



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

**NEWSLETTER REUNION EDITION
EDITION 72A NOVEMBER 1999**



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
210-681-4581

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

43rd Web Site: <http://www.kensmen.com>

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

Our 19th reunion in Tucson was a great event. Some members who have been coming since we began to meet said it was "one of the best." I am sorry that poor health and other circumstances prevented many of you from coming. We especially missed the presence of our Commanding Officer Jim Pettus and his wife Betty due to his illness. His greeting appears later in this letter. We had 268 in attendance by last count. It was a poignant experience for some of us to be back at the location where we formed crews over fifty years ago before going to the southwest Pacific.

Many thanks to Bob and Irene Watson for arranging a terrific site and fine accommodations. They have served as our reunion coordinators for ten years. We are very grateful to our hosts Jim and Louise Thompson who arranged the many activities and "got it all together" so beautifully.

Your representatives to the Board of Directors had many tough issues to tackle and they worked together for the good of our organization. Our Group Meeting on Saturday confirmed the nominating committee's recommendations for officers. Fred Hagen gave an update on his recovery efforts in New Guinea and Lt. Col. Robert Harcrow spoke about his Vietnam experiences.

Congratulations and best wishes to our new President Max Axelsen. He will also host the year 2000 reunion in San Antonio. We are pleased that Bill Wilson will continue as Treasurer and Jim Cherkauer will again serve as Secretary/Editor. We are delighted to have Roger Kettleon elected as our new Vice President. The Board selected Nashville, TN as the site of our 21st reunion in 2001. Bethel Ray and Harold Buelow will host the event.

I want to express my gratitude to the many members who helped to make the reunion so successful. I appreciate the many kind words and thoughtful notes regarding my job performance as your president. It is heartwarming. I will treasure the hand carved cane made by Joe Snyder. It has been my privilege to serve the 43rd Bomb Group Association.

[Editor's note. SAM continues as our President through December 31, 1999.]

***** FROM WILLIAM H. WILSON, Jr., TREASURER *****

**43rd Bomb Group Association
01-01-99 to 09-30-99**

Income

Dues	3,660.00
Life Member	1,665.00
Donations	332.00
Interest (CIC)	1,566.00
PX	23.00
E-Mail	75.00

Total 99 Reunion 7,321.00

Profit for first Nine months 823.60

Net

01-01-Starting Balance	20,485.01
Snyder National Bank	
Balance 10-05-99	21,308.61
Tucson Reunion	1,500.00
CD with Canyon	
Investment Co.	30,000.00
Net Worth	52,808.61

Expenses

Printing	3,421.83
Postage	1,130.18
PX Supplies	649.50
Office Supplies	285.01
Telephone	160.88
CPA Tax Return	150.00
Help & Lease Equipment	700.00

Total Expenses 6,497.40

***** FROM JIM CHERKAUER, SECRETARY *****

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1999
San Xavier Room**

In Attendance:

OFFICERS

Samuel F. Commons, President
William H. "Bill" Wilson, Jr., Treasurer

Max M. Axelsen, Vice President
Jim Cherkauer, Secretary

DIRECTORS

Roland T. Fisher, 63rd Director (2000)
Kenneth Brown, 64th Director (2000)
Eldon E. "Bud" Lawson, 65th Director (1999)
Arthur G. Durbeck, 403rd Director (2000)

Charles "Chuck" Rauch, 63rd Director (2001)
L. C. "Chalky" White, 65th Director (2001)
Joseph W. Snyder, 403rd Director (1999)

PAST PRESIDENTS

Robert H. Butler, 63rd

George L. White, 63rd

Max Osborn, 65th

James T. Murphy, 63rd

REUNION COORDINATOR R. F. "Bob" Watson,

- A. President Samuel F. Commons called the meeting to order in the San Xavier Room of the InnSuites Hotel & Resort at approximately 7:30 P.M. He offered an opening prayer for all of those who served in the 43rd Bomb Group and their family members.
- B. Those in attendance introduced themselves for the benefit of those at their first Board meeting.
- C. Bill Wilson moved and it was duly seconded that the 1998 minutes of the Board be accepted as distributed to the members and in the October 1998 Newsletter. The motion carried unanimously.
- D. A motion to name Eldon "Bud" Lawson as our Group Historian was made, seconded and carried unanimously.
- E. Sam Commons moved that the Association name E. Tracy Tucciarone's "Unofficial 43rd Bomb Group Web Site" as the "Official 43rd Bomb Group Web Site." The motion was seconded and discussion ensued. The motion was withdrawn.
63rd Director Roland T. Fisher moved that the Board compliment Tracy and thank her for her great efforts setting up the web site; ask her to drop the word "Unofficial" from the title; point out that we are concerned about any material that would be derogatory to the reputation of the 43rd and we would want to question it; and tell her she has been named "Sweetheart of the 43rd." The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.
- F. A motion was made by 65th Director, Bud Lawson, and seconded to name Roland T. Fisher as the Chaplain of the 43rd bomb Group Association. The motion carried unanimously.
- G. The Treasurer's report was received by the Board. It is in the earlier Report from the Treasurer.
- H. A motion was made and seconded to drop from the mailing roster those members (49) who have not paid their dues from 1994 through 1996. The motion carried.
- I. Past President and Chairman of the Nomination Committee, Robert H. Butler, presented the slate for nomination for officers of the Association.
 - For President - Max M. Axelsen;
 - For Vice President - G. Kettleon;
 - For Treasurer - William H. "Bill" Wilson, Jr.; and
 - For Secretary - Jim Cherkauer.The Board received the committee report.
- J. The secretary reminded the directors from the 64th, 65th and 403rd Squadrons that each had to elect a director to replace one whose term expired at the end of 1999.
- K. Roland Fisher and Chuck Rauch gave a report on the status of the history of the 43rd. Chuck reported that he met with Ron Nielson of Rose Publishing and discussed the problems we are having in getting any real action from the author, Lawrence J. Hickey. The publisher is also

bringing pressure to bear on Larry in the hopes that the book could go to them for publication by the end of 1999.

Chuck read a letter from Larry regarding the status of the book. He proposed that we write a letter to Larry accepting his promise to have the book completed by the end of 1999 and stating that if this deadline is not met, we will take appropriate action.

It was moved and seconded that Roland and Chuck prepare such a letter to Larry and that the President, Vice President and Secretary review the letter and make any suggested changes. The letter would be sent to Larry by certified mail, return receipt requested. Both letters are to be printed in the Newsletter of the 43rd.

The motion carried unanimously. [Both letters are shown following these Board Minutes.]

- L. It was moved and seconded that the Bylaws of the Association be amended to read, "No member or associate shall arrange for speakers, accommodations, equipment or anything that will require expenditure of monies from the 43rd Bomb Group Association treasury, except as directed by the active Board of Directors."
The motion carried unanimously.
[The Bylaws of the Association require that any proposed amendment be acted upon by an affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds of the members in good standing at an annual Membership Meeting. This motion was accidentally overlooked at the general Membership Meeting on Saturday, Oct. 23rd. It will be taken up at the 2000 reunion general Membership Meeting in San Antonio.]
- M. Bud Lawson moved that the Association appropriate \$10,000 to the cost of the year 2000 reunion to help reduce the registration fee for that reunion. The motion was seconded and carried.
- N. Max Axelsen suggested that we try to have the year 2001 reunion in Nashville, Tennessee. The achievement of that idea would depend upon finding someone(s) in the Association who would be willing to undertake the responsibility of planning and hosting such a reunion. It was recommended that the Squadron Directors approach this suggestion at their respective meetings on Thursday evening. The Board approved of the suggestions.
[Pres. Sam Commons reported in his remarks that two of our members, S. Ray Bethel and Harold A. Buelow, have agreed to undertake this responsibility so that the 2001 reunion will be in Nashville. Both of these men served on the crew of Robert A. Claycombe.]
- O. Pres. Sam Commons reported that a member of the Association proposed that we add associate members of the Association to the Board with the idea that they could perpetuate the organization after the demise of all of the active members
A motion was made to add associate members to the Board with the idea of perpetuating the Association. It was seconded.
There was discussion but no member spoke in favor of the concept of perpetuating this Association beyond the life span of the current members. All speakers felt that the organization should cease to exist at such time as there are too few active members to carry on.
The motion was defeated.
- P. A hand carved cane by Joe Snyder was presented to the Board by Joe. This beautiful piece of carving was passed around for all to examine and admire.
- Q. The meeting adjourned about 10 P.M.

Following are the letters cited in item K of Minutes of the Board of Directors immediately above.

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND PUBLISHING CORP.
P. O. BOX 3334, HIGH MAR STATION
BOULDER, COLORADO 80307
(303) 4999-0530

October 19, 1999

43rd BG Association Reunion
Inn Suites Hotel & Resort
475 N. Granada Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85701

Dear 43rd members,

We are finally nearing the end of this long ordeal to get the 43rd History to press. Several months ago I switched priority to the 43rd book project and I am on a schedule to have it to the printers by the end of the year. If I do not do so, I am prepared to refund all pre-publication orders to the 43rd membership. Until the book goes to the printers, this project continues to have my full attention. Everything is done but finishing part of the writing, which I'm working on for many hours each day. My research assistant, who works only part time, will be in town through the end of October, and she will be concentrat[ing] on getting back photo collections and other materials provided for the book projects. Any remaining will be returned by the time the book goes to press. For those of you for whom this is not satisfactory, I will continue to refund any pre-publication orders for those who request them. I know you don't want your money, you want the book. It is coming! I've sent a display of the book materials for you to review in the meantime. Except for refunds, please try and avoid otherwise contacting me as I cannot write and answer phone calls and correspondence at the same time. If you must contact me, leave a message on my voice mail and I will get back to you as I do not answer my phone while I'm writing.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Larry Hickey
Internet: ljh@concentric.net

[Editor's note. The materials Larry sent to the reunion were posted on a display board. Included were several airplane photos and artist's renditions of 43rd aircraft as well as several pages of the book and a Table of Contents: Dedication, Preface, Introduction, Chapters 1-24, 5 Appendices, Selected Bibliography, Acknowledgements, Index, Maps 1-16, Color Photo Section, Color Paintings, Color Patches and Color Aircraft Profiles.]

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

Tucson, Arizona
October 22, 1999

Dear Larry,

We have put up the group history display and the letter you sent so that all the members of the association attending the reunion have had a chance to see them. Last night, at the annual board meeting, we reviewed members' reactions to them and discussed at great length the extended delay in completion of our book.

While we see some small progress compared with the material you sent in previous years, the general attitude of the members and the consensus of the board of directors was disappointment. Just how near completion is the book?

In your letter, you state you will have the book ready for the publisher at the end of the year. So there is no confusion, this will be December 31, 1999. While you have misled us repeatedly in the past with schedules you have failed to meet, we are willing to accept this new schedule with the proviso that if you fail again, we will energetically seek alternatives.

You state also in your letter that you are ready to do certain things if you do not make this schedule. At this point, not making the schedule should NOT be one of your considerations. We prefer that you focus your time and energy on finishing the text and keeping your word. We think your only digression from this would be to give use weekly progress reports in a manner that would use a minimum of your time.

We proposed that no less than once a week you enter onto a copy of the table of contents that you sent with the exhibit, the percent of completion of EACH chapter. Send that report via e-mail to Roland Fisher at ---irmrol@msn.com---and Chuck Rauch at---crauch@sunline.net---. They are assigned by the group to work with you and report to the board useful information with which to make decisions.

Larry, we have a lot of frustrated, in some cases, angry people who simply want what you promised a long time ago. Some of them may, and have a right to, contact you for refunds or other reasons. Those are individual actions. At this point, the position of the Association is: you have given us your word you will send the completed files to Rose Publishing no later than December 31, 1999.

We expect you to keep your word.

Sincerely,
[Signature]
Samuel A. Commons
President

att: Hickey table of contents.

rtf/rtf
10/22/99

MINUTES OF THE 43rd BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION'S 19th ANNUAL REUNION MEETING
TUCSON, ARIZONA INN SUITES HOTEL & RESORT SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1999
COPPER/SILVER ROOM

- A. President Samuel F. Commons called the meeting to order at 9:30 A.M.
1. The order of the meeting was announced.
 - a. Business Meeting
 - b. Presentation by Fred Hagen, Associate member from Philadelphia, PA
 - c. Presentation by Robert Harcrow, son of James L. Harcrow, 65th Pilot
- B. A motion was made and seconded to dispense with the reading of the 1998 minutes and accept them as published in the October 1998 Newsletter.
Motion carried.
- C. Sam read the following message from Col. James T. Pettus, C.O. 43rd BG in the latter stages of WW II.
43rd Comrades- I am very sorry to miss this meeting, but my thoughts are with you. I am in remission, but still very fatigued. Doc Gusack assures me this will pass and is to be expected. Will see you all in Y2K in San Antonio. My congratulations to Sam on a great job.
- D. Treasurer's Report from William H. "Bill" Wilson, Jr. [See report earlier in Newsletter.]
- a. There will be a "Bad Boys" list in the next Newsletter for those whose dues are long overdue.
 - b. Bill stated that we might have one of the wealthiest Group Associations in the country.
- E. Robert H. Butler, Chairman of the Nomination Committee, presented the following slate of nominees for office:
- For President - Max M. Axelsen;
 - For Vice President - G. Kettleon;
 - For Treasurer - William H. "Bill" Wilson, Jr.; and
 - For Secretary - Jim Cherkauer.
- Eldon "Bud" Lawson moved that the nominations be closed. It was duly seconded. Hearing no objections, Sam asked for a vote on the motion. It passed without dissent.
With only one candidate for each office, Sam declared the nominees elected by acclamation as provided by Robert's Rules of Order.
- F. Vice President Max Axelsen reported on the Y2K reunion in San Antonio. Max and Margaret will be hosting this reunion. It will be from Monday, August 28th through Memorial Service and breakfast, Sunday, September 3, 2000, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Rooms will be \$99.00 per night with a 15% occupancy tax. This is where our 1994 reunion was held. Bus tours are being planned. One should go to the Hill Country, the Admiral Nimitz Museum and perhaps the Lyndon B. Johnson Ranch.
Max also pointed out that the nearby Air Force Base, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base was dedicated by Charles A. Lindbergh in 1927.
- G. Sam announced our plans to have the 2001 reunion in Nashville, Tennessee. He also announced that he had two volunteers who live near Nashville to host that reunion. [See article N of the Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting and the President's report.]

- H. Sam gave a brief report on the status of our history book by Larry Hickey and how Roland Fisher and Chuck Rauch are working with Larry and the publishing company on behalf of the 43rd. He also reported that the 22nd BG had initiated legal action against Larry and a judge has set a trial date in September 2000. He also mentioned that the letter to the Group from Larry Hickey will appear in this special edition of the Newsletter. The response to Larry from the Group will also appear in this Newsletter.
- I. President Commons announced the existence of a 43rd BG web site. He praised Tracy Tucciarone for the excellent work and great effort she has put forth to create and maintain this site for the Group. A computer and telephone connection are being set up in the Hospitality Room for the use of those at the reunion to see the web site, perhaps for the first time for many.
- J. Sam also asked members to send pictures taken at the reunion to him. He has to select several to appear in the 1999 Reunion Photo Album. He also announced the cocktail party before this evening's dinner/dance. Sam encouraged everyone to have his/her picture taken for the photo album whether or not it is your plans to purchase a copy of this. Lastly, he reminded everyone of the memorial service and brunch on Sunday morning.

This concluded the business portion of the annual meeting.

The meeting was turned over to Alfred "Fred" Hagen, Associate member from Philadelphia, PA.

Fred reported that it was impossible to bring the B-17 *MEMPHIS BELLE* to the reunion as it had been hoped. The plane, owned by David Tallichet, was grounded by the FAA while at the Confederate Air Force show in Texas and the needed repairs could not be made in time for this reunion.

Fred remarked that Tom Brokaw had mentioned in his book, *THE GREATEST GENERATION*, Fred's recovery of the P-47 piloted by Lt. Gaffney in New Guinea. FRED told about his attending a number of memorial services this past year for aviators who lost their lives in WW II over New Guinea and whose remains he had been instrumental in recovering.

Fred then presented to us a videotape on David Tallichet's and his negotiations with native New Guinea clans over the possession of and the rights to recover the B-17 he called the *SWAMP GHOST*. After heated discussions the islanders presented them with a list of demands before they would surrender the ownership of the plane. Fred did report that later the matter was settled to everyone's satisfaction and David and Fred now own the plane which they hope to recover next February and move to Australia for a complete renovation to its original flying condition. They plan to use flotation bags to bring up the fuselage after removing and recovering the engines and wings.

The video went on to show Fred, David and a few natives in the B-17 which was partially submerged in the swamp where it has been for nearly 6 decades.

He went on to report that he and David hoped to recover a number of other aircraft from New Guinea. This includes a B-17 *BLACK JACK*. They also have hopes of recovering a plane in Greenland and one in Libya.

After a 15-minute break, the non-business portion of the meeting continued. Sam introduced Robert "Bob" Harcrow and his dad, James L., 65th Pilot.

Lt. Col. Robert Harcrow presented a series of slide photos taken during his three tours in Vietnam as an Airforce Pilot. He entitled his presentation as "THE OTHER LT. HARCROW GOES TO WAR." Bob was a lieutenant when he made his first tour in Vietnam. He was stationed in Thailand for all three tours flying from two different bases. It was interesting to compare the living conditions he encountered with those the 43rd encountered in New Guinea. Between tours Bob saw his infant daughter for the first time. That is not unlike the situation when so many of us returned from our tours in the SWPA to see a son or daughter for the first time.

The photos of the temples and other buildings in Bangkok are simply too beautiful to describe. Bob pointed out how the Thais always managed diplomatically to stay out of war and preserve these magnificent buildings.

The secretary was amazed to find that the two-seat fighter, F-4U, could carry a load of bombs and rockets almost equal in weight to the bomb load of a B-24.

The meeting ended at 11:26 A.M. after a motion to adjourn was made, seconded and carried in a voice acclamation.

***** FROM JIM CHERKAUER, EDITOR *****

LOUISE and JIM THOMPSON have earned a hearty round of applause and thanks from our Group for the excellent reunion they co-hosted in Tucson. The reunion was well-organized and well run throughout the 7 days over which it took place. The hotel staff was very accommodating and always ready to help in any way that it could. Both LOUISE and JIM were always on hand to help with any problems that might arise. Thank you again, LOUISE and JIM.

We all owe an equally hearty round of applause to BOB and IRENE WATSON for the tremendous job they have done in making this reunion such a success. BOB made the hotel arrangements as he has done for so many of our past reunions. This is his last year as reunion coordinator. He is stepping down for a well-earned retirement from this tremendous responsibility. Thank you BOB. We must not forget the fantastic job IRENE has done in "manning" the registration desk and all of the related tasks she does to keep things moving smoothly throughout each of the past several reunions. Thank you IRENE.

REUNION ATTENDANCE FROM SIGNED ROSTERS

HEADQUARTERS SQD.

INGRID & CHARLES FARHA
BETTY & GORDON BAVOR
HUGH HIMES
ANTHONY V. IAMPIETRO
ROBERT S. CUTLER
MAURINE & FRED McALISTER
PHIL WELCH

403rd SQUADRON

LEE BROWN
LEWIS R. ARMSTRONG
MARGARET & MAX AXELSEN
VIRGINIA & ART DURBECK
JACKIE & PAUL BAUER
NANCY & BILL SOLOMON
ARLENE & BOB ROTH
SALLY & JOE SNYDER
JOHN McCRUM

PHYLLIS JOHNSON
HONEY & RAYMOND EMANUELSON
EDITH LOMBARDI
DOROTHY MARTIN
DANA E. DAVIS
CLARA & JOSEPH GASSEAU
PEG & ERNIE WELLS
RICHARD E. WILLIAMS
LILLIAN & BELFORD FRISBY
CAROLYN & PAUL COBER
MARLYS & NEIL FAIRBANKS
MIDGE & CHUCK DOWNER
RAY RUNGE

65th SQUADRON

IRENE & BOB WATSON
BETTY & FRANK TUCHER
ELDON E. "BUD" LAWSON
ALICE C. BARNES
EVELYN & ARNOLD HUSKINS
ELEANOR & ED JONES (guests of
the Huskins)
ANITA & JIM CHERKAUER
BONNIE & BETHEL RAY
TRACY TUCCARONE
(Daughter of Frank Tucher)
NORBERT MICHALOWICZ
MARGE & HAROLD BUELOW
HELEN & SAM COMMONS
BETTY & DON MARSAGLIA
MARY & BILL MYLES
LOIS & LARRY MAIN
MARY LOIS & BILL WILSON
SHIRLEY & CLEVE ENO
JIM EIDE
FRAN & MAX OSBORN
ROSEMARY & CHALKY WHITE
SUE & BOB CLAYCOMBE
KATHLEEN & TOM JAMISON
LEW DAWS
DOROTHY & ANDY BUROCHONOCK
BEN DAMRON
JOSEPHINE & LOUIS MOLIN
JIM HARCROW
BOB HARCROW
ELLE & DICK BENNETT
BOB VALLANCE

64th SQUADRON

BEV & ARTHUR F. MULLIGAN
NADEANE & BOB COOPER
HENRY H. DAY
ROSEMARY & KEN BROWN
MARGARET & CLETUS ANGERMEIER
RALPH D. GRUBB
WENDELL L. JONES
LILLIAN & ED ROSS
BOB SCHULTZ
HELEN & JOE JANCOSKO
HELENE & PAUL I. BARBUS
BETTY & LYLE HEINEKE
ANITA & GEORGE TUCHOLSKI
CLARE & ARVID HOUGLUM
AUDREY & ROGER KETTLESON
SHIRLEY & EMIL LANGE
GOLDIE & FALCNOR GIFFORD
BOB BREITENBACH
ANNE & HOWARD "ANDY" ANDERSON
LYNN & FRANK WAYSSE
LOUISE & ROY BAILEY
MARY & GARRETT L. MINNICK
CLARENCE CREAMER
JACK NUNNELLEE
JUNE PANTHER
JANE & RUSS BURNETT
DOLORES & JOE C. COX
NAOMI & SHAD SHADDOX
JOE "SHEP" CHEPULIS
ALVIN HAAS
IVY & GEORGE HUNTER
JANICE OLSON

HENRY GARCIA Jr.
TRUDY & DON YOST
ESTHER & BAIRD CHRISMAN
LAURA & F. K. "JACK" RHODES
CLETUS SWEIGARD

LOUISE & JIM THOMPSON
AILEEN & GEORGE WHITE
LLOYD ANDERSON & KAREN
(Daughter)
EDWARD GAMMILL & Son
POWELL E. GAMMILL
FOLMER SOGAARD
ALEX SEDILKO
PAUL (ED) WELCOME
BETTY & RAYMOND GATES
OMA & JAMES A. WATTS
GINNY & ED PHEASANT
RUDI & NEAL FUGATE
NORMA & RODGER LITTLE
DOROTHY & KEN BECKSTROM
MILDRED J. & HOWARD BOOTH
ORION L. ROGERS
ARLENE & FRANCIS LANGLAND
ROLAND FISHER
MILDRED & RICH HOWARD
BERTHA & GEORGE BURHOE
AL O'BRIEN
FRED HAGEN

[These names were taken from the sign in Rosters. Where the writing was difficult to read, the editor referred to the 1998 Roster or others to help him. He apologizes for any errors. If your name does not appear and you attended the reunion, you apparently did not sign the Roster for your squadron.]

As reported to the Secretary, the 64th Squadron elected **JOSEPH R. JANCOSKO** to a 3-year term on the Board of Directors. The 65th Squadron reelected **ELDON E. "BUD" LAWSON** to another 3-year term on the Board of Directors. The 403rd reelected **JOSEPH W. SNYDER** as one of their directors. Their terms will expire on Dec. 31, 2002. These elections took place during the Squadron meetings on Thursday evening.

Dr. **MILTON GUSACK**, Flight Surgeon 65th Squadron, sent greetings and best wishes on behalf of all the 43rd Flight Surgeons. He wished he could have been with us and he refers to the group as *"a fine group of young men who gave their all to win the war against great odds under deplorable conditions."* He sent his special congratulations to Dr. **HENRY BLANK**, 64th Flight Surgeon, who recently celebrated his 92nd birthday anniversary.

Dr. "BUD" GUSACK said, *"Enjoy yourselves!"*

The several tours scheduled during the reunion seemed to proceed as planned. There is so much in the Tucson area to see and visit and which is of great interest especially to those of us who have never been there before.

Women's Night on Thursday Oct. 21st featured **THE HOT FLASHES**, Tucson's Award Winning Senior Women Tap Dancers. They have been seen on TV and won Gold, Silver and special awards while competing on the Carnival Cruise Lines and other competitions.

It should be noted here that all of those lovely, hand carved saguaro cacti magnets, that were distributed to each lucky winner, were hand carved by our hostess **LOUISE THOMPSON**.

The hotel had a free Continental breakfast available each morning. There was a free "cocktail" hour each evening as well. On Wednesday evening the hotel had a barbecue cookout for all its guests.

Friday morning, after a buffet breakfast, we boarded Gray Lines buses for a tour of that section of the Davis-Monthan AFB where the aircraft are stored for future use or sale as well as the section where, after the instruments and other items are removed for spare parts, the planes are chopped up and crushed for recycling the metal.

This tour was followed by lunch in the Officers Club on the base.

Then we were taken to the Pima Air Museum where dozens of military and some civilian aircraft of all sorts are on display. One hanger was devoted almost exclusively to the B-17 including one on static display.

Another hanger was devoted to the B-24 and B-25. One of each aircraft was on static display and in mint condition. In a display case off to one side there was a model of the 64th's B-24J **THE DRAGON AND HIS TAIL**. The editor pointed out to the docent that there were many men visiting the museum that day who had flown in that B-24 973. He had not realized this and no one else had mentioned it to him. The editor showed him the nice Tucson reunion cap of the 43rd as evidence that we were indeed from the 43rd.

A tram trip around the area was available and many of our members and spouses took advantage of this so that they did not have to walk the long ramps among the aircraft in the hot sun.

Friday evening the Mexican Buffet, preceded by a cocktail party, was delicious and a delightful change for those of us who live in more northern climates. The mariachi band, composed entirely of high school students, and the Mexican dancers presented excellent background entertainment.

The annual meeting of the Association took place on Saturday morning as usual. This was preceded by another fine buffet breakfast. The minutes of this meeting as well as some information about the two presentations appear earlier in this special edition.

Saturday evening began with another fine cocktail hour. The evening banquet dinner/dance was a great success with excellent food, great music and dancing and lots of time to meet and talk with those not seen since the last reunion or even longer ago. It was during the cocktail hour that we were all asked to pose for photos for the upcoming picture album of the 1999 reunion.

Immediately after the dinner a number of presentations took place. Our President, **SAMUEL COMMONS**, presented a plaque to **IRENE** and **BOB WATSON** commemorating their long and faithful duty to the association in arranging these reunions and working at the registration desk. SAM also presented to BOB an elaborate hand carved cane which he will cherish forever. This was the work of **JOE SNYDER**, 403rd Gunner from Greencastle, PA. He presented Irene with a beautiful pair of Waterford crystal candlestick holders.

SAM presented a plaque to our associate member and webmaster, **TRACY TUCCiarONE**, daughter of **BETTY** and **FRANCIS TUCHER**, 65th Flight Engineer from Indianapolis, IN. The plaque was to thank TRACY for all that she has done voluntarily for the association. She was also officially named ***THE SWEETHEART OF THE 43RD***.

MAX AXELSEN, Vice President, President Elect and Chairman of the golf tournament presented prizes to the men and women who played in the tournament and showed some promise of giving Tiger Woods a run for his money.

Early Sunday morning the **MEMORIAL SERVICE** took place in the Gold Room of the hotel. President **SAM COMMONS** presided.

Sam greeted all of those present

Our Founder, Bob Butler, led us in a touching invocation.

This was followed by **NANCY SOLOMON**, wife of **BILL SOLOMON** of the 403rd, singing "How Great Thou Art" while accompanied on the piano by **MILDRED McCLENNY**, wife of **CHARLES McCLENNY** of the 64th. Those of us gathered there were encouraged to sing along. A number did.

BOB BUTLER read a poem he had selected for the occasion.

Recognition of Members Who Died in the Past Year or so.

Headquarters: **GEORGE J. CARTER**, **WILLIAM SPENCE** and **CHARLES W. STRAW**.

63rd Sqdn: **STAN CASEY**, **MICHAEL FRAYCHAK**, **ARNE E. HAVERSON**, **CHESTER HASKELL**, **WILLIAM F. HERRE**, **CARL A. HUSTAD**, **HENRY KOBOSKO**, **GEORGE R. LYNCH**, **NORMAN H. O'BRIEN Jr.**, **EDWARD ST. ONGE**, **HARRY A. STALEY**, **ALBERT F. TUBBESING** and **GAYLORD L. VAN ETTEN**.

64th Sqdn.: **RAY CHRISTIAN**, **RICHARD O. HENNIG**, **CLEMENT C. KINKAID**, **GEORGE R. LYNCH**, **ROY K. NIEMEYER**, **JOHN H. PFEIFFER** and **ANGUS B. TAFF**.

65th Sqdn.: **WILLARD "JOE" BROWN**, **THEODORE G. De FEDERICIS**, **HENRY LEWIS**, **GEORGE J. MAGID**, **EARL L. RESHAW**, **FRANK SHELTON** and **HAL C. WINFREY**.

403rd: **LEONARD CRAWFORD**, **ROLAND E. LALIBERTE**, **JOHN TALLITSCH** and **HOWARD WAUGH Jr.**

UNKNOWN SQUADRON: **EARL PEIFLY**.

Reading of the above names was by a director from the appropriate squadron. This was followed by a period of Silent Reflection.

Our new Chaplain, Roland Fisher, presented the following remarks to our gathering.

THE GREATEST

This past year I read books by two authors that affected me deeply. Tom Brokaw wrote about a generation of American men and women who, born in the echoes of the first World War, reached adolescence during the bleak, desperate years of the Great Depression and came of age during the excitement and danger of World War Two. This generation was shaped at a time of economic despair, in days when two hundred men would line up at a factory gate at dawn to respond to an advertisement of three jobs; a time when they watched their parents lose their jobs, their homes, their hopes; when they saw agony in their fathers' and mothers' eyes because they could not give them decent clothing, sometimes even food; a time when the future was so uncertain, it seemed to play out just one day at a time.

Then, as they approached adulthood, the world exploded in war, and they abruptly were summoned to protect personal freedoms that were being destroyed everywhere outside of America.

Their response was magnificent. They came from all parts of the nation: from the far north and the deep south; from logging camps, cattle ranches, small farms; from crowded cities, little towns; from mines, factories, offices, schools; from the lands of the Indian nations; from Hollywood, Wall Street, and great universities. Regardless of their origin, they united with a common purpose and with common values---duty, honor, courage, love of family and country, and responsibility for oneself.

They were uniquely qualified: toughened physically by hard work, strengthened mentally by intense competition for the few jobs available and quietly proud, in spite of their lack of material things. They were buoyed with a near spiritual belief that no matter what else they were denied, they had each other. They were profound and creative thinkers because their recreation, their escape from the economically dull world, lay in reading books, walking the land, viewing the sky. They could not afford to buy entertainment, except for an occasional nickel movie or listening to Amos and Andy on radio, so they dreamed dreams that grew into the greatest creativity of any society in history.

At a time when their lives should have involved gentle romance, innocent adventure, they had thrust upon them the responsibility of saving the world from tyranny, and they did.

Brokaw calls them the greatest generation any society has ever produced. It **WAS** the greatest generation ever. It was **OUR** generation.

The other author was Studs Terkel who wrote of "The Good War," a history of World War Two. "Good" and "War" are incongruent. They seem contradictory. But World War Two **WAS** a good war. It was a different kind of war. You and I who lived through it understand what that means. It was not expansion of our territory. We sought not to build an empire or impose our culture on another. Our enemies did. In fact, they had overrun vast areas and began mercilessly eliminating entire populations when we entered the war. They made it clear they were intent on destroying the personal freedoms that we held were precious rights, worth dying to preserve. If any war can be called just, it was the Second World War.

And---it was **OUR** war. It was **OUR** generation that answered the call to save the world from the two most powerful and ruthless military machines ever assembled, instruments of destruction and conquest in the hands of cold-blooded maniacs.

The men of our generation, which fought World War Two, came from a vast reservoir of American decency that compelled us to resist the terrible indecency of the enemy. We had a late start and faced huge odds, but we succeeded on every front.

We won **OUR** war.

We won because we loved our country and its precious freedoms, we loved each other and, as much as we were willing to risk losing it, and many of our comrades did, we loved life.

For four years the young men of the 43rd fought the vicious enemy, in strange skies where danger filled every corner, living in despicable conditions in primitive places with names the world had never hear of. More than seven hundred of us died, some in unknown places, lost forever in deep waters or dense forests. Some died from wounds or strange diseases lying in steaming humidity on a canvas cot under the canvas top of a field hospital. Some were sent with broken bodies to die at home. Some were shot down, captured and murdered by a bestial foe. A few came back to us after years of torture by brutal prison guards. But most of us survived, even thrived in that awful part of the world.

And we prevailed. We beat back the fanatic enemy. We liberated the homelands of the people they had conquered. We sank their huge warships. We knocked their planes from the sky. We smashed their weapons factories. We crushed their mighty military machines. We made them unconditionally surrender.

We won **OUR** war, and went home.

Then, in history's greatest display of mercy, although we were in a hurry to catch up with the years we had lost, instead of subjugating our former foes, we helped them rebuild their near completely devastated lands. We gave them food and medicine. We clothed them and provided fuel for an oncoming winter. We gave them money, our technology, our business expertise. We taught them of our democratic political institutions. We helped them rebuild themselves into two of the most stable, economically strongest, most peaceful countries in the world today.

Back home we began rebuilding our own lives. We were still young but had matured far beyond our years. We had been tempered by the rigors of war and disciplined by our military environment. We were very proud of our legacy of sacrifice we had created but humbled by our memories of those we had left behind. We hurried to build the world we wanted but we stayed true to our belief in values of personal responsibility, duty, honor and faith in each other.

A grateful nation gave us a generous tribute, the GI Bill. It was the greatest investment in higher education any society had ever made. Brokaw calls it a brilliant commitment to our nation's future--and it was. We jammed the campuses, lived in old barracks or hastily erected Quonset huts, some of us with new wives and babies. We ignored the customary frivolities of college life, focusing on learning quickly. We left school, armed with our new knowledge and a determination to make up for lost time. We moved into all the fields of American life with the same passions that served us so well during the war.

We were a major force in building the most powerful, longest lasting, peacetime economy in the history of the world. We invented entirely new technologies, landed on the moon, reached for the stars, gave new meanings to medicine and science, created new art and literature. We got our country to better understand the true meaning of the words of its founders, that all men have equal rights, and made overdue improvements in civil rights. For decades, until it collapsed from within, we stood fast against Communist Totalitarianism's threat to banish personal freedoms throughout the world, with the same determination that we fought **OUR** war.

That war ended nearly sixty years ago. Time is working against us. The fleets of Fortresses and Liberators in which we growled through the sky, seeking out the foe, are now a pitifully few airplanes, muted and motionless, sitting in the back corners of museums. **WE** are decreasing in numbers. Brokaw reports that over three thousand World War Two veterans die every month. Those of the 43rd are proportionately affected. We were young men when we came back from the war in the Pacific. Now we are in our twilight. Our numbers have fallen, scores of us gone. Just in the past year, we have lost many more.

Sadly, among too many of those who came after us, there is a disturbing disregard of World War Two and a near complete forgetting of the Great Depression, although both were events that forever changed the psyche and the face of the United States, of the entire world.

Not so here. Sometimes I pull forth from a corner of my closet, a battered, single-shot .410 shotgun. I think back to the bitter winter of 1933 when my father--my very young father--worked at menial labor for one of the few well-off landowners just for that gun. At age 12, I yearned for my own gun to hunt on the fringes of Denver. Dad had seen the .410 in the garage of the landowner. The price was one dollar. Dad did not have it. He made a deal to work all day for it. The owner paid him with it and gave him an extra dollar. To me, that gun has immeasurable sentimental value. Its intrinsic value? In this day of \$3000 Brownings, it is, maybe, fifty dollars. I don't scoff at that. I hold it in my hand, and I see the light in my father's face when he gave it to me on my 13th birthday. I remember.

As I look at my hand, I see another's. It is October 1944, ten years later. I am amidst the noise and chaos of the battle for the airstrip at Leyte, our single toehold in our return to the Philippines. We were under constant air attack. We had just pulled the 63rd's engineering officer, Hugh Noonan, from the flaming wreckage of a B-24. We lay him on a stretcher on the sand, on the beach, by the airstrip. He saw me bending over him, reached out with his charred hand and took mine, and said "Don't worry, Fish--I don't hurt." Two hours later he died under a canvas roof. I look at my hand that he grasped and I remember.

A few years after the new millenium begins, the greatest generation all will be gone. Probably, most of what we did will be forgotten, perhaps because, for someone who was not there, no amount of words can ever describe the experiences and feelings that we shared. But right now, those of us, of that generation, who still are left, remember. And in these final years we can take enormous pride in knowing that each of us was a part of it; in knowing that because of it, we leave the entire world with more personal freedom than ever before in its history.

To those we left behind when we all came home, to those who have left us since, to those who still remain---a salute! Know that you fought a good war--**OUR** war. And know that you are the **GREATEST** generation ever.

ROLAND FISHER 63rd Bomb Sqd. 43rd Bomb Grp. Fifth Air Force

Following this very moving and touching ceremony, Vice President Max Axelsen presented President Samuel Commons with a hand carved cane by Joseph Snyder, 403rd Director. The 65th Squadron, 43rd Group, 5th AAF, the air force bases from which Sam flew, the commanders under whom he toiled and the names of the men in his entire crew are carved in a spiral starting at the top of the cane and moving down to the tip. You have to see one of these canes to really appreciate the intricacy, the delicacy and the hours spent in labor by Joe to create such a work of art.

Everyone, except for those who had to depart immediately, moved to the adjoining room for our last breakfast together at the Tucson reunion. It was here that so many of us met with our good friends, old as well as newly formed at this reunion, to bid them farewell, a safe journey home and "See you next year in San Antonio." Many an eye was filled with tears for who knows what God intends for us by next year.

The editor and his wife, ANITA, along with ROSEMARY and KEN BROWN, departed to spend the next 6 days sight seeing in Arizona. Three times we crossed paths with ANITA and GEORGE TUCHOLSKI. The first time was in the former ghost town, Jerome. The next day we again ended up in the same place at the same time - Oak Creek National Park just north of Sedona. Finally, our paths again crossed in Grand Canyon National Park.

The editor wishes to thank the many of you who stopped to tell him or his wife, ANITA, how you enjoyed the Newsletter and appreciated the job we are doing. Those nice words are ever so encouraging and make the task that much easier.

HUMOR

I'm a SENIOR CITIZEN.

I'm the first one to find the bathroom wherever I go.

I'm smiling all the time because I can't hear a word you're saying.

I'm very good at telling stories...over and over and over and over.

I'm not grouchy. I just don't like traffic, waiting, children and politicians.

I'm sure everything I can't find is in a secure place.

I'm having trouble remembering simple words like...uh....

I'm supporting all movements now...by eating bran, prunes and raisins.

Humor taken from actual consumer goods.

On a Sears hair dryer:

Do not use while sleeping.

On a bag of Fritos:

You could be a winner! No purchase necessary. Details inside.

On Boot's Children's Cough Medicine:

Do not drive car or operate machinery.

Respectively Submitted – Jim Cherkauer, Secretary/Editor

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 15th of the month before publication. Late arriving material will be included in the following Newsletter. Please write 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 **43rd 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>.

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

This is Bill's Bad Boy list of people that we have dropped off the list.
 If any one knows how to get ahold of any of these guys. Give them a
 call, let them know that if they will bring their dues up to date. We will
 be glad to put them back on the list.

Acito	Vincent J	Howard	Alton
Day	William "Bill"	Hoyes	Robert M
Hanks	Robert E	Ickowski	Edward
Hanna	Joseph	Langlois	Leo
Kaiserman	Lewis	Lombardi	Edith
Ehlers	M V "Dutch"	Mansker	John H
Higgins	Robert L	Miller	Tiger
Petrisin	Andrew	Parry	Roger B
Winters	Carl P	Prather Jr	James J
Ahrens	John B	Richmond	Sam C
Beisty	Clara	Ruckert	John "Jack"
Benedetti	Eugene	Sakowski	Gustave J
Bill	Walter E	Schaeffer	Richard
Black	Clair	Sessler	Phyllis
Blais	Armand	Staley	Helen
Britton	J T	Standlee	Jim
Clatworthy	Allen S	Stringer	Brent
Dolezal	Frank	Sylvia	Albert
Dunham	Bruce C	Trent	Aubrey
Edgett Jr	Eugene A	Walker	W K "Bill"
Flack	Douglas	Watkins	Charley
Heichel	Byron "Dutch"	Whitehead	Jim
Hennig	Jane	Wotring	Maxon L