had cords and phones booths had doors. So we know how to have a private phone conversation. We were lucky to grow up when it was safe for kids to walk to school. We learned how to

organize our own sports after school and took lessons from that. We even did not have to drink water from a bottle. It tasted just fine from the faucet.

True! There are some pretty wondrous things going on today. But we got in on some really good things too. We dudes were not so white haired sixty five years ago when some really black hearted dudes began a conquest of whole nations and cultures. We white haired old dudes, then with darker hair, with national purpose, made masses of weapons: guns, ships, tanks, planes. We grouped into powerful forces. We spread all over the world. We met those rampaging black hearted dudes and forced them to a complete surrender. This had a huge cost—the greatest of which was—nearly two hundred thousand young dudes' lives ended. They never got to become white haired old dudes. Seven hundred classy young dudes on the 43rd Bmp Group did not get to come home from the awful places where they met the black hearted dudes and made them stop their evil activities. Today, he is white haired. But hey! dude, he is one of our most conscientious and effective leaders. Paris, seven hundred or our young comrades gave up their chance to become white haired old dudes. The greatest tribute to their sacrifice is—hey dude—that you are free to be Paris Hilton.

Roland Fisher **63rd Squadron-----43rd Bomb Group September 2008**

THE ATLANTA REUNION

The Atlanta Reunion was very enjoyable, Amy Nalley and Sam Commons planned and provided an excellent series of activities. The Crowne Plaza Atlanta Airport hotel facilities, rooms, service and personnel were excellent. The only complaint that your editor heard was that the "Watering Hole" did not open early enough!

Activities: 1-Wednesday-The day was mostly for registration and Memorabilia Room. The Executive Board Meeting was that evening ending up at the "Watering Hole". 2-Thursday-Golf, Atlanta's Past Tour, our Tour Guide would have made an excellent First Sergeant. She warned us that the driver was a rookie, this being his first time driving one of these large tour buses! She was always on schedule and told her subject with interesting stories. We visited the Cyclorama for a view of a very large painting about the battles around Atlanta during the Civil War, had an excellent lunch, next stop Stone Mountain Park and finally toured an Antebellum Plantation. 3-Friday-After the General meeting, the Atlanta's Future Tour, where we could go to the Georgia Aquarium or the World of Coca-Cola. That evening a Southern Buffet Dinner at the hotel with entertainment by the Old Flint River Dixieland Group of the U.S. Army Ground Forces Band, these young men were not in uniform, but were dressed as old time musicians. They played some fine foot tapping music. During one of their breaks, Richard Hughes told the story of the jolly swagman and sang Waltzing Matilda. 5-Saturday-The tour included the King Memorial, Carter Library and many points of interest. Lunched at MARY MAC'S Tea Room. Where lunch was "family style" helping yourself and passing around great southern food. Mint Julep was the favorite beverage and peach cobbler finished a delightful lunch. The tour finished with a run through some very impressive wealthy neighborhoods with many beautiful homes. The high point of the day was the dinner/dance that evening and a talk by an active duty Air Force Historian. He covered the transition of USAAF into the USAF and some of the history of the 43rd. 6-Sunday-Memorial Service which is covered in MEMORIALS. Farewell buffet brunch, departures and promises to meet next year ended most of our activities.



MARY MAC'S Tea Room

Attending the reunion and listed by squadron (including guest) were;

63rd SQUADRON

Ed Gammill
Jo Bachi
Raymond Gates
Betty Gates
Harold Newton
Patricia Newton
Ray Crawford
Dorothy Crawford
Eleanor Skinner
Chuck Rauch
Jim Dieffenderfer
Ann Fletcher
Christine Skibinski
Mark Hardy

64th SQUADRON

Lorraine Ross
Alvin Haus
Robert W. Cooper
Jesse Fulton
Hazel Taff (Angus)
Roger Kettleson
Audrey Kettleson
Howard "Andy" Anderson
Anne Anderson
Jim Rodella
Dan Grubb
Ralph Grubb
Ray Harper

65th SQUADRON

James Eide
Steve Edie
Jerry Nelson
Willard V. Horne
Chalky White
Rosemary White
Sam Commons
Amy Nally
Steve Nally
Eldon "Bud" Lawson
Donald J. Marsaglia
Betty Marsaglia
Francis R. Boutwell (Randy)
Judy Malley
Victoria Calder

403rd SQUADRON

Joe Snyder
Sally Snyder
William Snyder
Doug Snyder
Max Axelsen
Rick Lloyd
Nancy Solomon
Richard Hughes
Carolyn Hughes
Jack H. Strange
Bob Mangan
Dexter Fairbanks
Micah Dunn
Abby Dunn

*****EDITOR'S and MEMBERS REPORTS*****

"There is nothing wrong with change, if it is in the right direction." *Winston Churchill*

The OWI article in the April Newsletter brought a letter from **John Taylor, Flight Engineer, 64th Squadron**: "Sure enjoyed your article on OWI Island. It was quite an experience and a very nice place to be from. Our pilot **Matt Holohan** came down with something like that fever while there and had to be sent out for treatment.

Of the enlisted men in the photos, **Thomason and King** have passed in the past year. Myself and the other two, **Burns and Wisnack**, are hanging in there in case we might be need in Iraq, Ha! Hope you may find a spot in the next issue for the photos.

Sincerely, *John Taylor*



Donald King, Charles Thomason and Joe Wisnack
William Burns and John Taylor



King and Thomason in Fox Hole

A new Associate Member **Robert Naumann**, Nephew of **Ernst A. Naumann, 64th Squadron, Pilot**. Robert writes "My uncle was reported MIA in May 1943. His family never found out what happened. I am trying to find out. My uncle was commissioned a 2nd Lt. 26Sept41 and was assigned to the 43rd BG in January 1943. I wish to contact any of his crew or anyone who knew him personally."

Roberts address: 17951 SW 296 Street, Homestead, FL 33030, phone (305) 242-0144

In a letter to Bill Wilson, retired **Lt/Col Ely L Hill, 403 Squadron, Armament Officer**, sent payment for a lifetime membership in the 43rd Bomb Group Association. Ely's letter, which has includes some history, is an enclosure of this newsletter.

In an e-mail to **Jim Cherkauer, Jack Nunnellee, 64th Squadron, Nose Gunner** reports that he fell and broke a hip. He has undergone a complete hip replacement and is presently in recovery. Jack, we will miss you in Atlanta and expect to see you in Portland. Also there is a new address for Jack: 190 50th Avenue, Salem, Oregon 92304.

Jim Cherkauer received the follow note from **Frank Hohmann, 65th Squadron, Flight Engineer**: "I am back home and trying to walk. Never want another vacation like that again! A mistake by someone at the hospital resulted in an overdose of a medicine that was not compatible with a medicine that I have been taking for five years. The medicines had a fight, WHICH I LOST and resulted in a SEIZURE that has left me with nerve damage on my whole left side. But I have been there before, overcome it before and I will overcome it again. It was very kind of you to post a notice on "Kens Men", Thank you very much.

Virginia and I celebrated our 65th wedding anniversary on July 4th this year with our family in my hospital room and we kept our promise to each other." *Frank*

Frank, all Kens Mem wish you well and hope for your recovery soon.

Nance Solomon (Songbird of the 43rd) has presented her brother, **Richard W. Hughes** of Waltzing Matilda fame, with a Life Membership. Richard's address: 548 Greenhurst Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15243-2030. Welcome aboard Richard, we enjoyed your singing at the Atlanta Reunion.

Larry Driever, son of **Edwin Merl Driever, 403rd Squadron, Maintenance Crew Chief**, has become an Associate Member. Larry wishes to share photographs and other WWII information with the his 43rd friends. You may contact Larry at: 2679 Velarae Drive, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360 or his e-mail address ljdrv@gmail.com.

Mrs. Arthur D. Byrne, sent Bill Wilson dues with apologies for being late. Dear Jean, as the widow of Arthur, you no longer have to pay dues

Harold G. Scroggins, 65th Squadron, Pilot has become a member. He and his wife, **Olive**, live in Lake Jackson, TX. Harold served, as a member of the Aaron Burleson Crew, from May 1945 through November 1945. Their address: PO Box 580, Lake Jackson, TX, 77566 and phone (979) 297-0077.

Jim Quinn, # 52 Pomander Walk, Ridgewood, NJ 07450, (201) 447-2160, brother of **John Terrance Quinn**, Squadron, unknown has become an Associate Member.

From **Wayne Downing**: "Here is a check for 2007 and 2008 Dues. I fought the cold war in the 65th Squadron as a B-47 Stratojet Pilot from 1953 to 1960.

While you guys were winning the Pacific War from 1943 to 1945, I was doing combat in Europe as an A-20 Havoc and an A-26 Invader Pilot (86 combat missions). Keep up the good work".

All the best, *Wayne*

"Enclosed \$60 to catch up with dues for **James McGuire, 63rd Squadron, Radio Operator**. Sorry to be behind, but I take care of all correspondence, guess I'm the bad girl.

Jim is 86 years old and has lost a lot of his sight to macular degeneration. He is still able to take care of himself, do yard work, etc. But no longer drives or reads. We bought a video eye machine so he can still read your newsletter. I hope Larry Hickey will complete the history book so Jim can read it.

Jim and I met in 1942 when he was here in Maine. He was in the infantry guarding our coast but transferred to the Air Corp and ended up with the 43rd as a member of the **Neil Fugate Crew** flying in B-24s.

We send our best wishes to all who are still here. Our prayers are with you. Happy Holidays with your families".

Sincerely, *Cynthia McGuire*

It seems that I am remiss in my dues. I erroneously thought I had paid. Enclose is \$40 for 2007 and 2008. I am completely set up for the Atlanta Reunion, which fortunately is just 50 miles south of me.

Thank You, *William Snyder, Jr.* **403rd Squadron Gunner**

Dear Bill, Enclosed is check for my 2008 dues. I am sorry to report, that due to health problems, I will be unable to attend the Atlanta Reunion this fall. I will know in 2 weeks what my future course will be.

KEEP 'EM FLYIN' *Stuart Brown*, **403rd Pilot**

Have enclosed \$40 for 2007 & 2008 dues. I maybe able to attend the Atlanta Reunion. Have been busy caring for a sick wife prior to her death in February.

The OWI article was exceptionally interesting, as I joined the Group on that island.

Clarence Ray Harper, **64th Squadron, Pilot**

Elain, I apologize for my delinquency on dues the past few years. Times were tight and I was always surprised when newsletters continued to arrive. Consider this check (\$150) payment for lifetime Associate Membership and general frustration. It's been frustrating, personally, not to be able to support the association the way I wanted. I will say I am not done yet. More to come, I will let you know when. Thanks for all of your hard work.

Regards, *Clint Hayes*, **Free Lance Writer**

*****MEMORIALS*****

Via e-mails to **Jim Cherkauer**, **Kathie Lukowski** reported the serious sickness, followed by the death of her father, **Orion L. Rogers, 63rd Squadron Pilot**, July 7, 2008. Orion's ashes will be interred at Sunland Memorial Park, Sun City, Arizona, alongside his late wife. Kathie, her daughter **Lindsey** and grandson **Tyler**, attended the 2007 Philadelphia/Valley Forge Reunion.

I have just received this note to **Bill Wilson** dated October 20, 2007. "Just a short note to thank you for sending the 43rd Bomb Group Association the Newsletter to **Leroy Jasmer, 63rd Squadron, Maintenance** and to inform you that Leroy died August 17, this year, after patiently struggling with the effects of Parkinson's Disease. He had been in a Nursing Home since January 13th of this year.

In the September 1995 AIR CLASSICS magazine there is an article he wrote "BETTY'S FINAL MISSION-How The Japanese Betty bombers were used to conclude WWII." The last paragraph reads, "Sunday 19 August, dawned bright and clear. I was there on Ie Shima to see the Japanese Bettys when they landed at midday, and they could not have been more beautiful airplanes."

For all family he has written a beautiful autobiography which includes his description of his days in the Air Force. He was an English Teacher, and had many other talents as well."

Sincerely, *Naomi Jasmer*

A letter to Bill Wilson reveals a death and a "Love Story" from **Lt. Col. John L. Hinkle USMC (Ret)**. "Just a short note to inform you that (my wife) **Vivian D. Hinkle (widow of Herbert C. Pflueger, 63rd Squadron, Pilot)** passed away 7 April 07.

She and I grew up together in middle TN prior to WWII and were to be married, but her mother and my mother forbid it. So I joined the US Marines. When I returned from WWII, in August 1947, Vivian was married. So I went back to the West Coast and worked as a test pilot for Douglas Aircraft in Santa Monica, CA. I was called back into the Korean Affair for the USMC 15 June 50 and stayed in until 1964. I flew Curtis Commandos (R5C) C46 aircraft during WWII and in two tours in Korea.

In 2005, I received a Christmas Card from Vivian. I wrote to her and made arrangements to meet her in Jackson, TN for lunch. We knew right away how we felt about each other. I took her to my ranch in Wyoming and to the one on the western slope of Colorado. She enjoyed it very much but became homesick for her family in Jackson. She has 6 children, all living around Jackson. I turned the ranch operations over to my son and we

moved back to Jackson. We were married 29 June 06. Vivian suffer a heart attack 2 April 07 and only lived five more days. We had ten wonderful months together". Peace be unto you my Comrades of WWII, *John L. Hinkle*

I received a letter, at my home, addressed to **Elain**. Dear Elain, I hope you will forgive me for opening it, but I recognized that this was one of our well known pilots and that it was probably sad news. From **Max Axelsen**: "Our beloved **William "Bill" Wilson, 65th Squadron, Pilot**, one of the "originals" of the 43rd Group and our Treasurer for many years, passed away at Snyder, TX this date.....20 August. Elain will inform me of the services when known. Mary Lois, Bill's wife, has been ill for some time, but is holding up quite well".

From **Mrs. Gene De Loach**: "I regret to report the death of **Ralph De Loach, 63rd Squadron, Pilot**, my husband, in September of 2007. He enjoyed the 43rd Bomb Group Association newsletters, which he had been receiving for several years since attending a reunion in Arizona.

I know that Ralph was a pilot in the American Air Force, but I cannot supply anymore information. Thank you for the issues of the Ken's Men newsletter". Sincerely, *Gene De Loach*

Gene, Ralph joined the 63rd Squadron February 22, 1943, he was involved in the ditching of "Black Jack" B-17F, S/N 41-24521, July 11, 1943, off the southern coast of New Britain. The ditching was the result of combat damage to the aircraft during a mission in the Rabaul area. This action is covered in the April 1988 issue of National Geographic and pages 65-67 of the 63rd Squadron COMBAT DIARY.

Jim Thompson sent in the following: "I am reporting that **Howard Cook, 403rd Squadron, Navigator** passed away October 28, 2007. Dad suffered with Alzheimer for years and never talked about the war. I have read and enjoyed your newsletters for years. I would like to thank you for a glimpse into a part of his life that I never knew".

Stanley C. Cook

A short note from Jim: "I had another CT scan of the aneurysm near my heart. It has grown a little in the past two years. It is not at a point where I have have open heart surgery yet. Take care and have a good time at the reunion".

Jim Thompson

Our Memorial Service was held in the Mansfield 1 Room at Crowne Plaza Atlanta Airport Hotel. The welcoming and initiation of the service was by President "Bud" Lawson. After Nancy Solomon sang "How Great Thou Art" Max Axelsen read Chaplin Roland Fisher's INVOCATION:

OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

Once again we gather with friends and family to celebrate our love for you, and for each other, and to reflect on the high moral purpose of our responsibility to mankind you so wisely instilled in us when we formed as a unit years ago. Then we were many, young, strong and spirited, drawn from all parts of this great country you so generously gave to us. Now we are few. We show marks of the years gone by. We are weary, some feeble. We see the shadows of our twilight drawing near.

But we are deeply grateful for those years you gave us. We are grateful for the many blessings you have bestowed upon us. We are grateful that you gave us, all of us in the past, each other as comrades. We are grateful that you gave us the ability to serve our country, the opportunity to help all people be free. We are grateful for your love and compassion. We know the spirits of our comrades lost in the war, and of those have passed on since, are in your tender care. We ask for your blessing of the loved ones they left behind, and your mercy to ease their grief.

Our country, all mankind, is facing menace from the acts of those who are not guided by your principles of compassion. Give us the wisdom to cope with these threats in a way that protect us, protects those who would hurt us from harm to any and all of us. Help us to select the best of our leaders and guide them on to acts that will benefit all mankind.

Dear LORD, we are humbly grateful for your benevolence.

We thank THEE.

AMEN

Roland Fisher, Chaplain, 43rd Bomb Group

A director from each Squadron read the 2007-2008 list of departed 43rd Bomb Group Members.

63rd SQUADRON

Elizabeth Woods,
Wife of Charles R.
Wilbert H. Householdler
Anthony J. De Angelis
Lotus "Jack" Fultz
Thomas S. Casey
Emil B. Pruiet
Edmond L. Bouton Jr.
Orion L. Rogers
Vivian D. Pflueger/Hinkle
Wife of Herbert C./John L.

Leroy Jasmer
Ralph De Loach
Nathan "Joe" Hirsh, Jr.

Crew of:

B-24 "The Swan"

MIA 3Dec43

Robert Coleman
Kenneth L. Cassidy
George E. Wallinder
Irving Schechner
Paul Miccias
Albert J. Caruso
William L. Fraser
Robert E. Frank
Robert C. Morgan
Joseph Thompson

Have come home

Crew of :

B-24D S/N 42-40972

MIA 5Nov43

Arthur C. Armacost
William C. Cameron
Raymond S. Cisneros
David R. Eppright
Charles F. Feucht
Arthur P. Fredrickson
William M. Hafner
Alfred W. Hill
James G. Lascelles
Richard M. Salley

Have come home

64th SQUADRON

Asa Lewelling
Howard L. Rogers
Jeri Harper
Wife of Clarence R.

65TH SQUADRON

Dayton Blanchard
Charles L. Riefenberg,
Joseph Heuston
W.T. "Joe" Allbright
Vito Delfino
Arthur D. Byrne
Richard P. Schmitt, Jr.
J C Fronaberger
Jules V. Powell
Lloyd "Breezy" Boren
Norbert "Mike" Michalowicz
Ernest N. Morgan
William "Bill" Wilson

403RD SQUADRON

William E. Burns
Mitch Cobeaga
Ernest N. Morgan
William J. "Bill" Solomon
Leland R. Loughrey
Dorothy Galida
Wife of William D.
William D. Galida
Mary Whitt
Wife of Thomas
Allen E. Greenstein
Howard Cook

Nancy sang Taps, follow by Taps performed by SSG Erin Richardson, Bugler from the U.S. Army Ground Forces Band, Ft. McPherson, Georgia.

The Memorial Service was closed by sing Nancy leading all to sing "GOD Bless America."
The letters from Bill's family and Elain Follow:

Dear Friends of the 43rd.

What comfort and cheer the cards and letters gave our family after my grandfather's, (Major William H. Wilson Jr.), passing. The beautiful plant sent from the 43rd, sits next to his model of a B17 that Bill kept in the living room. The personal words and fond memories that many of you shared through offerings of sympathy gave my grandmother and we children and grandchildren such pride and solace as we navigated through those early days of grief and loss.

For all who knew Bill, his service as a B17 pilot and love for his WWII brothers and the country they fought so bravely to defend were the very fabric of who he was as a man.

At one time or other we all had the opportunity to accompany Bill and Mary Lois to a reunion. Experiencing first-hand with the 43rd, the warm embrace and absolute joy in being together as friends and families revealed to us yet another facet of our parent's and grandparent's lives. As young men with wives and growing families with so much for which to fight and return safely, it was easy to see how the friendships forged under those circumstances so many years ago could thrive so seamlessly for so long.

It is worth knowing that Bill passed with absolute peace in his own home under his own terms. One of the first responses from us when receiving the news of his death was how happy he must be to be sharing a great time with his WWII buddies who passed before him. We thank you so much for continuing to love and honor Bill and your friendship by taking the time to offer comfort and remembrance to Mary Lois and we children and grandchildren.

We will be thinking of the 43rd, as you all gather in Atlanta this year.

Sincerely,

Rachel Wilson Rember — First Granddaughter
Molly Wilson McMillian — Second Granddaughter
Carl Strelecki — Grandson
Mary Wilson Strelecki — Daughter
Bill Wilson III — Son

Hello to All 43rd Bomb Group Members,

I have been trying to work the Atlanta Reunion into my schedule. I wanted to take the time to say Thank you to all of you. That I feel VERY LUCKY to have known Major William H Wilson Jr. And I am so thankful to him for giving me the opportunity to go to the Reunions with him and Mrs. Wilson. I have been introduced to some of the most interesting and amazing people.

He always spoke so highly about the 43rd Bomb Group and the people in it. I will always remember the great talks and moments that Mr. Wilson and I shared.

Elain
"The Elf"

*****43rd HUMOR*****

Jokes that can be told in church, from **Roger Kettleson**.

Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl whispered to her mother, "Why is the bride dressed in white?" The mother replied, "Because white is the color of happiness, and today is the happiest day of her life." The child thought about this for a moment then said, "So why is the groom wearing black?"

An Elderly woman died last month. Having never married, she requested no male pallbearers. In her handwritten instructions for her memorial service, she wrote, "They wouldn't take me out while I was alive, I don't want them to take me out when I'm dead."

A police recruit was asked during the exam, "What would you do if you had to arrest your own mother?" He answered "Call for backup!"

A Sunday School Teacher asked her class why Joseph and Mary took Jesus with them to Jerusalem. A small child replied, "They couldn't get a baby-sitter."

A blonde joke from **Jim Cherkauer**

Last year, I replaced all of the windows in my house with that expensive double-pane energy efficient kind, and today I got a call from the contractor who installed them. He was complaining that the work had been completed a whole year ago and I still hadn't paid for them.

Hellloooo.....just because I'm blonde doesn't mean that I am automatically stupid. So I told him just what his fast talking sales guy told me last year—that in ONE YEAR these windows would pay for themselves!

Helllooooo? "Its been a year!" I told him. There was only silence at the other end of the line, so I finally just hung up. He never called back. Guess I won that stupid argument. I bet he felt like an idiot.

I've often been asked, "What do you old folks do now that you are retired? Well—I'm fortunate to have a few friends who have chemical engineering backgrounds, and one of the things we enjoy most is turning beer, wine, bourbon and martinis into urine. And, we're pretty damn good at it too!!

*****INFORMATION*****

This newsletter is published four times a year - **January, April, July and October**. Please send **membership applications** and **dues payments** to **Elain Pierce, P.O. Box 84, Snyder, TX 79549**. Please keep in mind that annual dues are **\$20.00 per year** and life membership is **\$100.00**. Please make the check to the **43rd Bomb Group Association**.

Send items for the **Newsletter** to **Ed Gammill at 5415 E. Osborn Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85018-6106** or via e-mail to **Edgammill@aol.com**. Any material received after the 15th of the month prior to a publication month probably will not appear in that publication.

The Postal Service **will not forward** this newsletter. If you change your address **please notify** our **Ed Gammill** at the address shown above. Send all changes of phone numbers, etc. also.

*****REUNION INFORMATION*****

Due to the cancellation of the Portland, OR Reunion, we must give Max Axelsen time to contact many folks in San Antonio. So just be patient and stand by, a well planned get together will in a future newsletter. Remember we have had wonderful times in prior TEXAS Reunions

Lt/Col. Ely L. Hill
United States Air Force (Ret.)
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Cincinnati, Ohio 45244
513.231.9187
ehill29@cinci.rr.com

April 21, 2008

Mr. William H. Wilson, Jr.
P. O. Box 360
Snyder, Texas 79550-6351

Dear Brother

I am enclosing my check for \$100.00 for a lifetime membership in the 43rd Bomb Group Association. I have been paying annual dues for the past several years, and I have thoroughly enjoyed the news articles that have been in the quarterly bulletin. I had looked forward to the publication of the Group's history, as many of us had. However, through the inclusion of both diaries and recalled memories, I feel that I know the history of the 43rd.

I joined the group late in the conflict, joining it at Clark Field, and moving with you to Ie Shima. I was on Ie Shima at the conclusion of the war: watched as the Japanese diplomats landed on our island to be further flown to the Philippines to General McArthur's headquarters for preparation for the final surrender. I was an armament Officer with the 403rd Squadron, and I read with much interest the account of the 1000-pound bomb, hanging up in flight, only to fall through the bomb bay door and to skid down the runway upon the plane's landing. This was one of my planes, and we were all somewhat shaken to see the skidding bomb. Fortunately the bombardier had removed the fuse making it somewhat inert, however it was a scare, and it did the bomb bay door no good.

To explain how this could have happened, one must know that each time we carried the 1000 pounder, different bomb racks had to be installed. They were removed when bombs of lesser weight were loaded. As the airframe changed through the stress of flying, it was an extremely hard job to install these different racks, as the holes for the attaching bolts were never in line. Through much twisting, forcing and cursing we were able to get the new

bomb racks installed. Through the stress from flying, the frame could again twist, which might cause the bomb shackle to freeze up in the dropping of the bomb, making it difficult to release. Most times the bombs did release, or could be caused to release, in the most extreme cases, by one of the crew standing on the middle support causeway and forcing the release by hand. This bomb, however, was very stubborn and wouldn't drop. Hence the show we had on the runway on landing.

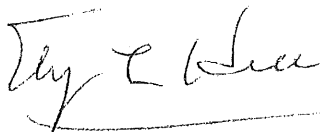
Through the years, two of my friends have been mentioned in the bulletin. George Olaf Anderson, who was one of my tent mates, and Wally Kitchura, who was one of my armament crew. There of course have been others, whose names at this time I can't recall and to whom I apologize for not recalling.

I was assigned to Atsugi Airfield with the 3rd Attach Group two weeks after the surrender, when I left you who were going home. I had not been in the field long enough to accumulate enough points to fly back, I spent eleven months in Japan, returning to the states in the summer of 1946. I retained my commission, and was called back to active duty during the Korean War, and spent eighteen months in the Research and Development Command at Wright Patterson Air force Base. Was again called back during the Cuban Missile crises, with the 302nd Troop Carrier Group, with whom I stayed until I retired in 1968.

I retired from The University of Cincinnati in 1988, as Assistant Treasurer in charge of cash flow, endowments and banking relations. After retirement I did keep in touch with the Air Force, having served as a docent at the United States Air Force Museum for ten years. "Where Eagles Sleep".

I wish you all the best; have a wonderful time at the reunion.

Keep 'end flying, (if only in our memories), my brothers.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Ely L. Hill". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Ely L. Hill.

Rich Schumann
B-24D # 42-40972, 4-5 Nov 1943
Mon Apr 21, 2008 19:30
199.208.239.141

1Lt William M. Hafner, Pilot
2Lt Charles F. Feucht, Bombardier
B-24D, #42-40972, 4-5 Nov 1943
63rd Bombardment Squadron, 43 Bombardment Group

I was privileged to be the senior Army officer participating in the interment ceremony for the "Hafner Group" in Arlington National Cemetery on July 19th, 2006. I personally escorted the family of 2Lt Charles Feucht, Bombardier, during the events. On November 4, 1943, 1Lt Hafner and his crew took off in a B-24D from Dobodura, Territory of New Guinea for a recon over the Bismark Sea. They and their seven crewmates of the B-24D went down on the night of 4-5 November, 1943 in the Morobe Province of Papua New Guinea.

Although they were returning from a successful mission having attacked a 10 ship convoy and sank a Japanese cruiser, a Missing Aircrew Report (MACR) was filled, but the Army lists the crash as an "accident" due to no evidence attributable to a combat related cause.

In the official U.S. Army records, none of the nine crewmembers received Purple Hearts as well as other discrepancies in their records. In an effort to correct, if possible, their personnel records, I have been researching the circumstances surrounding the downing. However, I have insufficient information to support a case of overwhelming circumstantial evidence, e.g. description of the low-level tactics their squadron used, information on the "Scott Project", identification of the sunken cruiser, eyewitness account of the aircraft during the attack or just prior to the crash that would indicate combat damage, etc.

If anyone has information regarding this aircraft or information that would support their case, I would greatly appreciate hearing from them.

NOTES

Bill Snyder, (770) 607-7565 and wray21@comcast.net, wishes to have contact with anyone who has knowledge of or participated in the crash landing of a 63rd Squadron B-24 at Wakde airstrip.

Due to the length of this newsletter, only 8 additional pages of Randal J. Sobotka's diary will be included. The remainder of his diary will be in the January 2009 Newsletter