

July 1987

43rd BOMB GROUP



ASSOCIATION

- Hds.
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43rd BOMBARDMENT GROUP NEWSLETTER

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24th Edition - 63rd, 64th, 65th, 403rd, Hdqs Squadrons - July 1987

FROM GEORGE WHITE

The Bossier City 1987 reunion is shaping up to be one of our best, so if you haven't already made your arrangements, reread the information LLOYD BOREN is placing in this newsletter, and mail or phone in your hotel reservation to the Hotel, and send your registration for the reunion to BOB BEAUDEAN, and if you intend to fly into Shreveport, make your plane reservations soon in order to secure those limited number of low cost plane seats. This years reunion is set for Sept. 2-6, a little earlier than the last few because we were able to obtain at that time the best hotel in Bossier City at the best price possible.

DUTCH BENEDETTI 65th, Monterey Park, CA., is still on the go, running marathons all over the world. The Los Angeles Marathon was his 19th in the last 38 months. If his 72 year old legs hold out, he intends to continue running. "DUTCH", a number of us will be ready to run with you at Bossier City for at least 100 yards."

One of our new members is MORTON SOSENSKY, 63rd, East Haven, CT. Mort was a cryptographer in the 63rd from Oct. 1941 to Oct. 1944, and would like to locate DICK METZNER, BERNIE GOLDBERG, and NORM BOROFKY. It would help us, MORT, if you could give us the names of the towns they came from.

Another new member is ROBERT SHEPPARD, Hdqrs., Springfield, MO. BOB joined the 43rd at Tacloban in 1945 and worked with M/Sgt. JIM DAVIS in the citations section. When BOB receives LLOYD'S new roster, he will be pleased to see the names of two men he inquired about, SPENCER WOOLEY and LEE MC ALLISTER. BOB retired from Delta Air Lines in 1979 and takes life easy by taking trips around the country, fishing, and playing golfs. Get your gang together at Bossier City, BOB, and sign up for the golf game.

Our far north member, JOHN MC DOWELL, 63rd, Anchorage, AK., would like to obtain a 63rd Seahawk jacket patch.

ROBERT E. HANKS, 65th, Watertown, NY, designed the 65th insignia with the dice showing the six and five on one side for the 65th, and the four and three for the 43rd. He won a case of champagne for his effort.

K "GUS" KELLEY, 63rd, Ft Myers, FL, was one of our "Scott Project" men who recognized RICHARD WELFZ name in the March Newsletter. The B-24 they brought to Port Moresby from Langley Field was "RADAR".

LON WEYLAND, 64th, Hot Springs, AR, read our story about 'CAP'N AND THE KIDS", and found three photos of the plane. LON would like to locate an old friend called "SEABISCUIT" with the middle name BEEDLE. Another man located by MATT HOLOHAN is DANIEL W. CROMER, 65th, Lakeland, FL. According to MATT, DAN was probably the first C/O of the 65th. When DAN was rotated back to the States, a General in Brisbane told him that if he flew under the San Francisco Golden Gate Bridge and anyone said anything, he should have them give him a call. Well, that's what he did and then he buzzed downtown San Francisco below the buildings roof level and no one said a word.

BILL BROWNE, 64th, Charlemont, MA, joined us last fall and has visited with MATT HOLOHAN, 64th, Seminole, FL, ART MULLIGAN 64th, Kingston, NY, and corresponded with JIM PETTUS, Hdqrs, Honolulu, HI.

CLARENCE "DUSTY" O'CONNOR, 63rd, Manchester, NH, wrote in answer to one of BRUCE HOY'S questions concerning the crew of B-17E 41-12481 that crashed on takeoff at Seven Mile August 27, 1943. DUSTY regrets to inform us that he was the pilot of the plane that day. The name of the plane was "TOPPER", and a top hat and Indian hatchet were painted on the frontside. They started down the strip loaded with bombs when the left main wheel tire exploded, the landing gear strut dug into the ground, and they were jolted into a 180 degree turn. Unfortunately, DUSTY does not remember the names of the other crew members who shared his anxious moments. Although I have not seen him since 1943, I have fond memories of DUSTY. He was co-pilot on my crew when we were in the 435th Squadron of the 19th Bomb Group. On Sept 24, 1942, with two navigators on board, we managed to get lost, run out of gas and made a water landing in Orangie Bay, New Guinea.

Our former CO, JIM PETTUS, is going to Africa this fall to see the game migrations and then to Asswan and down the Nile a la Cleopatra.

In the March Newsletter, I reported that BRUCE HOY was planning a visit to the U.S. this year, and I invited him to attend our reunion. Unfortunately, BRUCE has had to cut down on his travel days so he will not be with us a Bossier City. He will be in the States from September 30th to October 17th, and we will post his schedule of place and dates for those who would like to see him.

STEVE BIRDSALL of Sydney, Australia has been writing and researching military aviation history for 25 years, and gathered first-hand experience flying combat missions with the U.S. Air Force as a war correspondent in South Vietnam. He has written several major books including "FLYING BUCCANEERS", the story of the 5th Air Force. His current project is the production of a documentary television program/video tape entitled "Black Jack's Last Mission". Black Jack is a 63rd Squadron B-17F 41-24521 that did not return from a July 11, 1943 night strike on Vunakanau strip, Rabaul. Engine trouble and bad weather forced a water landing off Goodenough Island. The plane was discovered early this year in very deep water. The film will feature beautiful underwater pictures of the plane lying on the seabed. STEVE will be at our reunion in September to tell us more and to obtain additional information for his film. The film will be shown on television in 1988 on Anzac Day in Australia and Memorial Day in the U.S. STEVE is also working on B-17 "Almanac" and hopes to include as much 43rd material as possible. He is looking for photographs of a number of planes, in particular, "CAP'N AND THE KIDS" (LON WEYLAND please note), "YANKEE DIDD'LER", "THE LAST STRAW", "GUINEA PIG", and "LUCY", which JAY ZEAMER piloted the day he earned the Medal of Honor. All photos will be returned to the owner, so bring them to Bossier City or mail them to STEVE BIRDSALL, 31 Parkland Rd., Mona Vale, Sydney, Australia.

In April, DICK WOOD, 63rd, Saratoga, CA, escorted a number of us on a trip to Australia and Papua New Guinea. The principal places of interest were Sydney, Mareeba, Port Moresby, and for one intrepid soul, a daylight flight over Rabaul. Our overseas hosts were FRED and MARGARET BLAIR, BILL and PAT NANCE, and BRUCE and LINA HOY. The other members of the platoon were CLETUS ANGERMEIER and CHARLIE MAY, BOB and DORIS BUTLER, PAUL COBER, O.K. COULTER, MIKE and JANE EDSALL, FALCONER and GOLDIE GIFFORD, HENRY JAMES, RUSSELL and CLYTIE SEDERBERG, GEORGE and AILEEN WHITE, CHUNKY and CLARA MARIE WILFERT, and BILL and MARY LOIS WILSON. In brief, I would say that everyone had a good time and felt the trip was interesting and nostalgic. We were warmly received at all places and the 43rd is well remembered particularly at Mareeba. The old bomber strip is gone so the memorial and dedication ceremony was held at the Mareeba Airport. A number of local dignitaries and townspeople and a RAAF unit participated in the ceremony. The tablet being furnished by the 43rd and 19th Bomb Groups was not ready for placement; therefore, BOB BUTLER planted a small tree following his remarks to the assemblage. A reception for all followed at the Mareeba RSL Club. Naturally, a visit to Mareeba would not be complete with a side trip to Yungaburra and its watering hole, the Lake Eacham Hotel. CHUNKY WILFERT was greeted by young and old alike even though he insists he is not related; just an old friend who played Santa Claus at Christmas 1942.

During four days at Port Moresby, BRUCE HOY took us to many places including his war museum which is loaded with pictures and artifacts plus a number of planes and vehicles in various stages of reconstruction. The old Seven Mile Strip is now Jackson Field, the main entry point for Papua New Guinea. Some of the revetments, covered with kunia grass, are still in place along the north side of the runway. We walked up and down the camp area and the only physical evidence of our presence 45 years ago was an inscribed cement base about five foot square marking the entrance to the 65th Bomb Squadron's Enlisted Mens Clubs. BILL WILSON remembers that he and his friend JIM SHROPSHIRE, were among the many who helped construct the club. We also took a boat trip to view the remains of one of our 403rd B-17s that went down in Bootless Bay in December 1942. We visited the Bomana War Cemetery where white marble grave stones mark the final resting places of almost 4500 young Allied servicemen.

O.K. COULTER left us for a day to fly to Rabaul with a stop at Lae. His flight over the Owen Stanley Range was clear and calm. No rain, no fog, no jolting bounces, and no zeros; a real milk run. At Rabaul, he visited Yamamoto's bunker which is now a small museum with artifacts from the Australian, American and Japanese forces. He visited a native market where they sell the famous Betel nut which is chewed like tobacco. O.K. also lucked out in that he met the owner of a helicopter outfit who took him on a chopper tour of the area. He flew over one of our old targets, Vunakanau air strip, down into a volcanic crater, and saw Simpson Harbor.

Our visit to Sydney was well rewarded by three events. First of all we were guests at a luncheon given by the David Jones Department Store commemorating a luncheon given to the 43rd Bomb Group in 1943. Second, we marched in the ANZAC Memorial Day Parade carrying a 43rd banner. H. I. DALZIEL had made for the occasion. ANZAC DAY in Australia and New Zealand is not a sale day for stores. Every business is closed and it is a true Memorial Day dedicated to those who gave their lives in all the wars. Thousands paraded behind the flags and banners of their units. Last, but

FROM THE COLLECTION OF ELDON E. LAWSON

Eldon E. "Bud" Lawson

least, we were treated to a great day at the home of FRED and MARGARET BLAIR reached by ferry ride across Sydney Harbor. Their patio overlooks Freshwater Beach and the view is breathtaking. After a pleasant social hour, we were given a fabulous lunch at the Harbord Rogers Memorial Club, a very large modern facility including a casino featuring the famous Australian poker machines. Come to Bossier City and see DICK WOOD'S VCR picture of the entire trip.

In earlier editions of the Newsletter, we have told you about the effort of JOSE HOLGUIN 65th, Los Angeles, CA, to see that his crew mates were properly identified and buried in cemeteries in their home towns in the U.S. The April 1987 issue of Reader's Digest contains a six page article entitled "Lieutenant Holguin's Final Mission". This is an interesting account of how the plane, "Naughty But Nice", was shot down over Rabaul on June 25, 1943 and some details about the burial ceremonies for five of the men who had been found.

By the time you receive this Newsletter, our membership will have reached the 1200 mark. This is due largely to the work of MATT HOLOHAN, 64th, Seminole, FL, who started finding men by using the information you gave him at the San Antonio reunion. (He has located 200 men as of this letter). So bring to Bossier City reunion photos, general orders, movement orders, and special orders that include names and next of kin. BOB BACON, 63rd, Pekin, IL, and RICHARD WILLIAMS, 403rd, Rapid City, SD, have also been bringing in new members.

May 9th, I attended a 5th AF 1990 reunion planning meeting. Representatives of 16 reunion organizations were present. It is hoped that all hold their 1990 reunions in Las Vegas, NV, October 15-18. It is emphasized that each unit will do its own thing with only one or two gatherings of all 5th AF men and women. Our own 43rd reunion site committee, chaired by DALE R, 403rd, Omaha, NE, will consider the matter.

Based upon the input received up until now, it appears that the committee will recommend that we hold our 1988 reunion at Dayton, Ohio. The 5th AF Memorial Foundation has announced that the dedication of the 5th AF Memorial at the USAF Museum in Dayton, Ohio will be held June 24, 1988. The 43rd Bomb Group continues to be the leading contributing unit. We have 105 individual members.

We regret to report the following deaths and extend our deepest sympathy to relatives and friends.

| | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|----------------|------------------|
| GUS BLIXT | 63rd | Wyckoff, NJ | August 1, 1984 |
| JOHN L. PRESTON | 64th | Bedford, VA | January 15, 1987 |
| WILLIAM H. JONES | 63rd | Ft. Worth, TX | April 11, 1987 |
| WILLIAM NANCE | HDQRS | Telopea, Aust. | June 8, 1987 |
| CALVIN MEITZ | 65th | Burlingame, CA | June 21, 1987 |
| DAVID M. ANDERSON JR. | 63rd | Newton, MS | Dec 24, 1987 |

The 43rd Bombardment Wing on Guam has established a Wing Heritage Room and is anxious to include in the exhibit artifacts and photos that will contribute to the history of the 43rd. Items can be sent to Lt. Col. DONALD J. CANN, 43rd CSG/OT, APO San Francisco 95334. If you send photos or negatives you want returned, enclose return instructions.

According to a news item, Air Force Secretary EDWARD ALDRIDGE has ordered the restoration of a cherished token for his combat pilots; the leather flight jacket of yesteryear. Dropped from the regulation uniform some time ago, the jacket which can cost more than \$200.00, is being reintroduced as a morale booster.

And finally, I salute the author of the following: "If God had meant for men to fly he would have made it easier to get to the airport".

FROM BOB BEAUDEAN

Since the last newsletter gave a detailed run-down on the Bossier City reunion, we will give a minimum break down here, plus some additional information on events finalized as of this time.

Where Sheraton-Bossier Inn, 2015 Old Minden Rd., Bossier City, LA 71111
Phone 318-742-9700

When Sept 2 (Wed) thru noon Sept 6 (Sun)

Cost Rooms \$50.00 nightly single or double (be sure you specify you are with the 43rd BG)

Reunion cost \$65.00 per person.

Please register with the Hotel as early as possible, and a nights deposit should accompany ^{your} reservation, or credit card number. You are responsible for your own reservations at the hotel. Space is limited, so register early.

Unlike most of the other Groups, we have never given a cutoff date to register with the reunion chairman (BOB BEAUDEAN in this case), and we are not doing so now, but due to the fact that many of the events are paid for through your \$65.00 registration fee, we must give definite commitments, and pay for them whether you are there or not, we ask you to help us keep down the cost by registering for the reunion in advance of your arrival. Some of the costs included in your registration fee are: All shuttle bus services, Bus service for Louisiana Downs and Red River Paddleboat and Tour of Barksdale AFB. Southern Bar-B-Que dinner at Sheraton with Louisiana Hayride Show, Shuttle for Golf Tournament at Barksdale AFB, Two continental breakfasts, a Ladies breakfast & program, a Style and Hair Show for the ladies, Dinner at the Sheraton on Saturday with a show by the 8th AF Combo Showband Orchestra, followed by dancing to a Dixieland band, and a Sunday Brunch at the Sheraton.

With all the above plus wine tasting, coffee, etc for the memorabilia room, there is quite a bit your \$65.00 covers, and most of it we have to guarantee in advance, so again, please send your \$65.00 per person prior to your arrival if at all possible, or at least let BOB know you will definitely be coming. Also, TROY MC CONNELL, who is heading the Golf Tournament needs to know how many to count on for golf. (Golf fees, carts, etc are not included). Another thing to let BOB BEAUDEAN know is: Will you be going to the Special Race for the 43rd at Louisiana Downs? Tickets are included in your registration fee, but we have to guarantee a certain amount, so let BOB know as soon as possible if you plan on making this event.

FROM LLOYD

First! After making so many mistakes in the last newsletter, I'm almost afraid to open my mouth. As most of you know by this time, there was no May newsletter, we have never gotten a newsletter out that fast, it should have read June, and even then, due to several health problems, it turns out to be the middle of July when this is being sent out. My apologies.

Secondly! I made a horrible mistake and called LILLIAN BEAUDEAN LIZ. Talked to BOB last night, and he says LIL is getting used to it. But it is LIL and not LIZ.

About the first of April, I had surgery on my neck to clean out about 6 disks which were giving me quite a bit of trouble with arthritic buildup. Old age in other words. However, the big health problem was and still is as follows, and if you don't believe this story, I don't blame you, its hard for me to believe even now: On a Thursday about a month and a half ago, I was in the Veterans Hospital in San Antonio, sedated, prepped, laying on a gurney in front of the operating room waiting for the surgeon to go into my left knee and see if they could do anything for it. This would have meant being on crutches at least 3 weeks. The doctor came out and said I had been bumped to the following day because of an emergency operation. I was wheeled up to my room, and two hours later the doctor came in and asked me to come to the desk to the phone, was the Universal City Police calling to let me know that HELEN had fallen in a shopping center lot and broken her left knee cap. She was operated on the following day, and as of today she is still in a soft cast with the knee being held together with a couple pins and some wire. Needless to say, my operation is on the back burner now, and we are keeping our fingers crossed that HELEN will be able to make the reunion. She is getting around now with the aid of a walker. The wires are scheduled to be removed about the time of the reunion, so we are a little up in the air now. The only good part of this outside of the fact that only one of us is grounded at the same time is that I am getting to be a very good short order cook.

Had a nice letter from WARREN "DOC" BRYANT, 65th, Concord, CA, my navigator, who enclosed some information and a set of orders for BRUCE HOY concerning a plane he flew over in along with HARRY HAWTHORNE back in early 42. I have forwarded these to BRUCE.

Another nice letter from a recently located 63rd member, FRANK REMANIAK, Lakewood, NJ, who has a most interesting story about how RAY GATES, 63rd, West Monroe, LA, came to send his name in for the roster. FRANK writes; RAY had my 1940's home address, but in 1960 I moved to another town in New Jersey about 60 miles away. There were no family members left at the original address, and friends were also dispersed. My roots were severed. Earlier this year, I met a couple quite casually who came from a town near my 1940's address. Some reminiscences and adieu. The following day, they phoned me about a trip they made that date to the old haunts. They stopped in a diner to eat and picked up a local paper and saw an announcement about "looking for Fr Remaniak". They only met me the day before. This announcement was the result of RAY's request to the paper of the town I once lived in. So I phoned RAY and once again, some forty year old ties have been mended. What can be greater than hearing from old friends..... FRANK, due to prior commitments and late notice, will not be at the Bossier City reunion, but will plan on next.

Heard from DALE BARR last month, his son has moved to Corpus Christi, TX. which is only about 150 miles from us, so hopefully we will see more of DALE and MARY. DALE enclosed a letter from PHYLLIS CHRISTIANSEN about the upcoming 403rd and 13th Recon Squadrons 87 Reunion being held at the Nebraska Youth Development Center in Aurora, NE, August 28th-30th. Contact PHYLLIS CHRISTIANSEN by June 30th, RR 1 Box 242, Bradshaw, NE 68319. Cost is \$65.00 per person from Friday evening thru Sunday noon, meals and A/C room furnished.

BOB DE WITT, 63rd, Port Gibson, MS, writes that he will be attending the reunion, and playing golf. He is still waiting to hear from members of his crew. BOB, write MATT HOLOHAN in Florida and give him some names and old addresses (wartime). You would be surprised what MATT can do. He's a wonder.

Heard from PHYLLIS and GEORGE PATTERSON, Hdqrs, Saint Helena, CA, the other night, they had already made reservations for the reunion, but are having to cancel because GEORGE is having a problem with his eyes. GEORGE and PHILLIS just returned from a visit with their son who is a Colonel on active duty in Germany. All the best GEORGE, keep us posted. (We are still using that wine vinegar)

If I recall correctly, BOB BEAUDEAN told me last night that TROY MC CONNELL, 64th, Bossier City, LA has been in the hospital at Barksdale for 25 days. Hopefully he is out now and will be in good shape by reunion time. TROY has been partners with BOB all the way through on the reunion.

HELEN and I had a wonderful surprise a short time back when we received a box from JOE GREEN, 403rd, Valdosta, GA. It contained VIDALIA onions. I had mentioned to JOE, at least 6 months before that I sure would like some, but had forgotten all about it. JOE, bless his heart, didn't. Thanks JOE, we can't get them here. They didn't go to waste.

Those of you who paid your dues for 87 either at the San Antonio reunion or since, should have already gotten your rosters. I mailed them out about a week ago. If after another week, you have not gotten a roster, I don't have you marked paid. If I have made a mistake and you feel you have paid, simply drop me a card and I will send you a roster by squadrons by return mail. A good example of why we send the roster only to dues paying members is; I only sent out 486 rosters out of a membership of 1203. As a matter of fact, if it were not for a few who contribute much more than their share, we would have to drop members who have never paid dues. I have always hesitated to do this because I know there are some who are unable to pay dues, and fortunately, we have stayed in the black due to those who can afford dues, and in many cases, more. Those of you who send in dues for 1987, I have plenty of rosters on hand, and upon receipt of your dues before the reunion, I will forward a roster to you. Remember, dues are \$10.00 yearly, due from reunion to reunion. Dues for 1988 will be due at the Bossier City reunion.

I have ordered more caps than usual for the reunion, and although I haven't seen them yet, they should be the best yet. They will have the 43rd emblem in correct colors.

Please note the following changes in your roster which were received after the mailout:

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| FROM SQUADRON UNKNOWN | TO |
| FRANK WAGNER JR. | 63rd Squadron |
| JOHN J. CAIN | 64th Squadron |
| ARLEIGH APPEL | 65th Squadron |

ADD TO 63RD SQUADRON

M.R. HAMILTON, 217 N. JEFFREYS, PLEASANT HILL, MO 64080
 CREIGHTON BENNER, MURE 6-21-7, MITAKA 5H1, TOKYO, JAPAN
 JOHN W. CODY, P.O. BOX 42638, LAS VEGAS, NV 89116
 GEORGE DIRR, P.O. BOX 263, NEW PALESTINE, IN 46163
 GILBERT THREADWAY, RT 4 BOX 331, JASPER, IN 47546
 WARREN C. ADAMS, 232 N. COLUMBIA AVE., SPRINGFIELD, IL 62702
 SI FIRESTONE, P.O. BOX 19, HARRIET, AR 72639
 ROBERT LEE, 3411 SENATE AVE., FORT WAYNE, IN 44806

ADD TO SQUADRON UNKNOWN

ROBERT E. ESPENSHADE, 215 1ST ST., SUMMERDALE, PA 19481

It is very welcome to see so many of the later members of the 43rd joining our group, especially those from the Scott Project, and from Davis-Monthan. These younger members are eventually going to have to carry the ball and keep the Group together. Us old timers are going to need all the help we can get as time goes by.

Best wishes for your health and happiness, SEE YOU IN BOSSIER CITY !!!

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| George White and Eileen President 81 Orchard Rd. Chatham, NJ 07928 201-635-9438 | Lloyd Boren and Helen Secty-treas-newsletter 102 Beechwood Universal City, Tx 78148 512-658-5978 | Bob Beaudean and LIL Reunion Chairman 307 Jacquelyne St. Bossier City, LA 71111 Home 318-746-1217 Off 746-7611 |
|---|--|--|

MAIL TO BOB BEAUDEAN FOR REUNION FEES ONLY, HOTEL RESERVATIONS GO TO THE HOTEL.

| | | | |
|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| ----- | ----- | S----- | |
| NAME | # IN PARTY | AMT ENCLOSED (65.00 PER) | |
| ----- | ----- | ----- | |
| ADDRESS | SQDN | GOLF (Y/N) | RACE TRACK (Y/N) |
| ----- | ----- | ----- | ----- |
| METHOD OF TRANSPORTATION | ARRIVAL | DEPARTURE | |

TWO LATE NEWS ITEMS ... NEIL FAIRBANKS, 403rd, Anoka MN, called and says Dick Baughman, Chief of Pub Affairs, USAF Museum, will present a short film at the reunion; those interested in a 43rd BG design & construction of a memorial at the museum and other locations, are encouraged to bring ideas to Bossier City.

A Mr. Chris S. Lind, % Keith Hoffer, 18 Bishop St., Townsville 4810, Queensland, Australia, wrote me a long letter describing the remains of a B-17 he located off the old Mareeba airstrip. He checked it out, and it had crashed on takeoff Sept 14, 1942. The plane was registered to the 43rd BG, crew as follows; Herhall R. Henson, Capt, Upland, CA, James S. Bastion, 1st Lt, Chicago, IL, Francis W. Kritzmaier, 2nd Lt, San Antonio, TX, John A. Samara, T/Sgt, Pittsburg, PA, John P. Doran, T/Sgt, Philadelphia, PA, Louis N. Camp Jr., S/Sgt, Brooklyn, NY, Robert G. Case, Cpl, Ravenna, OH, and Jack C. Kaynor, Pvt, Detroit, Mich. If any of you know anything about this, drop him a line, or send to me and I will forward it. Mr. Lind was making a study of the Atherton Tablelands including Mareeba at the time.