



43RD BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION, INC.  
"KEN'S MEN"  
NEWSLETTER 66<sup>th</sup> EDITION  
APRIL 1998



**PRESIDENT**  
**SAMUEL F. COMMONS**  
2003 Grace Lane  
Flourtown, PA 19031-1709  
215-836-4158

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
**MAX M. AXELSEN**  
8406 Dorsetshire St.  
San Antonio, TX 78250-2414  
512-681-4581

**TREASURER**  
**WILLIAM H. WILSON, Jr.**  
P.O. Drawer M-360  
Snyder, TX 79550-0360  
915-573-6351

**SECRETARY**  
**JIM CHERKAUER**  
114 Thorncliff Rd.  
Kenmore, NY 14223-1216  
716-875-4346

\*\*\*\*\* FROM SAMUEL F. COMMONS, PRESIDENT \*\*\*\*\*

Warm greetings and best wishes to all members and their families for 1998. Thanks for the many calls and notes of good wishes as I take over the President's duties. I'm gradually learning just what those duties are. As I inquire about who handles a certain function, the answer often is, "Oh, that's something the president handles."

I had a phone call from Chester Haley, a 65<sup>th</sup> crew chief, regarding the status of our history book. Chester has never attended our reunions, but since it will be held only three hours from his home in New Britain, CT, I hope he'll join us. He went over on the Queen Mary, as a lot of our original group did.

How timely it was to receive a lovely note on Valentine's Day from a lovely lady - Alice Barnes. She mentioned Josh's memorial service was held on Veteran's Day. She is grateful for their 54 years of happy marriage and many friends from the 43<sup>rd</sup>, especially Doc Gusack, Flight Surgeon of the 65<sup>th</sup> Sqd. She reads the newsletter with interest and appreciates the fellows who compile it--"such a labor of love and time." She plans to come to Springfield this fall and wishes "all the veterans could join us."

Larry Hickey phoned to say he had hired Lex McAulay to fly over from Australia for five weeks to help him get our history book ready for the printers. Note: No specific date of delivery was promised, but this is an indication that we're heading down the home stretch.

Ann Lee Warner called from Australia to inform me of the passing of Josh Barnes on November 8<sup>th</sup>.

I heard from George Critsmilios, Radio Operator with the 64<sup>th</sup> Sqd. inquiring how to proceed with applying for medals he had earned, but not received. Since I have just received all the medals shown on my discharge, including the Philippine Liberation Medal issued by the Philippine government, I gave him the needed information. George and his wife, Helen, plan to be in Springfield in September.

Received a nice note from Jim Eide, 65<sup>th</sup> Nose Gunner, along with some great pictures he took in Albuquerque. Jim says they're having a "real nice winter in Minn.; with temps higher than usual and a couple of feet less Snow." He is also planning to be in Springfield in September.

Ex- President Max Osborn commenting on our colored letterhead says, "I CAN'T FULFILL ALL OUR PREAMBLE STATES; ESPECIALLY THE ABLE PART." Max also says his spouse, Fran, is considering a HIP replacement.

Now that the reunion will be in the Northeast, I hope that many new people will be able to gather with our buddies from the 43<sup>rd</sup>.

You will have to bear with the editor. This newsletter is being prepared on an entirely new computer system so the font will be slightly different as will its size. Hopefully this will work out well for the future newsletters.

The editor apologizes for writing Springfield in two places on the 1998 Springfield reunion registration form in the last Newsletter. He trusts that all of you were alert, and although you noted the mistake, you knew where the reunion really would be held.

In the January 1998 Newsletter, the editor made mention of the Internet site for B-24s: [www.mach3ww.com/B24](http://www.mach3ww.com/B24) In following up on this site, he has come across two persons claiming to be the son or daughter of a 43<sup>rd</sup> veteran from WWII. Each was seeking information regarding the parent and his participation in the 43<sup>rd</sup>. The editor has written to each of these persons via the www, but he has heard from only one of them. [See GANNON below.]

The editor has found a comparable Web site for the B-17. It is not as cluttered with old messages that seem never to be erased on the B-24 site. This B-17 site is [www.aviation-archive.com/b17/index.html](http://www.aviation-archive.com/b17/index.html)

The editor received e-mail from **BARBARA GANNON** from Johnstown, PA. She wanted to join our association as an associate member. An application form was mailed to her, and it has been returned with her '98 dues. Her father, **GEORGE KISEL** also from Johnstown, was in the 403<sup>rd</sup> from November 1944 through August 1945. He joined the 43<sup>rd</sup> in New Guinea and left for home from Ie Shima. He was severely injured and spent several months in a military hospital in Denver. **BARB** says that her father never talks of the war, but her children are very interested in what grandpa did during the war. **GEORGE** turned 80 years of age this January. Please encourage **BARB** to have her father join our association. If you recognize that name, you could send a message to **GEORGE** via **BARB** at her e-mail address: [babbsie2@twd.net](mailto:babbsie2@twd.net)

Shortly before Christmas, the editor received a Christmas card from **BEN R. DAMRON**, 65th from Stanford, KY, with an obit for the late **JOSHUA HORD BARNES**, 65<sup>th</sup> B-17 Pilot. [His death was reported in the January edition of the Newsletter.] **BEN** says that **JOSHUA** went over on the Queen Mary along with so many of you men.

**BEN** wrote that after attending the reunion in Washington, he tried to locate **JOSH**. First, he went to Paris, KY, where he thought **JOSH** lived during the war, but he could find no one there who knew him. Later, while talking to a friend who traveled over central Kentucky, he asked the friend if he had ever met a fellow named **JOSH BARNES**. The reply was startling as this fellow played golf regularly with **JOSH** who lived in Winchester. **BEN** went to Winchester to see **JOSH**, but he was in Florida for the winter. **BEN** did contact **JOSH** after he returned from Florida.

**FRED HAGEN**, Associate member from Philadelphia, PA, has prepared a very detailed report of his third trip to New Guinea in the search for his great-uncle's airplane. Major **BILL BENN** disappeared in the jungles of N.G. in 1943 while flying a B-25. At the last two reunions **FRED** gave reports, accompanied by videotapes, on his two previous expeditions to New Guinea. The contents of his letter should be of great interest to all of you. He sent this letter to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group at the request of our President, **SAM COMMONS**. His letter is quoted in entirety next.

I just returned from my third trip to New Guinea where I located the remains of 9 US airmen from WWII. Using the extensive network of contacts that I have fostered and utilizing the local knowledge in a creative way has also enabled me to tentatively identify sites for 3 more wrecks which I need to return to positively ID. I believe that as many as 100 WWII aircraft could be

recovered using the same techniques that I have used to date. Despite my modest success, however, I have reached a crossroads. After my next trip, I will have hopefully achieved all my initial objectives in New Guinea. I therefore find myself at a crossroads. Much more could be done but I can't afford to keep doing this on my own and am looking into a possible non-profit corporation and/or obtaining sponsors for my hobby. Perhaps I should just advertise for wealthy companions who might enjoy the sheer miseries of searching for aircraft in a tropical jungle. Misery on such a lavish scale that only the wealthiest and ironically, the poorest of this world are privileged to experience.

My recent trip to PNG was a bit nightmarish at times. The weather phenomenon known as "El Nino" has played havoc with the Southwest Pacific. Fires rage through the hinterland. Dried moss and deep humus billow prodigious quantities of smoke when alight. Grass aerodromes in the highlands are closed due to the smoke. Helicopter flying is difficult, often impossible. People have intentionally set the fires as part of their slash and burn style of agriculture, depending on the daily rainfall to put out the fires. It had not rained in the highlands for three months and the fires have swept through the clearings and penetrated into the rainforest. This mossy redoubt is normally impervious to prolonged conflagrations. Not this year. The climatic weather event of the Century was destined to once again thwart my efforts to find the wreckage of *The Red Headed Gal*.

I have received correspondence from a missionary Priest @ the village of Kamalai which indicates that my Great Uncle Major Benn's plane has almost certainly been found. A skull and the dog tags of his flight engineer were brought to the village and the Father relayed this information to me. In addition, my native partners in the village of Omu have also discovered another wrecksite, doubtless a bomber, which is replete with remains and .45 caliber sidearms. Imagine my excitement at finding and filming Benn's plane, discovering his flight engineer and also the wreckage of another supposed bomber. Then imagine my horror after traveling to the far reaches of the Earth and realizing that I couldn't get to Mt. Strong within my time allotment.

The western half of Mt. Strong was on fire. Morbid clouds of smoke obscure the sky and veil the terrain. Repeated attempts to punch through the haze failed. My pilot, Brian Lamplough, got a bit testy with me (of course, some things don't change), insisting that he wasn't going to kill himself or anyone else on account of my Magnificent Obsessions. I wanted to tear my hair out of my head.

I had hired an Australian named Bruce Hoy [an Associate member of our Association] to accompany me to the Finisterre Range in an effort to find the Gaffney P-47 wrecksite. He had gone along with CILHI (Central ID Lab, Hawaii) on an A-20 recovery in 1989 to provide local interpretation and to assist in identifying the planes. During the operation, he had heard rumors from the local natives that another wreck was in the area. He theorized that this might be the wreck of Frank Gaffney's P-47 which was lost in the general vicinity. I had been implored to find Gaffney's plane by his daughter Pattie. Frustrated in my attempts to reach the site of Major Benn's plane, I hoped to achieve success in locating the Gaffney site. I drove to Lae with Bruce and chartered a Squirrel helicopter from Pacific Heli. The first attempt was a failure, our effort to clear the Saidor Gap frustrated by smoke and cloud. Another attempt up the Markham River Valley likewise failed. I returned to Lae after 2 1/2 fruitless flying hours and we refueled the chopper. The pilot, Steve Spinaze, asked if I wanted to give up. "Not quite yet" came my reply.

We flew the much longer coastal route to Saidor, stopping to film various Japanese wrecksites along the coastal plain. An Oscar, a Nell, a Linda. Flying up a breathtaking Gorge which sliced through the Finisterre Range, we searched for the village where CILHI had hired local guides in 1989 to access the three A-20's that augured into the towering ridge together. After the passage of eight years, Bruce was unable to identify the exact village.

Seeing a large, attractive village which was nestled in a tributary valley off the main gorge, I directed Steve to swoop down for a talk. The Village was called Sawan, home to perhaps 50-60

natives, and they gathered curiously around the Big Bird. I had invited Richard Leahey to accompany me for the day. He speaks pidgin English and acted as our interpreter. You may have heard of Richard's father Mick Leahey. Mick and his brother Dan discovered the Stone Age Highland civilization of the indigenous New Guineans in the late '20's. They took along a film camera and were able to record this first contact with a Lost World. It was the last significant culture to be discovered by the Western World. Their feats have been memorialized in several documentaries and numerous books. Mick married a much younger girl when he was middle-aged and Richard was their first born son. He is now in his mid fifties.

Due to the high altitude, the Squirrel's performance was adversely affected and we had to disembark Bruce and the Native cameraman, Jerry Koasi, who I'd hired from EMTV in Port Moresby. After further removing numerous Jerry Cans full of Jet Fuel, Steve flew a young guide up the gorge. The guide seemed very positive about the directions but we were again foiled by descending layers of cloud which had settled down to a level of 9000' MSL, lower than the surrounding peaks. The Native kept pointing upwards into the cloud but we were unable to go on.

Using a rented land Cruiser Trooper, I drove back up the twisting dirt road to Wau. Two more wasted flights to Mt. Strong were attempted the next day. Brian then pronounced my goal unattainable for this trip, stating that there was no point in wasting any more money until the onset of heavy rains.

I returned again to Lae and made another assault on the Finisterre site. On this occasion, the weather close to the coast was reasonably clear and we were ferried into a steeply descending clearing high in the Mountain Range. Steve couldn't land on the site and we were forced to jump out of the chopper from about a 5'-6' hover. The natives from Sawan had apparently hiked the intervening 8-10 miles and set fire to this old clearing to burn off the brush in expectation of our imminent return. The fire had crept into the Rainless Rain Forest and swept through the area. The clearing was still smoldering. The ground actually glowed in places as the Chopper's downwash fanned the embers. Flaring alight, tongues of flame licked at the charred trunks of fallen trees.

Steve was signaled to return in 4 hours and we set off up a steep ridge. After 10 minutes, we turned and descended straight down the face of the gorge. Toiling to the bottom, we found a gurgling stream and the carcass of a Wallaby laying beside it. He had apparently starved to death or possibly had fallen while racing away from the fire above. Thoughts of Ken MacCullar's Wallaby flickered through my mind. The small animal had been hit by Mac's gear as his B-17 rotated in May of 1943. A broken hydraulic line had ignited a fire which consumed the entire Flying Fortress with all of her crew. It was the end of a legend.

We were all filthy and paused to wash the ash off our faces. A short climb up the opposite bank brought us to a huge radial Wright Cyclone engine. Bruce found the serial number and declared that this was all he needed to identify the aircraft. Both he and Richard were exhausted and wanted to return to the helipad. Weather was also setting in. Clouds could be seen above, descending ominously towards the tops of the ridge. Bruce was quite apprehensive about the possibility of being stranded in the mountains for an undetermined length of time.

It was decided that Bruce and Richard should retrace our route to the clearing. I would take the guide up the side of the gorge to see additional wreckage. It was a steep hillside and I pitied the fellows from CILHI who would be forced to perform an elaborate survey of this site. I found the other engine. It had apparently caught on fire and some cylinders were melted. The left wing lay close by the engine. A short distance uphill to my left, I saw the right wing. It was completely intact. Even the landing light had survived unbroken. It presented an eerie sight, an ominous unwavering eye that stared at me as I climbed upward.

Remnants of the fuselage were scattered everywhere and numerous human bones were scattered amongst the wreckage. This was obviously not Gaffney's P-47. It was probably a B-25 with a sizable crew aboard.

The clouds were settling fast. Concerned that I would be stranded on the mountaintop, I set off for the helipad at a fast pace. Despite an hour delay searching the site, we actually managed to arrive at the pad several minutes before Bruce and Richard. Steve was scheduled to pick us up in about 15 minutes but Bruce was convinced that the bird wouldn't penetrate the darkening clouds which swirled both above and below us. Miraculously, the clearing was free of cloud, an oasis in the gathering storm.

We heard the Squirrel before we saw it, thundering up the base of the gorge. It materialized suddenly, for all the world like a huge white dragonfly, whirling out of the mist. Steve would have to make two trips and I offered to stay with the guide in case Steve was unable to make it back. I dearly hoped that he'd be able to return but knew that we could walk out if necessary. The guide and I hoisted Bruce, Jerry and Richard up to the hovering copter and they quickly flew off, flying low to the trees in order to maintain ground contact.

The weather looked bad and I was pretty well resigned to spending the night and walking back to the village in the morning. Steve was determined to save me from that adventure, however, and he materialized again, minutes before the clouds closed the clearing completely off.

Richard Leahey phoned a well know Australian historian named Bob Piper in Canberra. He was able to identify the plane as a B-25D-1, #41-30182, 38<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, 71<sup>st</sup> Bomb Squadron. The B-25 had departed Saidor on a shuttle flight to Nadzab on July 1, 1944 @ 0907. There were 9 persons aboard:

They were:

Pilot	Richard Hurst	1 <sup>st</sup> Lt.
Co-Pilot	James Henderson	1 <sup>st</sup> Lt.
Navigator	Aloysius Steele	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt.
Radio/Gunner	John Creighton	Pfc
Gunner	Henry Miga	Sgt
Passenger	A Milazzo	TEC 5
Passenger	B Durham	Pfc
Passenger	S Russell	Pfc
Passenger	G Norris	Cpl

Their exact fate had been unknown until Friday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 1997. I picked up the skeleton of one of the men and put him in my backpack. The remains had already been moved by the natives and no site integrity was lost by my action. I returned him to the US Ambassador in Port Moresby, dropping him off at the Ambassador's residence in Moresby on Sunday morning. The Ambassador, a very dignified Lady, was more than a little surprised by my gift.

The natives in Omu who found Bill's plane have also apparently found another unrecovered bomber in the course of their search. My passion to get to the site had been incredibly stimulated by this news and my subsequent failure was particularly galling. The natives claim that the wreckage is "full of bones" and they also discovered several .45 caliber pistols in the wreckage. Unfortunately for me, they've apparently been waving their new armaments around and a missionary who lives in a nearby village has sent word out to the authorities. An Australian detachment has been instructed to head in, disarm the Natives and identify the aircraft. I have attempted to sidetrack this effort by the Australians until after my return trip, probably in January 1998.

I know that I should be satisfied that additional airmen are going to finally come home

and their families can lay them to rest. Being a selfish, egocentric eccentric, however, I can't help feeling that they're "stealing my thunder" and tarnishing the glow of my achievement in discovering this "unknown" craft. What a beautiful ending that would have made to the Bill Benn saga. Not only the recovery of his last crewman but the discovery of another plane, replete with remains. Guess I'll have to go back in a month or so to see what is left. The natives in Sawan also know the location of a single engine fighter with "bones" which may or may not be the long lost Gaffney P-47. Guess I'll find out soon. Hope for Pattie's sake that it is.

In light of Laverne VanDyke's discovery, I am considering requesting an exhumation of the remains in Kentucky and DNA testing to verify the actual identification of all remains and separate burial for all the crewmembers. Bill could be re-interred at Arlington which is close to the home of his daughter and his widow.

I've received no further word on the Desilets recovery. CILHI sounded embarrassed when I sent in the news of my additional finds. Several excuses were tendered. The upshot is that WWII recoveries are NOT A PRIORITY. They are more concerned with Vietnam (#1) and Korea (#2) because more relatives still survive the missing parties. This is true but it is equally true that many relatives of WWII veterans are nearing the end of their journey and I feel that it is just as important for them to heal and to reconcile their erstwhile losses. As soon as I have time, I will attempt to locate the families of the 9 missing airmen.

Our best wishes and prayers for success go with FRED on his next expedition to New Guinea.

Along with his '98 dues **GORDON F. BAVOR**, Headquarters Radio Operator from Norwalk, CT, writes that he finds a little more about the group's operations each time he reads the latest Newsletter. He writes, "It's remarkable how isolated I was in Hq. Sqrd. Communications section. Just another one of the boys doing his job of monitoring strike reports on the radio as handled by 5<sup>th</sup> Bomber Command Nadzab to Clark Field." He thanks all for the great job of gathering and reporting the news. He is looking forward to the Springfield reunion. **BETTY BAVOR** added a few lines in the letter saying that they missed Albuquerque due to family weddings at that time, but "God willing we will be in Springfield in September."

In the last issue of this Newsletter **ARNOLD HUSKINS**, 65<sup>th</sup> Bombardier from Pittsfield, MA had reported the finding of **HENRY J. BARTNICK**, 65<sup>th</sup> Nose Gunner from Brockport, NY. He now informs us that he has located another member of **GLEN E. BALES'** (65<sup>th</sup> Pilot from Nashville, TN) crew, 65<sup>th</sup> Tail Gunner **Dr. MAX E. JOHNS**. **ARNOLD** says that he hopes that **HENRY** will join us in Springfield for the next reunion. He is working on getting **MAX** to join the association. **HENRY** became a member last year. **MAX** has a couple of addresses, listed below, but spends most of the year at the Tucson address.

14159 North Buckingham Drive (Sep-Apr)  
Tucson, AZ 85737

1107 Ellis Drive (May-Aug)  
Charles City, Iowa 50616-3034  
Phone: 515-228-5782

Another welcome letter accompanied with a check for his '98 dues comes from **HARLEY F. HAYDEN**, 65<sup>th</sup> Gunner from Hannibal, MO. **HARLEY** appreciates the "good job you are all doing for the good of our Bomb Group Assoc." He says that the President's remarks in the January Newsletter covers it well. He attended his first reunion on the Queen Mary and his last one was at Norfolk. He blames his brother Ken for his missing the reunions since Norfolk. He says they always traveled and roomed together and lived close enough that they could visit each other. In all, he made 10 reunions and thinks the best one was at Omaha.

**HARLEY** writes that his brother and wife are doing well as are he and his wife, **PAT**. He says they are well and Happy for their age. "You guys know what that is." He signs his letter, "As always only slower."

**L. C. CHALKY WHITE**, 65<sup>th</sup> Bombardier from Eugene, OR, checked in with our President, **SAMUEL F. COMMONS** regarding the dates for the Springfield reunion which are Sept. 6 -13.

Sending along season greetings for the holidays since the last reunion, **ARTHUR G. DURBECK** 403<sup>rd</sup> Pilot, wants to be certain that the Newsletter is sent to both of his addresses so he sent in his '98 dues plus an additional amount to cover mailing to two addresses.

Back in Florida for the winter, he writes that he plays golf no more than 5 times a week while eating out at least 7 times a week. He wonders why he is having trouble keeping his weight down.

He reports that fishing is better than usual this year although he hasn't found the time to go fishing often enough. Rains have caused a good deal of flooding and the winds are strong enough to create small craft warnings most of the time.

Art and **VIRGINIA** have the following two addresses:

(Nov. through Apr.)  
Col. Arthur G. Durbeck  
USAF (Retired)  
4570 Pinebrook Cir. #401  
Bradenton, FL 34209-8019  
Phone 941-795-2472

(May through Oct.)  
Col. Arthur G. Durbeck  
USAF (Retired)  
3002 Farm Road  
Alexandria, VA 22302-2412  
Phone 703-548-6092

Through a telephone conversation with **ANN BACON**, from Pierson, FL, we learned that her husband, **LAYTON P. BACON**, 65<sup>th</sup> Ground Crewman, passed away on November 21, 1997 after a long illness. The last Newsletter reported he was under the care of Hospice. ANN says that she received in the mail a message from President **BILL CLINTON**. When the envelope arrived with the return address of the White House, she thought it was some kind of a prank. The message is given below. It was signed by William Clinton, President of the U.S. and had the Presidential Seal.

"The President of the United States of America honors the memory of Layton P. Bacon.

This certificate is awarded by a grateful nation in recognition of devoted and selfless consecration to the service of our country in the armed forces of the United States."

ANN says that she wants to stay in contact with the members of our association and wants to continue receiving the Newsletters.

**M. L. "SHAD" SHADDOX**, 64<sup>th</sup> Pilot from Friendswood, TX, reports a change of telephone number since the 1996 Roster was published. The area code has been changed. The correct phone number is: 281-482-6413.

SHAD and the editor have exchanged a number of e-mail messages mostly with regard to the picture **LARRY J. HICKEY**, author and associate member who has been working on the history of our organization for several years, has on his Web site. It shows 3 B-25s and a Japanese *Emily* in a harbor, which SHAD thinks might be Rabaul. It seems to be a picture made up by an artist as the *Emily*, a 4-engine flying boat, is in the water. The B-25s appear to be dropping fragmentation bombs, but only one is casting a shadow on the water. This Web site for those interested is: [www.airwar-worldwar2.com](http://www.airwar-worldwar2.com)

A later e-mail relates how sneaky SHAD can be. On Valentine's Day he rose early, put on a pot of coffee, slipped out to the car, cranked up and went to the early-opening grocery store, bought a nice Valentine, came home slipped in, poured coffee, woke up **NAOMI**, and with all innocence wished her a happy Valentine's day as if all had been planned and executed some time before. He says that after 51 years of marriage, one learns how to be a little sneaky.

After contacting **LARRY HICKEY** by e-mail, SHAD sent e-mail (2/19/98) to several of us telling us that **LARRY** informed him that he is working 18 hours a day on his books and there is not a chance our history could be out UNTIL SUMMER. **LARRY** reported the book has been contracted with a printer, and paper for the book would be ordered next week.

**BILL WILSON**, Treasurer, **SAM COMMONS**, President, and **JIM CHERKAUER**, Secretary, are being inundated with inquiries about the status of the book for the 43<sup>rd</sup>. SHAD has given us the latest information as of the date above.

A phone call from **LEWIS H. DAWS**, 65<sup>th</sup> Aircraft Maintenance from Rialto, CA, revealed that LEWIS contacted the couple, **FERN** and **MEL BEHUNIN**, mentioned in the last Newsletter who had spotted the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group bumper sticker on **ARLENE** and **BOB ROTH**'s car and told BOB, 403<sup>rd</sup> Gunner from Redlands, CA, he had been in the 43<sup>rd</sup>. LEWIS stated that the couple seemed rather reluctant to talk with him and he did not get much information from them. Fern told him that MEL never talked about the war. LEWIS wonders if MEL might be a bit confused as he reported joining the 43<sup>rd</sup> on Biak. The 43<sup>rd</sup> was never stationed on Biak Island.

LEWIS says that he wonders about the story in the January Newsletter about the paratroopers landing in Australia and the cover up of over 50 years. Like most of us, he wonders why the cover up would still continue.

To add to what took place early in the war in Australia, LEWIS says that a Japanese 2 or 3 man sub managed to get into a harbor in Australia when the nets were up for the USS Chicago. The sub did no damage to the Chicago but did manage to sink a barge before the sub was sunk by the Australians. This took place very early in January right after the 43<sup>rd</sup> arrived in Australia.

LEWIS said that he was discharged after WW II, but was called back for the Korean "War."

Along with a check for his '98 dues **JOSEPH R. ESPOSITO**, 65<sup>th</sup> Navigator from Malverne, NY, enclosed a letter in which he cites a reference to **MARCUS D. CARRELL**, 65<sup>th</sup> Pilot from Houston, TX, in the previous Newsletter. JOE says he flew most of his missions with MARCUS. He trained in the States as a member of the crew of **PARKER S. FLOYD**, and flew as navigator with FLOYD's crew from the States to Townsville, Australia, and then in New Guinea before joining MARCUS' crew.

JOE says that if he remembers correctly, he flew some of the missions with MARCUS in B-24 #060 named *TARGET FOR TONIGHT*.

He says that the Newsletter brings back good memories and is thankful for it.

Sending his '99 dues along with a generous donation for Association expenses, **L. DAYTON BLANCHARD**, 65<sup>th</sup> Pilot from Cloudcroft, NM, thinks the Newsletter is newsy and comprehensive. He enjoyed the ABQ reunion and was happy to see new faces at the reunion. He expresses confidence in the leadership of **SAM COMMONS** and our new Vice President **MAX AXELSEN**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Pilot from San Antonio, TX.

DAYT gave a run down of all of the reunions he will be attending this year along with several meetings at Holloman AFB not too far from Cloudcroft. DAYT says that there he gets to hob knob with Stealth fighter pilots who participated in Dessert Storm along with old timers from WW II, Korea, and Vietnam. As an ex-pilot and meteorologist in the Air Force he is quite active with several associations besides the 43<sup>rd</sup>.

DAYT says that he recently looked over a "short snorter" from the days he and the editor served in the 65<sup>th</sup> Squadron. He found the editor's name on it. [The editor has several "short snorters" from WW II. On an Australian 1/2 pound note appears the signature, L. D. Blanchard, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin.]

He goes on to report that his good wife, ANN, was recovering nicely from extensive surgery performed at the William Beaumont Army Hospital in El Paso, NM. She soon will be returning to her watercolor painting and will be doing art shows this year.

Enclosed with his newsy letter is a comprehensive listing of the missions he flew with his crew from April 21, 1945 through August 12, 1945. He says that the editor flew on some of these missions as well. A check of the records of yours truly shows that we did indeed fly on 8 of the same missions

from Clark Field and Ie Shima. One memorial mission which was flown by both of us was that which went to Taichung, Formosa, on June 15, 1945. It was on this mission that **DON CAMPBELL** and crew were shot down. Although the crew survived, all were executed by the Japanese on that island.

The editor has chosen not to print all of these missions but will list **DAYTON's** crew. Hopefully, our crews will be listed in the upcoming History, if and when it goes to press. Meanwhile this can serve as a bit of history of the Group.

Dayton Blanchard, Pilot	Dick Golze, Copilot	John Connors, Navigator
Don Marsaglia, Bombardier	Sam Dante, Engineer, Crew Chief	
Mel Schroeder, Radio Operator	Bob Hoyes, Waist Gunner, Ball Turret	
Tony Vastola, Nose Gunner	Lew Baker, Tail Gunner	Fay Carson, Waist Gunner

**PAUL F. PUCHALSKI**, 63<sup>rd</sup> from Dover, DE, wrote for the address of **LARRY HICKEY**, author of the series of books on the 5<sup>th</sup> Air Force which includes our **KEN'S MEN AGAINST THE EMPIRE**. By now a good many members must be about to write to LARRY. His name and address are in the 1986 ROSTER. In case you do not have your ROSTER any longer it is:

Lawrence J. Hickey, President	Order history at this address. Cost \$75.00
International Research and Publishing Corp.	+ \$5.00 S&H USA per book or \$6.00
P.O. Box 3334 High Mar Station	overseas surface. 3.5% Sales Tax for
Boulder, CO 80307	Colorado residents only.

Some of you have trouble receiving one Newsletter, but **GEORGE CRITSIMILIOS** 64<sup>th</sup> Radio Operator from New York, NY, writes that he is receiving 2. The mailing label of one of them shows him PD-96. The other reads PD-98. He says that he needs only one of these, but did enclose his check for 1999 and 2000 dues. [His mail label and the 1986 ROSTER omit the final "S" on **GEORGE'S** name. We will try to correct that.]

He says that he hopes to make the Springfield reunion, but wants to check on the remaining members of his crew: **HARRY STEVENSON**, Pilot from San Diego, CA; **SAM WELLBORN**, Flight Engineer from Naples, FL; and **JOE STRONG**, Waist Gunner from Mission Hills, CA. He writes that if they decide to go, that will be a strong incentive for him to attend. [New York City is so close to Springfield, you have no excuse for not attending, **GEORGE**. Would you believe that the editor and **HARRY** attended college together in Buffalo, NY?]

**JOHN J. ROCHE**, 64<sup>th</sup> Operations, had a rough time health wise during the holidays at the end of 1997 and the beginning of 1998. In a conversation with him via the telephone, **JOHN** and his wife, **GENEVIEVE**, say that he is making a slow recovery. Let's wish him well.

In a telephone conversation **DOTTIE EDWARDS** of Massillon, OH, widow of the late **RUSSELL H. EDWARDS** 63<sup>rd</sup> Flight Engineer, informed the editor that **FRED W. EPPLEN**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Navigator from Aurora, CO, had passed away last December. **FRED** leaves his widow, **HELEN**. **FRED** was often seen at the reunions helping sell items for the Association in the Memorabilia Room. He will be missed by all.

The 90<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Association will be holding an Eastern Mini Reunion from May 21-24 in Livonia, MI. A Mid-Continent Mini Reunion is planned for April 29-May 2, in Miami, OK. A Western Mini Reunion is planned from June 9-14 in San Diego, CA. Their National Reunion will be from Sept. 16-20 in Richmond, VA. If you are interested, the Sect.-Treas. is **THOMAS C. FETTER** at 701 Brightwood Drive, Marion, OH 43302. Write him for additional information.

The 90<sup>th</sup> BG is having its original *Jolly Rogers* history reprinted by an Atglen, PA, publisher.

The 19<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Association will hold its 1998 annual reunion from May 6-9 in the Inn Suites Hotel in Tucson, AZ. If you are interested, contact **ROBERT E. LEY at 3574 Wellston Ct., Simi Valley, CA 93063.**

A letter from **BETTY C. SPILLYARDS** from North Little Rock, AR, calls to the editor's attention that Sun City West and Sun Lakes are both located in Arizona (AZ) and not Arkansas (AR) as listed in the January Newsletter. [A typo such as that only enhances the adage, "To err is human." The editor apologizes for this unfortunate mistake.]

**BETTY** and her late husband, **HOWARD L. SPILLYARDS**, 65<sup>th</sup> Crew Chief, had attended 2 reunions in the past, but he was disappointed by the lack of ground crew personnel at those reunions. She does not intend to renew her membership in the Association, as she is not personally acquainted with the attendees. [Most of us knew few of those at the reunion the first time we attended, but with the friendliness encountered among those who attend, lasting friendships are soon developed.]

Anyone who has attended any of the last 3 or 4 reunions must know **JANICE OLSON**, Associate member from Apple Valley, CA. **JANICE** has made several trips to New Guinea and other islands in the Southwest Pacific area in search of her late father's B-17. At our more recent reunions, **JANICE** has given interesting and informative presentations about her several searches for that missing plane. You may recall that during her exploits she did recover several other planes and the remains of many of our missing comrades. Her life is so involved with and dedicated to the B-17 that her own e-mail address is: **B17Project@aol.com**

In an e-mail letter **JANICE** writes that many of us may recall that she spends almost every waking moment researching the history of the B-17 in the Pacific theatre as well as bugging our B-17 personnel for copies of their Form 5s and awards' narratives, flight logs, etc. Well, in her persistent research, **JANICE** reports that she has "discovered" a report on the B-17 dated 21 January 201 BC.

Subjectum: Wherein it hath been stated that the fiery engines ceaseth to burn within the wing of the B-17, and there was great fear and trembling and there followeth sore times.

Here followeth the report of M/Sgt Ulcerus Duodenum who showeth great wisdom and departeth, smiting the silk. He returneth to this base and woe was him, for thus he spake:

And when Col. Moses returned from Gomorrah [Rabaul], he looked out on the land of the fuzzy wuzzy's forefathers, and saw that it was good. For we had been wingingeth from the land of Sodom to the north, for many hours in our B-17 of four engines, and he was sore tried. For lo and behold, two of our faithful engines had belched forth fire and brimstone and had ceased to work hard, and their flames had died.

Col. Moses turned to his co-pilot, and great was his wrath. "How comest thou to alloweth this flame-out, seeing that thou didst know of our great height in the heavens? The good has gone out of thee, and yea, also out of this aircraft, and surely we hath now had it!" And Col. Moses prepareth to spread out the great cloud of silk to the four winds, that he might float from on high to green jungles below.

But suddenly it came to pass that he saw a great beach along the coast, that stretched onward and onward like the great lake of the Mojave. No blade of grass nor a wallaby nor a coconut remained in his way, and Col. Moses rejoiced and thanked the lord, for he knew he could land his B-17 as a sow on its belly.

"Lower thy flaps and casteth out all that which is a burden unto us," sayeth Col. Moses. "Roger, oh wise one," replied the co-pilot. Then Col. Moses vowed a great vow that howsoever longeth they should stay in the air, he would keepeth his airspeed at five times five the speed of a duck.

It was then that the heart went out of me, and I was as dung on the hoof of a bullock, for I baileth myself out into the air. It was not long before Col. Moses and his co-pilot glideth but a few feet from the sands of the beach, and I cast my eyes upon the smooth sand and saw that it

would be to his B-17, as butter to the palm of the hand, and I rejoiceth as he alloweth himself to enter a full stall.

But Col. Moses had been a thoughtless man and the devil was with him in all things, for he had forgotten to jettison his bombs. Yea, verily I say unto you that whosoever shall land on two parafrags, until the St. Georges Strait shall dry up, and the sun groweth cold, they shall surely suffereth the tortures of hell.

Amen

NOTE: With a couple of changes, the above was found in a recent issue of the Confederate Air Force's Arizona Wing newsletter ... sent to them by Arizona wing member Ed Branning.

JANICE also informed us that there are two copies of **LEX McAULAY'S BATTLE OF THE BISMARCK SEA** in stock at Paul Gaudette BOOKS. Phone 1-800-874-9412.  
Fax 1-520-791-9412. E-mail: [PGBooks@aol.com](mailto:PGBooks@aol.com)

An e-mail message arrived from **JAMES T. MURPHY**, immediate past president of our Association and 65<sup>th</sup> Pilot from Huntsville, AL, who had received a letter from **BETTY G. TRIPP**, 304 Drury Lane, Mauldin, SC 296562. She is seeking information regarding her brother, **CPL. ROBERT C. GREEN**, SN36781651. She reports that **ROBERT** was a tail gunner on a B-24 that went down on Jan. 17, 1945. He was on a radar crew with the 90<sup>th</sup> BG but was detached to the 43rd BG for a short time.

[If there is any of you reading this who recalls **ROBERT** or the downing of that plane, please contact **BETTY** at the above address.]

**ELDON "BUD" LAWSON**, 65<sup>th</sup> Bombardier from Bay Village, OH, sent to our president, **SAM COMMONS**, the following article he found in the **Friends Journal**, Vol. 20, No. 3 Fall 1997.

**"Preparing for the Invasion"** by Sgt. William C. Warren

On a small island in the South Pacific called Ie Shima, in the closing days of World War II, I was an aircrew member serving as a flight engineer on a B-24 bomber. I served in the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group, 63<sup>rd</sup> "Sea Hawks" Squadron, 5<sup>th</sup> AF. This was the island upon which Ernie Pyle, the well-read American journalist, was killed, and this was the island where World War II really ended. Ie Shima was the contact point where a Japanese delegation, flying in two white planes (*Bataan I* & *Bataan II*), landed to surrender. The Japanese party then boarded an American C-54 aircraft and flew to Clark Field in the Philippines. At Clark Field, 10,000 of the first occupying troops were assembled, creating the 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division.

On August 28, 1945, five B-24s from the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group took off from Ie Shima and flew to Atsugia, Japan, about 20 miles from Tokyo. My crew and the four other crews became the first Americans to land at the airfield there.

We landed at Atsugia and taxied up to the Japanese hangars not knowing what to expect or how we would be welcomed. We knew that Japan had been bringing thousands of battle-tough troops back to their homeland for the expected invasion by the US. They were well armed and fully ready to fight to the death.

Our planes were painted all black, as we were night bombers, flying missions from sunset until about 8 A.M. We were provided with protection from the civil population by armed Japanese police. Atsugia had dozens of armed and fueled fighters ready for use. Nearby were workshops dug into vast underground tunnels. They had machine tool lathes, drill presses, and shapers dug into small workrooms off the main tunnels. It was like a coal mine except it was tall enough for one to stand up and work. A single light bulb was attached to wire and was hung from the dirt roof of the tunnel about every ten feet. Koreans and prisoners of war were shackled by leg irons to the machines. Piles of war work were stacked along the tunnels, and

each machine had a corner with a slat board and heap of straw upon which the forced laborers slept.

I attempted to start up one of the lathes. It was a machine made by Monarch in the United States.

Hundreds of small caves were filled with small arms, ammunition, and war supplies. Near the machines I found small batches of small arms ammunition and hundreds of small knives which were to be used to repel the expected invasion. Bamboo plants were cut and sharpened to be used as spears.

Underground, we found plants for arms production worked by POWs and small, young children from China and Korea. We blockaded the entrances to the caves and cut control cables and other wires to disable the fighters.

We remained at Atsugia Air Field for three days. Gas refineries in Japan had been bombed out of production. The few cars, trucks and buses still running were fueled by charcoal burners installed on the rear of the vehicles. It was a strange sight to see a bus chug along at about ten miles per hour, come to a hill, and then the passengers would get out to push it up the hill. Once at the top, the passengers would jump back on and continue their ride.

We also toured Yokahama and Tokyo and visited the gate of the Emperor's palace. We saw the complete devastation of the city, curb to curb, and the ruins of buildings and industrial plants. It was difficult to make out what was left of thousands of small frame and paper covered homes.

Then hundreds of C-54s (troop carriers) started to land, one every two minutes, bringing in the 10,000 airborne troops of the 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne from Clark Field. After the troops were in place at Atsugia, we returned to Ie Shima. We then broke up our aircrews and started our flights back to the United States.

Thus the invasion of Japan, that was planned for November '45, was prevented with the savings of thousands of lives.

[Editors comment. BUD LAWSON could you follow up on the story you provided us and see if you can locate WILLIAM C. WARREN? He is not listed in our ROSTER as a member of our Association. We should recruit him.]

Picking up on the mention on page 3 of the January Newsletter, that a **CLIFF NEFF** was interested in hearing from those who participated in the bombing of Balikpapan, Borneo, our Vice President, **MAX M. AXELSEN**, 403rd Pilot from San Antonio, sent him the following communication:

I was a pilot with the 43<sup>rd</sup> and flew a mission against Balikpapan on 10 Oct. 44. It was a momentous day in my life since I learned a week later that my son was born on that day! We departed OWI island at 02:30 AM and joined by the 90<sup>th</sup> BG from Biak, a few miles north of us, and the 22<sup>nd</sup> BG...struck the target refineries at Balikpapan around 10:00 AM. If my memory is right there were about 107 airplanes in the strike. We were briefed to have had fighter cover out of Mindoro....they arrived twenty minutes early and stirred up a hornets nest! It was a nine hour fighter mission and fifteen hour mission for the bombers with recovery at Sansapor in NW New Guinea. Our bomb load was five 500-lb. bombs! I don't know what the official record reported but I was told we lost seven B-24's in the strike. We were tracked by a Betty bomber of Japan for twenty minutes or so before we struck. During and after the bomb run a number of the enemy was shot down. I've heard of 33 or so....really don't know the accuracy of that number. Our CO, Lt. Col. Jim Pettus did a masterful job of leading the Group and we were very glad to get out of that area! Enjoy your stay in Borneo.... I would prefer to see it from ground level rather than from 12,000 ft. under fighter attack! Best regards and if I can enlighten you further or direct inquiries you may have, please let me know. Adios from San Antonio.

**FRANK HASSETT**, 64<sup>th</sup> Pilot from Murrieta, CA, writes that he should have opted for a "Life" membership some time ago, but never got around to it. Now he's not sure about paying for two years at one time "... at this stage I don't even buy green bananas." So he paid for his '98 dues and thanked everyone for all of the hard work done for the Association.

FRANK reports a change in his area phone code: 909-698-044.

For those who attended the reunion in Cheyenne the following may be of interest to you. **BOB ROTH**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Gunner from Redlands, CA, and his wife **ARLENE**, have written that they have heard from **ANNIE** and **AMY SMITH** who entertained us so well with their excellent renditions of so many Western songs. **BOB** and **ARLENE** had asked them why they had not recorded several of the old time favorites on the cassettes they were selling at the reunion. The **SMITH** Sisters said that they were going to record them on a cassette in the future. The **ROTHS** left their name and address with **ANNIE** and **AMY**.

Early in January the **ROTHS** received an order form from the **SMITHS** for a cassette, **WESTERN CLASSICS**. The order form was autographed and they asked about the Florida reunion and the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bombers. **BOB** included an order form with his letter. The cassette contains many of the great songs the sisters sang for us at Cheyenne.

If you are interested in ordering this cassette, the address is:

Annie and Amy International  
P.O. Box 20705  
Cheyenne, WY 82003

The cost is \$14.00 plus \$2.50 for Postage and handling.

Here is some good news. **ROBERT R. RICHARDSON**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Top Gunner from Wilmington, NC, has been working on the Internet in his attempts to find the members of his B-24 crew he had not located since the war. He now knows that 6 of the crew of 10 survive. Three have been members of the Association. They are **ROGER W. LITTLE**, Pilot from Rockledge, FL, **JAMES F. HAMPSHIRE**, Bombardier from St. Cloud, FL, and **ROBERT**. In addition **FLORENCE SOSNOWSKI**, of Mentor, OH, and widow of **JOSEPH**, is also a participating member of our Association. Through the Internet **ROBERT** has found 3 more members of the crew and the son of a non-surviving member. These four have indicated a desire to join us so they have each been mailed an application form and the January edition of the Newsletter. They are:

**EDWIN D. PHEASANT**, Copilot  
277 Knox Place  
Costa Mesa, CA 92627-2051  
(714) 648-2051

**ATHILL W. IRVINE**, Radio Operator  
7 Elgin Place #4111  
Dunedin, FL 34698  
(813) 738-8198  
[Joined us in March]

**CLIFFORD L. McHENRY**, Nose Gunner  
605 Hughes Drive  
Freeport, PA 16229-1608  
(412) 295-2394

**WILLIAM KLEIN\***  
619 N. L St.  
Lake Worth, FL 33460  
(561) 533-5347

\* Son of the late **MICKEY MAN KLEIN**

Robert goes on to say that he has commitments from five to attend the reunion in Springfield where they all first met and trained in the B-24.

**WILLIAM L. JOBE**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Assist. Radio Operator and Gunner from Bremerton, WA, sent **BILL WILSON** copies of letters he has sent to **LARRY HICKEY** requesting the return of 10 target photos, a picture of his B-24 crew and plane, *Pistol Packing Mama*, on which he served, along with pictures of the B-24s, *Zombie* and *Marie*. His third letter to **LARRY** is dated 24 November 1997, but he has not received his materials back. He asked **BILL** for help in getting these materials returned to him.

BILL JOBE has paid his '98 dues and says that he enjoys the Newsletter. He sent to BILL W. "Excerpts from William L. Jobe's War-time Diary" which covers from June 25, 1943 through August 15, 1944 when he arrived home in the States. This is far too extensive (13 pages) to include in the Newsletter. It shows that BILL J. participated in some of the most hazardous missions in which the 43<sup>rd</sup> was involved including the April 16, 1944 mission to Hollandia. This mission became known as Black Sunday a day in which the 5<sup>th</sup> AF lost 37 planes and 54 airmen because of weather and not the enemy.

He relates how in February 1944 he encountered a "Komodo dragon" in the jungle, but since no one took him seriously, he did not record it in his diary. A recent "National Geographic" TV documentary on this huge dragon brought back his memories of the lizard he had estimated as 10' long.

The crew on which BILL served included: 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. **HENRY J. DOMAGALSKI**, Pilot; 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. **ROBERT A. BRENNON**, Copilot; 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. **JOHN J. PEZZOLI**, Navigator; 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. **HERBERT J. MAXWELL**, Bombardier; T/Sgt. **GEORGE M. BLEGEN**, Flight Engineer; S/Sgt. **CHARLES VANEK**, Asst. Flight Engineer; T/Sgt. **ROBERT O. SPINDLER**, Radio Operator; S/Sgt. **WILLIAM L. JOBE**, Asst. Radio Operator/Gunner; S/Sgt. **RICHARD J. FARIA**, Left Waist Gunner; and S/Sgt. **WAYNE K. YATES**, Tail Gunner.

BILL has located his Pilot, Bombardier and Flight Engineer. He reports that the Copilot, Navigator, Left-Waist Gunner and Tail Gunner are deceased. He has not located the Radio Operator and Nose Gunner. BILL retired from the USAF as a Captain.

From Kalamazoo, MI, **CLOYD J. HOLT** wonders about his newsletters which apparently are not all reaching him. Since he and his wife winter in Florida, he would like to have his newsletters sent first class mail to their Michigan address and he will arrange to pay any extra costs. CLOYD included his '98 dues with his letter. Since his name is not in the 1996 ROSTER, here are his addresses:

5792 NE Hwy. 17 - A2  
Arcadia, FL 34266

3310 10. Milham Rd.  
Kalamazoo, MI 49024

**DOUGLAS P. WALKER** from Stamford, CT, enclosed his '98 dues to become an Associate member of the association. He reports that the association has been sending him the Newsletter. He reported to our most recent Past President, **JAMES T. MURPHY**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Pilot from Huntsville, AL, that the Air University Press at Maxwell AFB published the biography of his father, **KENNETH N. WALKER**. **KENNETH** served early in the history of the 43<sup>rd</sup>. The book is not sold or available outside of the Air Force, but **DOUGLAS** believes that if anyone from the 43<sup>rd</sup> requested this book, the AU Press would respond favorably.

**DOUGLAS** is very pleased to note that the '98 reunion is in Springfield, MA, which is on his travel itinerary. He hopes to be there in September.

In a lengthy letter to **BILL WILSON**, **JOE HEUSTON**, 65<sup>th</sup> Engineer and Gunner from Cohasset, MA, writes that he first met BILL in Bangor, ME, for the plaque dedication there. **JOE** reports that his wife, **ANN**, of 52 years fell victim to Parkinson's disease after a battle which lasted 5 years. He does not recall ever meeting BILL in New Guinea although they were there at the same time.

**JOE** joined the 43<sup>rd</sup> in Bangor, ME, after entering service on Oct. 15, 1941, at the age of 21. He had served most recently in the Clearing House of the Boston Stock Exchange - the best job of many he held during the depression. He served in the Ground Personnel section at Bangor and says he was the 5' 8" GI who took a long screwdriver and unlatched the fuselage just back of the props and choked the engine manually to help the pilot start the engine.

Like so many of our members, **JOE** embarked on the Queen Mary from Boston on Feb. 10, 1942, for parts unknown. He says on that 39,000 mile 29 day trip, he stood guard duty all night while in the Indian Ocean. [Some historical records show a 20,000-mile trip lasting 40 days.] A

fire broke out between midnight and 6 A.M., but with vast quantities of water pouring down the stairway, it was extinguished.

He was assigned to engineering and other sections, but caught up with Capt. **TRUE** from Intelligence and worked all night with him on reports. Anything was better than digging for water at Iron Range and repeated guard duty.

In June or July of 1942 he was flown with several other GIs to Port Moresby where he was assigned to Transportation, and he helped crews park the planes returning from missions at any hour of the day or night. He rode in his jeep with a red flag as he directed the crews safely back home.

After working on various duties assigned to him, he ended up working with 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. **AL CUMMINGS**. While working with AL, JOE met many officers who came into the office. He found Major **HAWTHORNE**, Capt. **CROMER**, Capt. **ROBERTS** and Capt. **FLETCHER** all to be fine gentlemen.

One of JOE's assignments while in the 43<sup>rd</sup> was to write and mail MIA letters to the families - a task which he found very difficult to find the appropriate words.

JOE was transferred back to the States via Milne Bay, where he again contracted malaria. He took an 8,000-ton vessel back on a 3-week voyage with 4-5 days in a violent storm. After arriving in California he was assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> AAF at Providence, RI, as the Operations Chief Enlisted man and when that base closed, he was transferred to Mitchell Field, NY, and assigned as assistant Sgt. Major.

Like other ground crewmen, JOE expressed some disappointment in the fact that so few of them seem to attend the reunions.

Thinking that he was no longer a member of the Association, **DAVID A. ADAMS**, 403rd from Bellevue, NE, mailed in his '98 dues upon the advice of **STEVE BLOUNT 3<sup>RD</sup>**, 64<sup>th</sup> Pilot from San Antonio, TX. DAVID was in the 19<sup>th</sup> BG before joining the 43<sup>rd</sup> and he stays current with the 19<sup>th</sup>. [You are still in good standing.]

From Australia comes the news that **TOM FITZGERALD**, 24 Sqd. Assoc. and Air Gunner in the RAAF as well as a 43<sup>rd</sup> Associate member, is pulling up stakes and moving to the Philippines and his wife's home town. They plan to build a home there on land they already own. They have a large river frontage with a view of the town, the sea, outer islands and a palm tree lined river for as far as one can see.

TOM writes that there is a golf course in the city of Tacloban, Leyte, which is only 5 hours away. He plans to put in a 9m x 9m x 9m golf driving range on the property near the river bank.

"When I was a 19 year old Air Gunner, RAAF on B-24s, we were flying over the Flores Islands [Indonesia] NW of Darwin and I said to my Rear Gunner mate, 'One day I'm going to retire on one of those.' It's amazing how many times things said in youth come to fruition."

The new address for Tom: **BALAGBIS ST.**  
**BGY 2 OCPOL**  
**DOLORES E. SAMAR**  
**PHILIPPINES 6817**

Paying dues for '98-'99 **BETTY CROFT**, from Montrose, CO, and widow of the late **WILLIAM CROFT** of the 63<sup>rd</sup>, thanks the Association for the complimentary Newsletters she has been receiving. BETTY writes that she keeps in contact with other members of BILL's crew. They had kept contact with **PAT** and **CHARLES RAUCH**, Navigator from Punta Gorda, FL, **JIMMIE** and **RAY PERRY**, Flight Engineer from Prescott Valley, AZ, and occasionally with **CLAIR BLACK**. She is glad that **CHUCK** has been in contact with other members of the crew.

**JIM MURPHY** has sent a check for \$10 to the Association treasurer which represents the extra paid for his book, *SKIP BOMBING*, by **HAROLD T NEWTON**, 63rd Pilot from Easley, SC.

JIM reports a new phone area code: 256-881-875.

**GREGORY L. ROSS**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Flight Engineer from Iowa Park, TX, has sent in his Life Membership. He reports having a knee replacement and now can golf many times a week. He and his wife, **VERA**, hope to make it to the Springfield reunion.

GREG sent us his new area phone code. It is now 940-593-5549.

Mailing BILL his '98 dues is **WALDO SCHAUWEKER**, 64<sup>th</sup> Pilot. He says that he was one of the "old timers" having joined the 43<sup>rd</sup> in Mareeba as the pilot on a replacement crew. His B-17 was loaded with tents, pipes, etc., and they set up camp at 7-Mile. He believes his crew was the first from the Group to arrive in New Guinea.

After surviving a couple of years, he went to Air Force Operations and was soon assigned as General **WHITEHEAD**'s personal pilot. Their plane had a painting of Uncle Sam and was called the *OLD MAN*. Not long after, WALDO was promoted to a major and returned to the States.

**BOB BUTLER**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Bombardier from Fayetteville, NC, contacted him and WALDO did attend the first reunion of the Association in San Antonio.

Gen. **WHITEHEAD** recalled him for service during the Korean Incident, but he never left the States.

About 6 years ago he and **MARY**, his wife, spent three weeks in New Guinea and Rabaul. They are enjoying their condo in Florida where they spend three months each year.

He hopes more reunions will be held east of the Mississippi. Their addresses are:

223 West Second Street

Perrysburg, OH 43551-1404

419-874-5258

The Seadunes (5B)

5400 N. Ocean, Singer Island

Riviera Beach FL 33404

561-863-9862

January - March

Reading the last Newsletter, which he found of interest, was **WALTER B. KICHURA**, 403<sup>rd</sup> B/ST/MNT from Chicago, IL. He also noted he needed to pay his dues which are now up to date.

WALTER writes that it has been some time since he attended a reunion, but with his cancer treatments and hospital stays for different cancer related illnesses, it makes traveling almost impossible. He reports an area code change for his phone number, and he hopes the next reunion will be as successful as the last one. Please note the change of area code shown below:

773-725-0386.

Also remitting his '98 dues with an additional amount to cover the cost of sending the Newsletter to both of his addresses is **SHORTY HELLMAN**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Navigator. His addresses are:

465 Ocean Drive Apt. 622

Miami Beach, FL 33139

28 Horseshoe Lane

Columbus, OH 08022

Although he is a life member, **REHART ZAHURANEC**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Radio Operator from Sharpesville, PA, and his wife **MARY** have sent a generous donation to the Association. Accompanying the check is a change in their house number:

6973 Lamor Road, Sharpesville, PA 16150.

**FRED C. WHITNEY**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Radio/Gunner from Tustin, CA, wrote a nice "Thank You" to BILL for his many years of service to our Association which he says is truly "OUTSTANDING." Along with his '98 dues, FRED reports a change in his zip code. Please make this change in your Roster.

13536 Pecan Lane, Tustin, CA 92782-8369.

Sending the secretary the name of a potential new associate member, **LLOYD BREEZY BOREN**, 65<sup>th</sup> Bombardier from San Antonio, TX, and a former secretary/treasurer of our Association, has again volunteered to send notices of our reunion to a number of other organizations for publication in their newsletters and bulletins. This is a great help to the secretary and is very much appreciated. He has located **JIMMY DIMMER** from Grand Rapids, MI, whose grandfather was **BILL PROUDFOOT** of the 63<sup>rd</sup>. An application for membership as well as the January Newsletter has been mailed to JIMMY.

Included with his '98 dues is a note from **JAMES J. IVERSON**, Associate member from Villa Park, IL, and nephew of the late **JAMES J. FRANKLIN**, 65<sup>th</sup> pilot KIA. He hopes to attend the reunion this year so as to meet more of our members who knew his uncle. He says that our "Association is truly a great one."

In a later letter to BILL, JAMES is seeking the address of **PAUL L. NICHOLS**, 65<sup>th</sup> Pilot from Picayune, MS, so that he can order PAUL's book, *My Lucky Dice*. He says that he is starting to build a 43<sup>rd</sup> B.G. library. Address: P.O. Box 151, Picayune, MS 39446.

JAMES goes on to write that he wonders if there is a way to put together a book list of all the books written about the 43<sup>rd</sup> B.G. and publish such in a future Newsletter. He says that he is referring to all books including personal memoirs, histories, etc. [This would be quite an undertaking for someone in our Association to work at. Perhaps the Board of Directors might take up the possibility of such a project.]

**REBECCA WARDELL**, widow of the late **ROBERT J. WARDELL** of the 64<sup>th</sup>, has written that she has moved and asks that her name be dropped from the mailing list. She states that she will not be able to attend any of our reunions or follow the doings of the organization. She did not provide any new address.

Sending BILL his '98 dues **WILLIAM A. AUSTIN**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Photographer from Hurst, TX says he appreciates all that BILL has done for the Association. "Fifty-five years ago I would never have believed that I would still be part of the 43<sup>rd</sup> to this time."

**FRANCIS R. BOUTWELL**, 65<sup>th</sup> Nose Gunner from Hoover, AL, has sent in a generous check for his '98 dues and asks that he be listed as a dues paying member. [The editor's records indicate that FRANCIS joined the Association about a year ago. Apparently his name was omitted from the mailing roster.] He requested information about the '97 reunion from BILL as well as a copy of the latest Roster. [If you mean the '98 reunion, FRANCIS, information regarding this reunion is at the end of the Newsletter.]

Wondering why he was listed in the October edition of our Newsletter as a relative of a deceased or living 43<sup>rd</sup> Association member is **DONALD H. BANCROFT, Jr.**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Pilot from Rockport, TX. He is further puzzled as to why his name appears on "Bill's Bad Boys" list when his dues are up to date and he sent in proof of his timely payments for dues from 1996-2000. [The editor takes full blame for the incorrect listing of your status in the October Newsletter. I am sorry that this happened.]

DON is very understanding of the goofs we make now and then as well as for all of the work put into running the Association's business. He has worked for 17 years as a member of a committee which organizes the annual reunions of ex-employees of the Creole Petroleum Corporation (an Exxon affiliate) where he worked from 1937-1971. From '42-'45 there was a gap in his employment due to a war.

Sending BILL his '98 dues at the end of 1997, **JOHN COOP**, 403<sup>rd</sup> from Kellyville, NSW, Australia, wrote that in the October issue of the Newsletter mention was made of another B-17 resting in a New Guinea swamp. He says that he keeps hoping that one day someone will find the B-17 of Lt. **TITUS** from the 403<sup>rd</sup>. The crew and plane were lost in November 1942. He believes the plane's number was 41-24546. JOHN says that he was the last person to see them as they took off for that last mission. He pulled the chocks away and drove the jeep back to Arcadia. He and others were due to return to Milne Bay, but they stayed on an extra day to search for the lost plane and crew. JOHN was a member of **WILLIAM R. GOWDY**'s crew at that time. Also on the missing plane was the Squadron Commander, Major **CHARLES**, but as far as JOHN knows nothing was ever heard about them again. Also on the plane was Radio Operator **MERLE HARTBURG** from JOHN's home town, Niagara Falls, NY. He met MERLE's parents after the war and attended MERLE's memorial service held in the Falls at the time.

He wishes all Association members the very best for 1998.

Writing from Tahlequah, OK, and sending dues for '98, **EULAMAE MILLER**, widow of the late **ROBERT L. "TOD" MILLER**, Headquarters Radio Operator, says she is sorry to be late with her dues as she thought they were already paid through '98.

EULAMAE writes that ROBERT never forgot his beloved 43<sup>rd</sup>. He had written a "... piece of poetry to the *Flying Fortress' Honor*." She promised to share this with us in the near future.

She says "God Bless each of you. Today [January 20, 1998] would have been our 52<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary. Many pleasant memories have come to mind today."

Referring the staff to page 7 of the 65<sup>th</sup> edition of the Newsletter, **CLIFFORD KOCHA**, points out that his dues have been paid through the year 2000. A change of area code as well as the additional 4 digits to his area zip code were shown in that issue. [Apparently this information did not appear on his last mailing label. We apologize for this oversight and hope to do better with this Newsletter.]

It seems that **TED J. BIBY**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Photo/Lab from Winfield, KS, is still having a problem getting his dues situation straightened out, but he enclosed his '98 dues regardless.

With an additional complaint, TED says that his poem [Page 10 of January 1998 Newsletter] lost its punch with a misspelled word which was the "punch word." Here is the poem again.

I may go to Heaven, or I may go to hell.

But I've had a great time in this old shell.

Occupation - Carpenter.

Cause of death - HAMMERIODS.

TED writes "A person should never admit adultery."

He had cataract surgery which involved 4 hours of waiting for 15 minutes of surgery with a \$2,000 price tag. TED says Will Rogers had it right when he said, "You can not live in this country for nothing."

**RUSSELL G. KNUTZON**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Line Chief from Eagle Grove, IA, mailed in his '98 dues along with a nice donation to the Association. He wants to know about the history being written by **LARRY HICKEY**.

[Requests about the book come by mail, phone and e-mail from members all over the country. President **SAM COMMONS** makes some mention of this situation in his remarks at the beginning of the Newsletter. Other references to this book appear scattered throughout this edition. An order form appeared in the July 1997 edition of the Newsletter. Larry has promised to send the editor late information for this edition. Whatever, if anything, comes from Larry will appear later in this edition.]

Russ goes on to write that he joined the 435<sup>th</sup> Sqd. 19<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group in Townsville, Australia, in 1942. He was transferred to the 403<sup>rd</sup> when the 19<sup>th</sup> was sent back to the States. He stayed with the 403<sup>rd</sup>, as a Line Chief, until the 403<sup>rd</sup> was located on Ie Shima.

Paying '98-'99 dues are **ELSIE** and **KENT MILTON**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Armament/Gunner from Clairton, PA. ELSIE wants to be sure that the Newsletter keeps arriving at their home. She also says that after receiving the last Newsletter, KENT visited **E. FURIO**, 65<sup>th</sup> from Monessen, PA. [Jan. '9 pages 6-7] Although KENT did not know ROMEO prior to his visit, the two had an enjoyable visit recalling their days with the 43<sup>rd</sup>.

She says that although they do not know most of the people who appear in the newsletters, they do enjoy reading them as they bring back memories for KENT - some enjoyable and some sad. She asks that we all keep up the good work and sends their blessings to all.

In a short note accompanying his '98 dues **LELAND J. MLNARIK**, Headquarters Radio Operator from Omaha, NE, writes, "Our whole family enjoys the Newsletter. Keep them coming."

**MARY JO PUTNAM**, widow of the late **GEORGE "AL" ALFRED PUTNAM, Sr.** 403<sup>rd</sup> Pilot from Sacramento, CA, has sent the Association a memorial obituary for GEORGE who passed away on March 17, 1997 at the age of 78 years, 4 months and 9 days. It is always sad to hear of one of our members going to his final resting place.

Admitting that the last Newsletter reminded him to pay his dues, **JOHN PONTILLO**, 64<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Air Man, asks that we keep the Newsletter coming as "... it brings back memories of the early time when we were young."

He recalls traveling from Bangor, ME, to Darwin, Iron Range, Mareeba, New Guinea and the good U.S.A.

Included with his '98 dues is a letter from **LEROY JASMER**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Maintenance from Willmar, MN. He wants to know what kind of a contract **LARRY HICKEY** has with the Association. He thinks that a good part of the book must be ready for print and wants to know why he can't publish that now and print a supplement as he completes more of the history?

LEROY is sure that we are probably sick and tired of fielding questions on the book. [That goes with the office. The Newsletter attempts to keep you up to date with this situation, but as you and others know we have had one promise after another without seeing the book.]

Another sending BILL his dues and a letter urging him to do anything he can do to expedite our History is **ROBERT L. GORDON**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Bombardier from Savannah, GA. He enclosed a copy of an order form for the History that he probably completed in '90 or '91. At that time the book was promised for publication in 1991. Upon returning the form to BOB, LARRY penned a note on the bottom informing BOB that the status of the book is updated in each Newsletter. He says that since his B-17 co-author pooped out, it has been delayed. He goes on to say that, "Parts are in production right now." [Remember this was 1991.] At that time the book sold for \$70 plus \$3.50 for shipping.

Sending in lifetime dues plus a hefty donation to the Association is **JOHN M. BUSLINGER**, 65<sup>th</sup> Navigator from Palm Bay, FL. He thanks everyone for the good job on the Newsletter, but thinks it is carefully distancing itself from any news on the upcoming history.

He writes that last July he obtained a listing of publication dates. These showed the 22<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Group's history would be published on Sept. 15, 1997 and the 43<sup>rd</sup>'s on Oct. 15, 1997.

This past January he was informed by LARRY HICKEY, via the telephone, that the 22<sup>nd</sup>s would be published in 90 days and ours would go to press 45 days later. [We have had many promises over the years. Let's hope 1998 is the year we all receive this book.]

Enclosing '98-'99 dues for **BOOTS** and **JIM RODELLA**, 64<sup>th</sup> Gunner from Pittsburgh, PA, as well as dues for their daughter, **JOYCE** an Associate member, **JIM** writes that they missed the Albuquerque reunion as their granddaughter was getting married on September 12<sup>th</sup>.

**JIM** also asked **BILL** to send only one Newsletter to his house since **JOYCE** lives there, and they can manage with just one copy.

Keeping current with his dues is **BILL "RADAR" HOOVER**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Navigator from St. Cloud, FL. In early February **BILL** wrote that he had just returned from Miami where he had a plastic windpipe removed. He had lived with it for a year and his condition kept him from traveling in '97. **BILL** says that things look brighter for the future, and he and **VIRGINIA** hope to make it to the Mass. reunion. They did spend Christmas in Houston. They flew there and took his medical equipment along.

Joining the Association as a new member before old age overcomes him is **MIKE MEDNICK**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Gunner from Woodridge, NY. **MIKE** writes that he is 76 years old, married and his wife's name is **GAIL**.

**MIKE** says that he entered the service in 1941 and ended his service on Ie Shima. He spent his time as Ball Turret Gunner in both the B-17 and the B-24 starting in '43. He remembers Capt. **KEN McCULLAR**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Sqd. CO, Col. **JAMES T. PETTUS**, Group CO, as well as **HAWTHORNE** and some of the other COs. He says that he remembers faces but not names and hopes that at the Springfield reunion he will see someone he knew. Below is his address for those who remember **MIKE**.

P.O. Box 548, Woodridge, NY 12789-6548

Mailing in his '98 dues and nice remarks about the good job being done by all with the Newsletter, especially what is going on with those from the 403<sup>rd</sup>, is **TED ROMANOWSKI**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Armament/Gunner from Whiting, NJ.

**TED** writes that last September he was contacted by Col. Charles Munch from the Collings Foundation to do promotion and publicity for the B-17 and B-24, *ALL AMERICAN*, participating in the air show at Miller Air Park in Toms River, NJ. **TED** wrote that he did some TV and local newspaper interviews as well as answering questions about his experiences. He found that this brought back memories, and he was amazed at the interest of the public.

The show was a huge success. The B-24 was fully equipped just as those we flew in the war. The cost for reconstruction was \$1.3 million. The *ALL AMERICAN* has appeared at over 500 locations in the past 5 years.

[The two planes will be at Westover A.R.B. on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of September. That is at the end of our reunion. The annual air show has previously been held in August but has been moved to September for 1998.]

**PHYLLIS JOHNSON**, Kettle River, MN, has mailed in dues for '98. She sadly reports the passing of her husband, **HAROLD C. JOHNSON**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Crew Chief, on December 18, 1997. **PHYLLIS** enclosed a memorial obituary for **HAROLD**.

**HAROLD** suffered from cancer and put up a brave fight for 5 months. They had attended all of the reunions of the 43<sup>rd</sup> except for two when **HAROLD** was ill. He was hoping that before he died, he would receive the "History" book they paid for years ago. She writes that when it does arrive, she will be "... anxious to read it and it will be a good legacy to our daughter, **PAULETTE**."

PHYLLIS says that HAROLD enjoyed the golf tournaments at the reunions as well as seeing so many of his old friends. She writes further that, "Harold was ready to go 'home' to be with the Lord and I was so happy to care for him at home until the end as he wanted."

Along with his '98 dues, **BILL GALIDA**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Armament from Campbell, OH sent a Happy New Year to all. He reported that **CLAUDE P. MORTON**, 403<sup>rd</sup> from Owensboro, KY, had passed away this past summer.

The editor received from **BILL WILSON**, Treasurer, two letters written by **RUSS BURNETT**, 64<sup>th</sup> Flight Engineer from Conway, MA, and co-host of the '98 reunion, which indicated that RUSS had been attempting to entice the Collings Foundation to bring their B-17 and B-24 to Westover A.R.B. for our reunion. The cost was simply out of the question. But as you have read above, the two planes will be there during the last Saturday and Sunday of our reunion, but for an air show and not because of our reunion.

A later letter from RUSS included an article from the January 1998 "Atlantic Flyer." It concerns a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary memorial service in Perkinsville, VT for the crew and passenger aboard a B-29 that crashed into Hawk Mountain where the ceremonies were held. It turns out that the 1947 crash was of a SAC 64<sup>th</sup> Sqd., 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group (VH), B-29 stationed in Arizona. The article tells how the 43<sup>rd</sup> BG (H) had extensive service in the Pacific during WWII, but was inactivated in the Philippines on April 29, 1946. It was activated on October 1, 1946 at Davis-Monthan AAF and was assigned to SAC. The article accompanied with a photo of a B-29 is too long to be reproduced in our Newsletter. Those killed in the crash include 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. **ROBERT G. FESSLER**, Pilot, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. **WILFRED E. GASSETT**, Copilot, **CEASARE P. FONTANA**, Observer, M/Sgt. **D. D. JACK**, Crew Chief, T/Sgt. **PAUL H. FETTERHOFF**, T/Sgt. **CLAYTON D. KNIGHT**, S/Sgt. **OLIVER W. HARTWELL**, S/Sgt. **SYLVESTER S. MACHALAC**, S/Sgt. **JOHN J. O'TOOLE**, Cpl. **HARRY HUMPHREY**, Cpl. **ROBERT CLARK** and Pfc. **ROBERT M. STEWART**.

Via e-mail the secretary/editor heard from **Brad Buck** with regard to B-24s at Clark Field in the Philippines. Brad reports that his father, **William L. Buck**, Bombardier, was in the 13<sup>th</sup> Air Force, 5<sup>th</sup> BG, 72<sup>nd</sup> Sqd. in the Philippines late in the war. He had thought that the 13<sup>th</sup> was stationed at Clark Field at that time. The editor had indicated that he thought this was incorrect and that only the 90<sup>th</sup> was at Clark Field when the war ended. If anyone of you has information to clear up this question, please let the editor know. If you have e-mail capabilities, Brad's e-mail address is: [bradfordbuck@rossnutrition.com](mailto:bradfordbuck@rossnutrition.com)

On March 4<sup>th</sup>, the editor received a phone call from **GEORGE R. TUCHOLSKI**, 64<sup>th</sup> Radio Operator from Middleburg Hts., OH. GEORGE was wondering if the Association had published any newsletters since the Albuquerque reunion that he attended. His name is not on Bill's Bad Boys list, and he says that his dues are current although the check he wrote for his '98 dues last December had not cleared his bank. The Oct. '97 and Jan. '98 editions were put in the mail to him that same day. Good reading George.

A nice letter arrived from **REGINALD TATRO**, 65<sup>th</sup> Radio Operator from Greenfield, MA along with a check for his '98 dues.

REGINALD writes that he is a bit late with his dues as he has been taking care of his wife, **LUCILLE**, who had major surgery in a local hospital in January. She had to follow the doctor's orders for a 6-week period and couldn't do much to take care of herself. REGINALD says that she is coming along satisfactorily, but it will take time for a full recovery.

Late in February he had a phone call from **J. T. BRITTON**, 65<sup>th</sup> Pilot from Las Chavez, NM. "It was good to hear from him and catch up on all his news."

REGINALD also included the sad news that **JOHN A. "ROBBIE" ROBERSTON**, 65<sup>th</sup> Pilot from Green Valley, AZ passed away last October. REGINALD and LUCILLE had visited ROBBIE in the hospital in Tucson last April. They received the news from ROBBIE's widow, JANE.

The TATROs' grandson, a senior at the University Of Wyoming, will be married in Cody, WY on June 13<sup>th</sup>. They will try to stay well to attend the big event.

Received via our President, SAM COMMONS, a 40-page catalog of model aircraft from WWI through the current day. It includes both military and civilian aircraft as well as some WWII naval craft. The models are made by Skip and Carol Spencer and family. He is a retired Air Force person who has started a business out of his home to keep him occupied in his retirement.

He has in the catalog a couple of B-17s (scale 1/54), *MEMPHIS BELLE* and *SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY*, and a B-24J (scale 1/60). The price of one model such as the B-17 is \$139.50. With shipping and handling it would cost just over \$145. He is offering the Association a 7% discount off the regular catalog price for orders of 20 or more models. With shipping this would then cost \$110.16 per model. Maybe some of you would want to get together at the next reunion and see if 20 or more want to order one of these planes. The editor understands that a catalog will be available in the Memorabilia Room.

These models are handcrafted with a specially treated mahogany wood and are made from exact blueprints. Skip Spencer says that if anyone has any question about the quality of these models, he/she should check with **LELAND R. LOUGHREY**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Navigator at 1085 Kennett Way, West Chester, PA 19380. Phone 215-430-3665.

Skip and Carol call their hobby/business, *Memories*. They are located at:

5516 Via Conejo NE

Albuquerque, NM 87111

Phone: 505-294-3992

Fax: 505-275-3441

E-mail: [wishing@flash.net](mailto:wishing@flash.net)

With his check for his '98 dues, **GEORGE J. CARTER** of Headquarters from Cream Ridge, NJ, sent a letter, part of his war diary and a proposal to the Board of Directors. He writes that he has been a member of the Association since 1981 and has attended 6 reunions, including a mini reunion at Bangor, ME. He goes on to say that this is his first letter to the editor of our "...fabulous and well authored newsletter."

GEORGE finds the increased number of items regarding combat missions of the famed 43<sup>rd</sup> Group crews is welcome. He suggests that by keeping each edition of the Newsletter in our libraries, we may find that in time we will have a factual description of the 43<sup>rd</sup>'s great efforts in the SWPA. He points out that this would cost one only the membership dues.

GEORGE sends along the sad news that First Sgt. **J. WILSON KING**, Headquarters of Canyon Lake, TX, passed away in Louisville, KY, on December 31<sup>st</sup>. He reminds us that "BILL" was married to the beautiful **SHERYL** at the Omaha reunion in 1993. GEORGE served as best man. [Our apologies if your name is **SHERRILL** as listed in the Roster. Condolences from us all.]

He enclosed a copy of the part of his diary written while sailing on the *Queen Mary* from Boston to Sidney, Australia. [This edition of the Newsletter is growing quite lengthy. The editor will peruse this material for possible inclusion in upcoming issues.]

GEORGE has sent to the Board of Directors a proposal aimed at perpetuating the glories and the history of the 43<sup>rd</sup> by establishing a scholarship fund with what reserve monies we have. He outlines his proposal in some detail, but in essence he sees this as a means to continue our history with preference given to someone who might be entering R.O.T.C. at a college or university and/or considering a military career.

Please make a change of address for **RAYMOND E. CRAWFORD** of the 63<sup>rd</sup>.

7767 #1 Madison Rd. Alliance, NE 69301.

Also sending in dues for 1998 is **RODNEY FLETCHER**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Crewman from Columbia, MD, and **ROBERT J. "BOB" MULVEY**, 403<sup>rd</sup> from S. Yarmouth, Ma. One of **RUSS BURNETT**'s letters with regard to the B-17 and B-24 of the Collings Foundation, referred to earlier in this Newsletter, was sent to BOB.

Some late breaking but sad new comes by phone from our President, **SAMUEL COMMONS**, who received a letter from **MICHAEL J. O'MALLEY**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Navigator from Pittsburgh, PA. **MICHAEL** reported the passing of two of our comrades from the 63<sup>rd</sup> Squadron: **GEORGE W. LEAKY**, Navigator from Bakersfield, CA and on the crew of **PAUL CREASSAR**; and **JOHN ALBERS**, Pilot from Canyon, TX.

Via e-mail **BOB SCHULTZ**, 64<sup>th</sup> Pilot, and **HELEN GREEN**, widow of **FRANK GREEN** 63<sup>rd</sup> Pilot, send word from Loveland, OH, that BOB had a total knee replacement in March and is currently taking therapy twice a week. **HELEN** is doing some quilting. They plan to see everyone in Springfield.

Sending **BILL** his dues for '98 - '00 is **HAROLD H. KAHLER**, 65<sup>th</sup> Bombardier from Kaukauna, WI. **HAROLD** says that he has not been to a reunion in some time, but he hopes to make one soon.

He arrived in Port Moresby in March or April of 1943 as a replacement bombardier. As a result he flew with many different crews and spent time in the 64<sup>th</sup>, 63<sup>rd</sup> and finally in the 65<sup>th</sup>. He plans to buy the history if it is ever published.

**HAROLD** wonders how many of you can remember your serial number?

Please note the area code change on his phone number: 920-766-5592

Another former 43<sup>rd</sup> member has just joined the Association. **AL TUBBESING** of the 63<sup>rd</sup> who served on **JIM MURPHY**'s crew and hails from Lake Ozark, MO, writes that he wants information regarding our Springfield reunion. [It's at the end of this Newsletter.] His address is:

576 State Hwy. H.H.

Lake Ozark MO 65049

Phone: 573-365-4132

Remitting his '98 dues and hoping to see **BILL WILSON** in Springfield at the reunion is **JAMES T. "MAC" McCLURE**, 65<sup>th</sup> from Suitland, MD. **MAC** reports that he spent time in the Bethesda Navy Hospital where the staff was doing some repair work on his bad back.

Paying his '99 dues as he would rather be ahead than behind since it is so easy to forget such matters at our ages is **RICHARD J. MROWINSKI**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Armament/Gunner from West Allis, WI.

**RODGER W. LITTLE**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Pilot from Rockledge, FL, has sent in his '98-'99 dues and asks to be put back in good standing if he has been listed as delinquent.

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**M. L. "SHAD" SHADDOX**, 64<sup>th</sup> Pilot from Friendswood, TX, sent via e-mail a series of remarks about "Lessons in Life." These range from age 6 through age 92. A few will be cited below:

I've learned that when I wave to people in the country, they stop what they are doing and wave back. Age 9

I've learned that if you want to cheer yourself up, you should try cheering someone else up.

Age 13

I've learned that wherever I go, the world's worst drivers have followed me there. Age 29

I've learned that there are people who love you dearly but just don't know how to show it.

Age 41

I've learned that children and grandparents are natural allies. Age 46

I've learned that you can learn a lot about a man by the way he handles these three things:  
a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas tree lights. Age 52

I've learned that whenever I decide something with kindness, I usually make the right decision. Age 66

I've learned that I still have a lot to learn. Age 92

You can tell when it is going to be a rotten day. When ...

You call your answering service and they tell you that it is none of your business.

The bird singing outside your window is a buzzard.

More humor from the collection of NICK ARABINKO, 64<sup>th</sup> Pilot from Punta Gorda, FL.

Do not let any sweet-talking woman beguile your good sense with the fascinations of her shape. It's your barn she's after. Hesiod (circa 800 B.C.)

\*\*\*\*\*

A bit of advice from those who run the registration desk at the reunions.

**BRING YOUR NAMETAG WITH YOU TO THE REUNION.**

Those who work at registration at the reunions say that we are running out of nametags since so many members forget to bring along their nametags and have to be given another. The supply is now very limited. Thanks for your cooperation.

The Newsletter is published 4 times each year – January, April, July and October. If you have any news which you want in the Newsletter, please have it in the editor's hands absolutely no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month before publication. Please make your letters as short as possible, and if you do not type, write or letter legibly. Dues (\$15 Per Year or \$100 Life) may be sent directly to BILL WILSON, Treasurer, or to JIM CHERKAUER, Secretary. (Addresses are at the beginning of the Newsletter.) Make the check out to **43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group Assoc.** Check the mailing label on this edition to find out your status with respect to paid up dues. The Association's fiscal year is the same as the calendar year. You may send E-Mail to the secretary/editor at: [cherrij@buffnet.net](mailto:cherrij@buffnet.net)

**The Post Office department will not forward the Newsletter.** If you have a change of address, send BILL WILSON the change as soon as possible.

No word had been received from Larry Hickey regarding the publication of the History by the time this went to press. An e-mail request for an update was not acknowledged. *Jim Cherkauer*

RUSS BURNETT writes that perhaps some of you will want to see some of the air show on Saturday or consider staying through Sunday to see it after our Memorial Service and Brunch.

**REUNION MATERIALS ON THE NEXT SEVERAL PAGES**

# 1998 REUNION SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Registration is on a daily basis. The first scheduled official activity begins with the Board of Directors Meeting in the late evening on Wednesday, September 9<sup>th</sup>.

We urge you to come early so that you can have lots of time to visit with your friends, take advantage of the optional tours and enjoy visiting the many museums and points of interest, (See page 18 in the January Newsletter). Springfield and the surrounding area steeps with History. The Springfield Armory and Basketball Hall of Fame are but two "firsts."

Remember to bring and wear your 43<sup>rd</sup> Badges.

A brief outline of the Reunion Schedule follows:

- Registration - 9:00 A.M. - 3:30 P.M. Monday - Friday
- Hospitality Room - 9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. Monday - Friday
- Board of Directors - 8:00 P.M. Wednesday, September 9<sup>th</sup>

## Wednesday September 9<sup>th</sup>

8:30 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. Tour #1 Boston

9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. Tour #2 The Berkshires

9:00 A.M. - 1:30 P.M. Tour #3 Old Sturbridge Village

**(NONE OF THE ABOVE TOURS IS INCLUDED IN THE REGISTRATION FEE.)**

## Thursday September 10<sup>th</sup>

9:00 A.M. Golf, Tennis & Bridge

All tours available on Wednesday are available today at the same hours.

8:00 P.M. Squadron Meetings & Ladies Night

## Friday September 11<sup>th</sup>

7:30 A.M. Breakfast Buffet

8:45 A.M. Bus Tour with Lunch at Westover A.R.B.

(Included in Registration Fee)

6:30 P.M. Dinner & Entertainment

## Saturday September 12<sup>th</sup>

7:30 A.M. Continental Breakfast

9:30 A.M. Group Meeting

5:00 P.M. Cocktail Hour with Music

6:30 P.M. Banquet with 10 Piece Band

## Sunday September 13<sup>th</sup>

8:30 A.M. Memorial Service

9:00 A.M. Brunch & Farewells

*Russ Burnett*  
Reunion Chairman

*Bob Watson*  
Reunion Coordinator

# 43rd Bomb Group Association Reunion

SPRINGFIELD MARriott SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS 01115

September 6 - 13, 1998

NAME: Last \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE/GUEST: \_\_\_\_\_ SQUADRON: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ If any information has changed since Sept. '97,  
please check \_\_\_\_\_.

REUNION FEE: \$105 per person X \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(No. of people) (Amount enclosed)

ARRIVING \_\_\_\_\_ AND DEPARTING \_\_\_\_\_  
(date) (date)

TRAVELING BY: Auto \_\_\_\_\_ Plane \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

I WILL BE PLAYING: Golf \_\_\_\_\_ Tennis \_\_\_\_\_ Bridge \_\_\_\_\_

MY SPOUSE/GUEST WILL PLAY: Golf \_\_\_\_\_ Tennis \_\_\_\_\_ Bridge \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: Make check payable to:  
43rd BOMB GROUP REUNION  
Mail check with this form to:  
Russ Burnett  
P.O. Box 126  
Conway, MA 01341-0126

**43rd BOMB GROUP REUNION**  
**September 6 - 13, 1998**

**Springfield Marriott Hotel**  
Corner of Boland Way & Columbus  
P.O. Box 15729  
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01115-5729  
413-781-7111 413-731-6939 Fax  
**TOLL FREE 1-800-228-9290**

NAME _____	<b>43rd Bomb Group Reunion</b>
ADDRESS _____	
CITY/STATE/ZIP _____	PHONE _____
SHARING ROOM WITH _____	
If sharing room - please make one reservation only.	
Multiple reservation for one room may results in a no-show billing.	

**PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT**

For your convenience you may either mail in this reservation form or call 1-800-228-9290 (toll free) to make your reservation.

All reservations will be held until 6 p.m. of the day of arrival unless guaranteed by one night's advance deposit or one of the following major credit cards: American Express Card, Dinners Club, Carte Blanche, MasterCard, Visa, Discover or En Route. Special requests are subject to availability at time of check-in.

If calling 1-800 number, please identify yourself as an attendee of:  
**The 43rd Bomb Group Reunion**

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that I am liable for one night's room and tax which will be deducted from my deposit or billed through my credit card in the event that I do not arrive on the date indicated, or cancel before 6 p.m. on DATE OF ARRIVAL. A code number is required for verification of cancellation.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

No. of Rooms	Please Circle Preferred Rate Below Accommodations Requested		
_____	Single (1 Person)	1 bed	\$74
_____	Double (2 persons)	1 bed	\$74
_____	Triple (3 persons)	2 beds	\$74
_____	Quad (4 persons)	2 beds	\$74

Arrival Date \_\_\_\_\_

Departure Date \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Nights \_\_\_\_\_  
(Check-in 4 P.M. - Check Out 12 noon)

**August 21, 1988**  
**Cut-off Date.** All reservations must  
by above date in order to be eligible  
for group rate.

All rooms subject to existing local and state taxes.

# SPRINGFIELD Marriott

Corner of Boland and Columbus Avenue, Springfield, Massachusetts 01115-5729 · (413) 781-7111

## DIRECTIONS TO THE SPRINGFIELD MARRIOTT

### ***Traveling on I-91 North (from Hartford, New York City, Philadelphia, etc.)***

- Follow I-91 North to Exit 6 - Columbus Avenue, Springfield Center
- The exit will put you immediately onto Columbus Avenue
- Go through two lights and the hotel will be immediately on the right
- Take the parking ramp to Level C, take the elevator on this level for the hotel entrance

### ***Traveling on I-91 South (from Northern Massachusetts, Vermont, etc.)***

- Follow I-91 South to Exit 7 - Springfield Center, Columbus Avenue
- Go to the first light and make a left under the highway
- At the next light (Columbus Avenue) make another left and the hotel will be immediately on your right
- Take the parking ramp to Level C, take the elevator on this level for the hotel entrance

### ***Traveling on the Mass Turnpike (Rt. 90)***

#### ***West (from Boston, Worcester, etc.)***

- Take Exit 6
- Go to the first light and make a left onto Rt. 291
- Follow Rt. 291 to I-91 South
- Once on I-91 South, quickly get into the right lane for Exit 7 - Springfield Center, Columbus Avenue
- Go to the first light and make a left under the highway
- At the next light (Columbus Avenue), make another left and the hotel is immediately on the right
- Take the parking ramp to Level C, take the elevator on this level for the hotel entrance

#### ***Traveling on the Mass Turnpike (Rt. 90) East (from Pittsfield, Albany, NY, etc.)***

- Take Exit 4
- Follow the directions from statement 2 above

City	Miles from Springfield	Driving Time @ 55 mph
New York, NY	150	3 hrs
Bridgeport, CT	84	1 1/2 hrs
Bradley Int'l Airport, CT	21	1/2 hr
Albany, NY	90	1 3/4 hrs
Worcester, MA	45	3/4 hrs
Boston, MA	90	1 3/4 hrs
Providence, RI	104	2 hrs
Cape Cod, MA	150	3 hrs
Manchester, NH	124	2 1/2 hrs
Montreal	300	5 3/4 hrs
Quebec	419	8 hrs
New Haven, CT	67	1 1/4 hrs
Hartford, CT	27	1/2 hr