



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

NEWSLETTER 82<sup>nd</sup> EDITION  
APRIL 2002



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\*\*\*\*\*FROM Roger G. Ketteson, President\*\*\*\*\*

The planning for the 2002 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group Association reunion in Las Vegas at the Golden Nugget Hotel from Sunday, September 22, 2002 until noon Thursday, September 26, 2002 remains on schedule. However, the activity at Nellis AFB and the tour of Hoover Dam are currently curtailed for security reasons. We are hopeful that these restrictions will not be in force at the time of our reunion. Once again, I thank Jim Cherkauer, for his great volunteer service as our Secretary and all of his other past efforts. I encourage all members to provide Howard "Andy" Anderson, our current Secretary, with your input on news items, member visits, etc. As we progress toward our "final destination", the newsletter is the "life line" that keeps us connected. Gruesome thought, but true! So lets keep connected and give Andy a hand, so he can keep us informed on the activities of our "Ken's Men".

I received a change of address from Betty Woolard for Otis H. Godfrey. His address is now Minnesota Veterans Home, 5105 Minnehaha Ave., So. 2 N. Room 225, Minneapolis, MN 55417. I'm sure He would appreciate a note of encouragement from members who remember this gunner from the 64<sup>th</sup> Squadron. Let's brighten the day for those that we can.

More 2002 reunion details will be in the following newsletter. Keep Las Vegas marked on your 2002 calendar and as our Treasurer, Bill Wilson would say, "you-all come."

*Roger*

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Many of you B-24 men had your training at Tonopah, Nevada just before going overseas. Roger said that Tonopah is about 110 miles Northwest of Las Vegas. The old antique Mizpah Hotel is still there. Our military makes good use of the isolated areas in the Nevada desert and they do not discuss what happens there. Roger said that they simply call it Area 51.

My AAA guidebook states that the average high temperature in late September is about 90 and the average low temperature at night 60. Because of the lack of humidity, that is a very comfortable temperature. Wives will have no shortage of things to do. Just strolling around the new fancy hotels is a treat.

*Andy Anderson*

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This is the first newsletter edited by me and I want the members to know that constructive criticism is welcome. I am indebted to **Jim Cherkauer** for his advice and patience. Jim had his computer printer set to print on both sides the paper. Jim helped me to learn how to set my printer to print on both sides to get the newsletter into the form that **Bill Wilson** and **The Elf** are accustomed to receiving it in Texas where it is duplicated and mailed. Since most events at the Nashville reunion have already been reported I will have space to bring up many new topics and to bring up the subject of the next reunion in Las Vegas. I plan to save some quarters for the slot machines in Las Vegas, after all, that is a safer investment than Enron stock!

*Andy Anderson*

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# From Treasurer, Bill Wilson

## 2001 Nashville Reunion

### Income

Bomb Group Advance	\$4,336.57
PX Sales	1,100.00
Dues	845.00
Reunion Fee	19,314.00
Total	\$25,595.00

### Expenses

Supplies	\$ 39.90
Golf	995.90
Ladies Night	500.00
Music	1,210.00
Hotel	17,991.73
Buses	2436.00
PX Supplies	772.04
Refunds	1650.00

Total \$ 25,595.00

## 43<sup>rd</sup>. Bomb Group Association

### Income

Dues	\$ 5,130.00
Life Member	1,500.00
Donation	151.00
Interest	2088.00
PX	12.00
Refund on reunion	6065.47

Total \$ 14,946.47

### Expenses

Printing	\$ 3242.25
Postage	994.67
PX supplies	772.04
Office supplies	44.98
Telephone	161.33
Gifts	400.00
Advance to reunion	9630.00

Total \$ 15245.25

### Net

Loss for 2001	\$ (298.78)
1/1/2001 Starting Bal.	24,716.32
12/31/2001 Balance	24,417.54
CD Ford Motor Co.	30,000.00

Net Worth \$ 54,417.54

Your editor is now receiving **Briefing**, the quarterly newsletter of the International B-24 Liberator Club which is based in Southern California. I was pleased to see two nice long letters from our group

historian, **Eldon "Bud" Lawson** and **Jim Cherkauer**. **Bud** sent in an article about our own **Colonel Harry Hawthorne**, once our group CO, and a nice photo also. I have my own photo of Hawthorne, which I took at the 1983 reunion on the Queen Mary. I read the 40 page journal of the Liberator Club from cover to cover. There were many photos, articles, letters and books and videos advertised for sale. They are selling a wooden desk model of "The Dragon and His Tail" mounted on a short stand for \$95. But something bothers me about the model besides the price. The painting on the model is on the wrong side of the plane!

If you are interested in contacting the B-24 Liberator Club, the address is 1672 Main Street, Suite E, PMB-124, Ramona, CA 92065. I think PMB stands for Postal Mail Box.

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The diary of **Richard Bennet**, 65<sup>th</sup> Squadron B-17 pilot from Fredricksburg, TX is **continued** here:

**May 13, 1943-** Eleventh mission. Took off about 7:00 p.m. for Wewak. Had bad weather going over. Wewak drome was open and at 8,000 feet we made our run. Searchlights snapped on all around. They sure had a lot of them. After releasing the bombs we circled a bit to the south of the target and watched a couple of other planes make their run. We expected night fighters but weren't unhappy when they didn't show up. Weather home was good and the doc was waiting with Cokes and "Old Crony".

**May 14, 1943-** The Nips pulled a raid over Moresby tonight. They came over about 20,000 feet. The first plane got shot down by a P-70, the next two got away, or at least we didn't see them go down. The AA was very close to them and they may have been hit. We watched the show from the top the of the hill and only had to hit the trench twice when we thought they were coming over us.

**May 15, 1943** -Got myself grounded today. First time I've done that. I've got either a bad cold or hay fever. I hope it is not hay fever.

**May 16, 1943-**Back on flying status.

**May 17, 1943-**Twelfth mission. The old milk run. Up the north coast of New Britain, down the South coast. Dropped bombs on Gasmatta . AA medium.

**May 18, 1943-**Thirteenth mission. (The old "black cat") Took off for Dobadura at 4:30 p.m. Stayed there until 1:00 a.m. and then took off for a raid on Rabaul, Vanakanau. While we were at Dobadura, we had to two air raids. Someone yelled , "Air Raid!" just as the bombs were falling. Over the target, the AA and search lights were the worst I've ever seen, thought sure we'd get hit. Lots of Roman candle pom pom.

**May 24, 1943-** Fourteenth mission. Recco, Wide Bay- Open Bay milk run. Weather and fronts all over the place. Couldn't see anything on New Britain. We brought our bombs home with us as we couldn't find a place to drop them. (Just lots of weather and all bad.)

**May 27, 1943-** At long last we hooked up on a gravy train. We were flown down to Townsville on a C-47 to pick up one of our B-17s from the depot. Stopped at Mareeba on the way back to New Guinea and noticed a leaky gas tank. Patched it up and flew back to Townsville. Returned here June 3. Just as we got to the revetment, the brakes went out and we plowed into the dirt wall; pushed in the whole nose section. Damned shame after all the trouble we went to, to get it back to the squadron.

**June 9, 1943-** Fifteenth mission. Took off at 2:00 a.m. from Dobadura for Rabaul, Lakinie. More search lights than I have ever seen before. We got through the lights when we were hit by a night fighter. We never saw the fighter but we could see the tracers pouring into us. On the first pass, our right aileron was shot away. On the second pass, an explosive shell hit number 3 prop and bullets tore into the right wing. A fine spot to be in! Just outside Rabaul, dawn coming up, very little control of the plane, and one engine out. We called Dobadura to have them clear the runway for a crash landing, but Hensler sat the plane down without a scratch.

**June 12, 1943-** Sixteenth mission. Took off at 11:30 p.m. from Seven Mile Strip for Rabaul, Vunakanua . On our first run we were too far to the right of the runway, so we made another run: a thing that I do not enjoy doing. Saw several other planes going over the target. It's a horror to watch other planes going over the target. You see all the lights on the one plane and see all the tracers and heavy AA coming up at one

plane. You can't understand how one plane can get through that mess. One plane from our squadron didn't get through last night. Russ Emerick and J. K. Wisener were on it.

**June 18, 1943-** Seventeenth mission. Rabaul, Vanakanua. I think that is enough said! Hensler was on the sick book, so I flew with Fair. The Nips are getting good with their night fighters up there. They hit Baldy's tail gunner. Seems they hit someone every time.

**Between June 20 & 25, 1943-** We flew to Dobadura in the afternoon for a scheduled midnight take for Rabaul. Our hydraulic pressure wouldn't come up, so we never got off the ground. Next morning we returned to Moresby and learned that Trimingham's plane went down over the target. Bill Sarsfield was co-pilot on that trip.

I was damned glad when our leave orders came through, and the end of June we left for Sidney. We all had a swell time. I caught a cold the last day we were there and came back to find myself pushed into the hospital. Stayed in the hospital thirteen days and almost went nuts for something to do. I felt fine all the time, but they wouldn't let me out. At least I got a good rest out of it. By this time, we only had three crews in the squadron, most of the boys either having been shot up, or in the case of the older members, having been sent home. Within a few days, some new crews started to come in. That is, replacements.

**August 1, 1943-** Eighteenth mission. Daylight formation attack on Salamoia. Medium ack ack, but accurate.

**August 2, 1943-** Nineteenth mission. Daylight formation attack on supplies south of Boigajim. Plenty of P-38 top cover. No ack ack. One plane was lost from our Squadron. Brennamen, attacked by three Zeros, downed on the first pass. Two of the Zekes were shot down. I flew with Gibbs on this mission, it being his first mission as first pilot. It looks like some of the older boys may be going home soon. Hensler should be on the next list. That will leave me without a crew, so I will have to check out or have to fly with someone else.

**October 29, 1943-** It has been a long time since I last wrote any notes. Mostly because it has been the same thing over and over again. You get up early. Eat the same sad mess of food, go down to the planes and take off to bomb some target up north. For a while it was Lae, but they finished that place off. Then it was the Bogajim Road, bridges and warehouses. Wewak got pounded day and night. Finnhaven got a little bombing, but not as much as I thought we'd do up there. Cape Gloucester was bombed a couple of times and I almost fell over when I saw all of the ack ack they had moved into that place. It was not very long ago that we used to go down the runway strafing, but not any more. 10,000 feet is a safe altitude providing the AA does to get to you. Out on the reconns we found a few convoys and bombed same, causing unobserved results. Lost La Porte's crew. Taylor's crew bailed out, with some of the men being found. Turner's crew went down off Milne Bay. Eberly met a mountain. We have been going to Rabaul again. Now instead of single planes at night, it's mass formation during daylight. Have made a few trips up there the past month. On a of them we didn't get there because of the weather. I don't know which is worse, getting to Rabaul or trying to fly formation through a tropical front. Several planes lost on these raids. Some because of AA; some because of Zero's and some went down in the drink out of gas. Last week we bombed Rapapo. My co-pilot got the Purple Heart for a wound in the chest. AA fragment hit and busted the windshield. The last raid over Lakunni, AA hit and busted the top turret. Holes in various parts of the plane. Fair was leading the squadron but had to fall out right after takeoff, so I led the squadron up and back. The sky has been thick with Zeros and clouded with AA. Not much fun, but I don't mind it very much. I only need thirty nine more hours and I will have my three hundred. What a happy day that will be! Gibbs made Capt. Last month. Al Fair made it last week. Most of the old boys have gone home. The squadron is full of new crews, very eager.

**Saturday, November 13, 1943-** This, I believe, will be the last page in my overseas notes. I have just finished flying combat, ending with a total of over 306 combat hours and between 40 and 45 combat missions. In the words of Major Barnes, "I have lived through the war in New Guinea." I suppose I should be relaxed and full at ease knowing that never again will I have to fly into enemy fire, at least For some time to come depending on the course of the war. I am being put on the same list to go home

as Gibbs, Pertonis, Fair, and Diminski. The orders to go home should be out in two weeks, but in the meantime the squadron is moving over to Dobadura and it might delay our leaving. I'd give anything to be home by Christmas, but will just have to sit tight and await developments. Now that combat flying is over and I've been fortunate enough to emerge without so much as a scratch, I could very easily say that it wasn't so tough after all, but all I have to do is to think back to any one mission and I know that this is far from the truth. Besides almost failing to come back a number of times myself, I only have only to think of those who didn't return, and the list is long. When I first came over here I didn't realize what was going on or the dangers involved. It was a big game in which someone was apt to get hurt. It didn't take many missions for me to change my mind and become educated as to what it was all about. Not only was someone apt to get hurt, but they were getting hurt, and worse. Those were planes going down in the jungle, in the sea and God only knows where else. I began to devote most of my spare time to making a study of everything that I might like to know some sad day. Bailouts, crash landings in the sea or jungle, ways of natives, life in the jungle, or life on a rubber raft. Procedures for a dozen and one different emergencies. I never intended to have to use any of the information I studied, but like buying insurance, "One never knows, do one?" To say the least, it would be most embarrassing to find one's self in the middle of the ocean or jungle and not have any idea of how you might save yourself. I will never regret having learned these things for I do not feel like the man who bought insurance to cover his life up to the age of 60 and then became very angry when he reached his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday and was still living. Every mission I went out on I took the attitude that this might well be the roughest mission I had ever seen. I never relaxed nor underestimated what the enemy might be able to do. I'll admit that the tension had me worn out after each mission, but this might just be one of the factors that accounts for my being here today. Along with the other lucky few who are about to go home, I feel certain sense of pride and pleasure in knowing that I have done a little something towards furthering our goal in this war. We used to say that if we live through, it will be the greatest experience of our lives- it has been!

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*By Andy Anderson:*

That was the final installment of the wartime diary of former **Captain Richard Bennett**, 65<sup>th</sup> B-17 pilot. We are grateful to him for sharing his experiences. Your editor has been researching the casualties of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb group using the microfilm records of the 43<sup>rd</sup> from Maxwell AFB and a web site, [www.abmc.gov](http://www.abmc.gov). The 43<sup>rd</sup> did report the loss of **Russell Emerick** and **Jack Wisener** on a B-17 piloted by **John W. Wodard** along with the seven other members of the crew. None are now listed as missing and none buried in overseas military cemeteries. I conclude that their remains were all located eventually and sent home for burial. **Lt. Charles Trimmingham** and his crew were reported lost by the 43<sup>rd</sup> on 26 June 1943. The 43<sup>rd</sup> incorrectly reported the plane to be a B-24. The 43<sup>rd</sup> also failed to mention that 2<sup>nd</sup> **Lt. Herman Knott** was aboard the plane. He was an extra bombardier being trained. The plane was a B-17 named "*Naughty but Nice*". **William Sarsfield**, as Bennett mentions, was the co-pilot. He is still listed as missing. **Jose Holquin**, the navigator, spent 2yrs and 2 months as a POW at Rabaul. He was the only survivor. Your editor got to know him quite well after the war. He died a few years ago and his widow, **Rebecca**, has attended some of our reunions. The remains of **S/Sgt. Henry Garcia**, **Lt. Francis Peattie**, **Lt. Herman Knott**, **S/Sgt Robert Greibel** and **S/Sgt Pace Payne** were located and brought home. **Garcia's** son lives near me in Southern California and has attended some of our reunions. The remains of **Sarsfield**, **Trimmingham**, **T/Sgt Leonard Gionet** and **Robert Chistopherson** were not located and brought home. The "missing" men of this crew are known to have been killed in the crash but until their remains are positively identified, the American Battle Monuments Commission stubbornly lists them as missing. **Jose** parachuted into the flaming wreck of his plane and confirmed that all were dead before he left the site and was captured some distance away. The plane was shot down at night by an "Irving" night fighter. **Jose** went back to New Britain and was the first to find the wreck some 38 years after the war. He testified in Japanese war crimes trials, did much research on other POWs, and retired from the Air Force as a Lt. Colonel. Your editor knew him as an assistant principal of a high school in a suburb of Los Angeles. I hope I am correct about the above information. I reviewed it with **Curt Holquin**, **Jose's** son.

Incidentally, B17E 41-2430 "*Naughty But Nice*" was one of those B-17s which carried no ammunition when they arrived in Hawaii from California while the Japanese were bombing on Dec. 7, 1941 but managed to escape damage that day.

1<sup>st</sup>. Lt. **Walter Brennamen's** B-17E 41-2634 *Red Moose Express*, was reported shot down by the 43<sup>rd</sup> on Aug 3. He along with Lt. **James Purdy**, and Lt. **Charles Lanning** are still listed as missing but the remaining seven men on the crew are not now missing nor are they buried in an American military cemetery overseas. I must assume that their remains were eventually recovered and returned home for burial.

1<sup>st</sup>. Lt. **Michael LaPorte's** crew was reported missing on Sept 2, 1943 on a mission to Lae. Eight of his crewmen are still missing but **LaPorte** and Sgt. **Alvin Rowe** are not now missing nor are they buried overseas. I must conclude that their remains were eventually located and sent home.

Bennett mentioned that Taylor's crew bailed out and Turner's crew went down. All must have been rescued because the 43<sup>rd</sup> did not report any loss from their crews. Bennett reported that "**Eberly's** plane hit a mountain." The 43<sup>rd</sup> official report confirms this and lists eleven men on the plane. 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. **Howard Eberly**, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. **Charles Ranker**, co-pilot, and Sgt. **Arthur Jingoian** are still listed as missing but all of the remains of the other nine men must have been recovered and sent home for burial. Eberly's B-17 F 41-24552 *Listen Here Tojo* was the last B-17 lost in the war in the Pacific according to Saleckler's book, **FORTRESS AGAINST THE SUN**.

All of the "missing" men mentioned above are honored on "Tablets of the Missing" at the Manila American Military Cemetery located at the former Fort William McKinley. The cemetery is 152 acres in size and contains the graves of 17,206 military dead of World War II most of whom gave their lives in New Guinea and the Philippines. In addition the names of 36,282 of the Missing who gave their lives in the service of America and who rest in unknown graves are honored there. All of their names are inscribed on limestone piers near a chapel. A few of our 43<sup>rd</sup> men are buried there and many of our missing are honored there. "Next of kin" had a choice; remains could be brought home or buried at Manila or, later in the war, at Honolulu. We also have a few interred at Honolulu and several Missing honored at the Honolulu Military Cemetery, called the "Punchbowl" because it is in the center of an extinct volcano.

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Your editor received a short note from **Francis P. Denault**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Squadron pilot, with a new address. It seems that he only moved about a block from his old address. He is now at 677 Durham # Y, Deerfield Beach, Florida 33442. He writes "Hope to see you in Vegas, god willing". You should feel at home in Vegas in September, **Francis**. The weather should be as warm as Florida. Your letter is being forwarded on to Bill Wilson, in Texas, in February, so that this newsletter should reach you at your new address.

**Loren C. Bates**, 403rd Squadron radioman from Sacramento, CA sent in a dues check that is being forwarded to our treasurer. In spite of some health problems, he hopes to attend the Las Vegas reunion and connect with his pilot, **Paul Bauer**. Has a lot of praise for Bauer, writing, "Because of his skill and professionalism we all survived fifty three missions, and I think that speaks very well of his abilities." **Loren** is a retired Chief Master Sergeant, USAF, retired. I think that speaks well of you, also, **Loren**.

**Donald E. Clark** writes to thank us for writing about him in the January newsletter. He wants us to know that his middle initial was reported as "F" when it should be "E". He now has an e-mail address which is [Pivonclark@hotmail.com](mailto:Pivonclark@hotmail.com). No, **Donald**, we do not issue membership cards but we issue badges to be worn at all reunions. You asked about caps, patches, etc. We do not have a catalog but at the Las Vegas reunion you should be able to get a badge, a cap, and other articles. A new cap is designed for each reunion. Some of our members have sizeable collection of caps! The Las Vegas reunion will be our 22<sup>nd</sup>. As a Post Commander in the VFW, you could help to publicize our reunions.

Our Treasurer received a letter from **John Q. McCabe**, former 64<sup>th</sup> Sq. Engineering Officer from Midland, Texas containing dues. He writes, "My wife, **Doris** became deceased in May 2001. Doris attended several of our reunions and was deeply moved by some combat stories she heard. I assume her name will be removed from the roster you are preparing in March, and I also assume you will remove my name from your delinquent list. The staff of the 43<sup>rd</sup>. Bomb Group Association, Inc. are certainly due all the thanks they receive for preparing our newsletter. Please include my thanks." John's letterhead indicates that he is in the oil and gas exploration business. Can you pump your wells a little harder, **John**? Gasoline prices are rising rapidly in California after a few weeks of under a dollar a gallon, I now pay about \$1.45 for 87 octane. But, it appears that it is not your fault. The newspapers say that we have refinery problems in California. Can you ship your Editor a tanker truck full of already refined gasoline? We are sad to learn of the passing of Doris.

**John Pontillo** writes from Massapequa, NY, "Received the newsletter where I enjoy reading about the 43<sup>rd</sup>. B.G. It also reminds me to pay my dues. I happened to look at the date of my check. It was exactly **60 years** ago on **Feb. 18, 1942** that we departed from **Bangor Air Base** to get to the **Queen Mary** for our long journey to Australia. It was so long ago that memories fade but reading newsletters bring back some things about being a member of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group. I was proud to be in the ordinance ground crew. Thanking you all, *John Pontillo* 64<sup>th</sup> Bomb Sq.

PS Here is the name of a book about our group. *Flying Fortress* by Edward Jablonski Chapter 5 to 7 Page 66 "Climb Mount Nitaka". Doubleday, Inc. Garden City, New York

**John L. Van Auken** sent in dues with a new address and phone. It is 22254 Sycamore St. Apt 3-H Columbus, IN 47201. The phone is (812) 375-9667. He states, "I have been in and out of the VA hospital 3 times in the last year...sure hope that is the last time. The best to all of you."

A check for two years of dues and a note came in from **P.D. Alexander** 403<sup>rd</sup> from Tulsa. He writes, "**Juanita** is in a Alzheimers home and I am nearby. Will try to make Las Vegas." **Percy**, we are sorry about the Alzheimers but we are pleased about your hopes to make it to Las Vegas.

We have a new associate member. He is **Clint Hayes** 11363 Amanda Lane #243, Dallas, TX 75238. His phone number is (214) 341-2569 and his e-mail address is [TexVnWinkl@aol.com](mailto:TexVnWinkl@aol.com). He is a freelance writer. Clint, this editor saw your inquiry on our web site [www.kensmen.com](http://www.kensmen.com) I have not had time to respond to it. You were asking about a list of men and anyone who knew about them. You did not mention **Jay Zeamer's** name but I recognized the list of men as his crewmen. Clint states that he may soon apply for lifetime membership.

From Craigmont, Idaho **Charles Thomason** writes, "Greetings to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group. The snow is about 2 feet deep here but is starting to leave. Oh ! To be back on **good old Owi Island** ! .....

(In a pig's eye!) I enjoy the newsletters! Keep up the good work!

I am still kicking around and taking in all the Happy Hours in our small town...population a little over 500. I'm getting to the point where I figure every new day is a bonus after 83 years.

I'm surprised that I remembered to mail in my dues! Hanging in there! *Chuck Thomason*

Chuck was a 64<sup>th</sup> Squadron Tail Gunner who may have lost some of his youth but has not lost his sense of humor.

A letter copy arrived from **Albert E. Feldbin** arrived, The original was sent to our treasurer, **Bill Wilson**, in Texas with a dues check. **Albert** was a bombardier on **Ken Brown's** 64<sup>th</sup> Squadron B-24 crew. He writes of meeting the TV personality and author, **Andy Rooney**, at a book signing. Rooney is an admirer of **Ernie Pyle** and when **Albert** showed him a photo of his crew taken at the monument to Pyle on Ie Shma Island he got a handshake and a hug from Rooney. My memory is not great, but I believe that I saw a TV



program about ball turret gunners on the History Channel and Andy Rooney was mentioned as being a WWII ball turret gunner. Rooney is a member of the B-17 Combat Crewmen and Wingmen organization. I have a photo of myself taken at the same monument on Ie Shima. It marks the spot where Pyle was killed and was erected by the 77<sup>th</sup> Infantry. Pyle's remains were moved to the "Punchbowl" Military Cemetery in Honolulu. **Feldbin** sees our former 64<sup>th</sup> CO, **Art Mulligan**, at times when Art visits his daughter in Kingston, NY. **Albert** has a record sheet showing that his crew flew three missions in "The Dragon and His Tail", and his son gave him a wooden model of the plane. He has an e-mail address. It is [hootowl104@aol.com](mailto:hootowl104@aol.com).

**Eileen Goodwin**, widow of **Robert Goodwin**, 64<sup>th</sup> Squadron Bomb Sight and Auto Pilot Technician sent in dues for 2002. She still lives in Kewanee, Illinois. She is having her knees operated on - one at a time. That seems smarter than a neighbor of mine who is soon going to have knee replacement on both knees at the same time! Eileen, I miss Bob's cheerful face at our reunions and I will never forget running into you and **Bob** in Sante Fe, NM, just a few days before the Albuquerque reunion in 1997. It seems that we both had come to New Mexico long before the reunion so that we could see places that we had not visited before. I remember that you and **Bob** did not drive home after the reunion, but continued to explore the west. **Eileen**, what happened to Bob's fabulous car collection? Do you still have it?

**Jack Rusmiser**, 64<sup>th</sup> Bombardier, sent in dues money and sent me his son's address in North Hollywood, CA. located about 20 miles from my home in West Los Angeles. **Jack**, if you come west from Omaha to visit your son, call me and we can have a lunch, or something. Us 64<sup>th</sup> men must stick together.

We have a new member. He is **Bernard Greenberg**, 64<sup>th</sup> Squadron pilot on **Maj. Carl Cramer's** B-24 crew. He lives at 15557 Walton Heath Row, San Diego, CA 92128. That part of San Diego is known as Rancho Bernardo. His phone number is (858) 592-6636. He and Cramer shared the piloting duties on "Million \$ Baby". He has had contact with Major Cramer in Tennessee, but is looking for other members of his crew. His grandson entered "B-24" in his computer and magically our website came up. There he saw a photo of his plane and crew! He had 31 missions in when the war ended. **Bernard** and **Carl** flew Million \$ Baby back to Sacramento, CA, almost running out of fuel before reaching Hawaii.

**Garnett Peeling**, 65<sup>th</sup> Squadron Ordinance Man from Presque Isle, Michigan sent in is 2002 dues and his wife, **Pauline**, wrote a note for him because he had a slight stroke last July and still does not write so well. **Garnett** commented that our treasurer is "doing a good job". Will that get him a discount on a Ford??

**George Welsh**, of the B-24 Liberator Club sent **Jim Cherkauer** a check for \$12 for our cooperation in selling their 2002 calendars. **George** states that they are working on a 2003 calendar that will include some color photos. He is asking for high quality photos of B-24s, either black and white or color. His address is elsewhere in this newsletter.

**Jesse Fulton**, 64<sup>th</sup> Squadron bombardier from Blountville, Tennessee, sent in his 2002 dues and informed us of his wife, **Dorothy's** courageous battle with cancer. That is why he did not make the Nashville reunion. He asks us to pray for her. May God bless her, Jesse. The good people of the 43<sup>rd</sup> will certainly pull for her.

From Bremerton, Washington comes a letter and dues money from **William L. Jobe**, radioman/gunner, 64<sup>th</sup> Squadron. He writes, "Maybe this would be of interest to past members of the 64<sup>th</sup> Squadron: From my diary for 1 April, 1944: *Lt. Papworth and crew crashed their B-24 on take-off this morning. It soon caught fire as they were struggling to free their tail gunner who was trapped in the bomb bay. As they ran*



*from it, the plane exploded its eight 1000 lb. bombs, killing him. The crew suffered severe shock. No plane left.*

Does anyone remember this or remember Lt. Papworth's crew? The tail gunner was an American Indian, by the way" The incident happened at Nadzab, New Guinea.

This editor has discovered that for a period of time in 1944 the 43<sup>rd</sup>'s reporting of casualties is very poor. Often they only listed names without explaining how they died or became wounded. 1st. Lt. **Hugh P. Papworth**'s name was on a list of 12 men listed as wounded in March and April of 1944 without further information.

As for the tail gunner, he was S/Sgt. **Wallace B. Saurez**. His name was on a list of 15 killed in the same time period. I have learned on our web site that his son, **Mike Saurez**, is seeking information about the incident and has succeeded in contacting Papworth. He will now contact you, **Bill**, since you gave permission. Thanks for your letter

**Patrick E. McNutt** of 609 Ave.D, Bogalusa, LA 70427 is a new associate member. He wants to find out more about the service of his grandfather who was a photographer in the 43<sup>rd</sup>. He also hopes to find someone who knew his grandfather. We need more information, **Patrick**, and do you have any photos to share? His phone number is (985) 730-5773.

Our treasurer received dues and a very nicely hand printed letter from **Anthony DeAngelis** in Sarasota, Florida. The letter was forwarded to me. It is the work of "Madam Queen", his wife of 56 years, who is sometimes known as **Virginia**. It was men like **Tony**, a retired Air Force Master Sgt., who kept those planes flying so well in the 63<sup>rd</sup> Squadron. He had 48 weeks of Air Mechanics training at Chanute Field, Illinois and then was sent to West Point where he helped to maintain three twin engine amphibians that flew off of the Hudson River. He also maintained other early planes at Stewart Field. He had 23 ½ years in the military and 21 years of civil service working for NASA and the USAF. **Tony** found that the easiest plane to maintain was a T-6 and the most difficult was a B-29. Most flying crews agree that the real heroes were the ground crew. **Tony**, my handwriting is shaky, also. That is caused by the earthquakes in California!

**Ernest Wells**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Squadron pilot, sent in dues and a new address and phone number. The new address is Ernest and Peggy Wells, 400 Willow Valley Square, Garden Apartment 412, Lancaster, PA 17602. The phone is (717) 464-7649. His first name is correct in our year 2000 roster, but was incorrect on the mailing label for the old address. His e-mail address is **PEGGY1917@msn.com**. Thanks, **Ernie**.

**Alton D. "Doug" Leaman**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Squadron Gunner has reported a new address. It is 9416 Charter Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46250. His phone is now (317) 579-0742.

**Leland "Skip" Agard III** now lives at 108 White Drive, Starkville, MS 39759. His new phone number is (662) 323-4197. His e-mail address is **traderskip@bellsouth.net**.

A check for 3 years dues came in from **James J. Smith**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Squadron Radioman, who lives at 981 N. Valleyview St., Wichita, KS. He reports his e-mail address as **JJSMITH@JUNO.COM**. We do not keep a record of e-mail addresses but report them in the newsletter so that persons who know the member can use them.

An e-mail came in too late to be mentioned in the January newsletter. It is from **Barbara Gannon** in Pennsylvania. I will quote from it. "I'm sorry to notify you that my father, **George T. Kisel**, 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group, 403<sup>rd</sup> Squadron, passed away October 6, 2001 after a brave fight with cancer and heart disease. He is survived by his wife, **Dorothy**, and two daughters. I am a lifetime member of the newsletter and will continue to read them with great interest and admiration for the brave men who fought to keep me free.

I'm sorry we were never able to make contact with anyone who served with Dad. He was not one to discuss the war, but his grandchildren would like to hear about it. Dad received the Purple Heart for injuries sustained in the South Pacific. I am not sure how to proceed with searching for info which may fill in the blanks for us. Take care and God bless, and my best wishes for a happy, healthy new year. **Barb Gannon**" Your editor checked the roster and she is, indeed, a member. Her e-mail address is **babbsie2@charter.net**. If anyone has information for her it would be nice if they could contact her. May God bless all of this family!

**Max Axelsen** received an e-mail On Dec.31 from **Tom Klein**, son of **Jim Klein** 65<sup>th</sup> Pilot. I quote " My dad, Jim Klein (Major, Ret.) has given me the newsletters and other info from the 43<sup>rd</sup>. and the DFC Society after he read them the past few years. I thought you might want to know that **Jim** died on December 17 at home with his wife, **Mary**, and daughter **Barbara** with him after a year long battle with a brain tumor. He was 80 years old. Earlier this year, we went to the web site and Dad was surprised to see the pictures of people he remembered on the website. I could tell it took him back to the emotions of the time. I have a favor to ask of you. Would you please ask someone to check the picture of **Jim Kine** (sic)and his friend **Tom Scannell** . Dad's name is misspelled in the caption on that picture. I would appreciate it if you would get it corrected. Also, are the sons of members able to attend the upcoming reunion in Las Vegas?"

Of course, Max assured Tom that he would be welcome in Las Vegas and has taken action to have the caption corrected. Max also expressed our regret on the passing of his father.

**Ed Gammil**, our effective recruiter, reported the death of **Dominick Angerame**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Squadron of Albany, NY. Our condolences go to his wife, **Hilda**, who will continue to receive the newsletter.

Another death announcement came by e-mail. I will quote from it. "I am sorry to report to you that after a long convalescence, **Floyd Redding** of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb group passed away last July 27<sup>th</sup>. He always looked forward to the newsletters and thoroughly enjoyed the one and only reunion we attended at San Antonio, but his health prohibited him from attending more. I find myself richly blessed to have had such a loving, caring husband for 53 years and for all the family, friends, and neighbors who have helped me to adjust to my future without him. I wish you the very best of luck with the next reunion and send our gratitude to the organization for all the effort put forth to keep everyone in touch with one another down through the years. My blessings to all of you". **Jean R. Redding**

**Floyd** was a 63<sup>rd</sup> Squadron pilot. May God bless you, also, **Jean**.

An e-mail arrived from **Roland Fisher** 63<sup>rd</sup>. B-24 pilot reminding us that we are late in reporting the death of **Allen Clatworthy**, 63rd pilot who lived in Vancouver, WA. He passed on with Roland at his bedside on October 24, 2001.

**Roland Fisher** also reports on **Dorwin Wilson's** widow, **Louise**. She now lives at 160 Islander Ct., Apt 270 AL, Longwood, FL 32750. Her phone is (407) 767- 6787. She wishes to continue receiving the newsletter. Your editor mailed her the January newsletter in February.

**Roland** also reported a phone number for **Art Millard**. It is (407) 767-6818

Your Secretary/Editor has a (almost) new book that I think many of you who flew B-17s would like. The title is "**Siege of Rabaul**". The author is Henry Sakaida who lives in Temple City, California. The book contains 100 pages and is printed on very good slick 8 ½ x 11 paper There are many photographs of people that I have met. I once attended several air shows in Southern California and I met Pappy Boyington and Masahiro Kawato, the Japanese pilot who claims to have shot Boyington down.(This is disputed). Both once lived in California. Both wrote books and I have an autographed copy of each. I got "**Siege of Rabaul**" on the internet from Amazon.com. It was printed by Phalanx Publishing Co., LTD of St. Paul. Sakaida is Japanese and had access to all the Japanese records about Rabaul. There are articles

about the three B-17s of the 43<sup>rd</sup> that were shot down by Irving night fighters near Rabaul. There are photos in the book of the Japanese pilots that shot them down. The Japanese called the night fighters "Gekkos" while the American code name was "Irving". There is much information in the book about our American, Australian, and New Zealander prisoners at Rabaul. Much of the prisoner research was done by our own **Jose Holguin** and supplied by his widow, **Rebecca**. Of the more than 135 allied prisoners at Rabaul, 70 or more were murdered. The list of prisoners includes **1st. Lt. Phillip Beck** of our 65<sup>th</sup> Squadron who was murdered, probably in early 1944, but his remains were recovered. It also lists **Capt. Byron Hetchel** of our 63<sup>rd</sup> Squadron who was captured near New Ireland and transported to Japan. Your editor believes that he is still living. The Japanese Navy at Rabaul murdered all of their prisoners. The book, "Siege Of Rabaul" explains why Pappy Boyington was spared. His Japanese interrogator convinced his superiors that Pappy had some information to disclose and should be taken to Japan. Boyington lived in Fresno and died several years ago. Masajaro "Mike" Kawato still lives, I believe, in Redmond, Washington. He was shot down by an American destroyer, and became a prisoner himself.

An e-mail came from **Charles Rauch**, our vice-president, who lives in Florida. His new e-mail address is **crauch5@comcast.net**.

By e-mail also comes a notice that **Francis X. Labie** of the 64<sup>th</sup> Squadron has a new address. It is 3741 Cranberry Drive, New Port Richey, FL 34653. His new phone number is (727) 815-9728. His e-mail address is **labu@juno.com**. We are sad to hear of the death of his wife of 54 years. He has praise for the newsletter and states that he will attend the next reunion "god willing". He has placed an ad in the St. Petersburg Times in an effort to get us some new members. Thanks, **Francis**, that might work.

A notice was sent to Bill Wilson concerning the death of **Harold T. Barret**, 403<sup>rd</sup> pilot, by his son, **Alan Barrett**. He states, "He often mentioned coming by to visit you there in Snyder. My mother wanted to make sure that you got the info in time for the next newsletter. Her address remains the same, **Mrs. Louise Barrett**, RR5 Box 145, Tahoka, TX 79351" He passed away January 18, 2002 according to the enclosed obituary. We are saddened by this notice and we will take action to see that **Louise** continues to receive the newsletter.

With her husband's dues comes a letter from **Betty Unruh**, wife of **Lt. Col.(Ret.) Clifford Unruh**, of Dinuba, California. She states, "I believe he knew **Roger Kettleson** briefly during his '43,'44 stint in the South Pacific. He was a navigator-B-24. Now he is a Dinuba farmer, retired!"

A letter to the 43<sup>rd</sup> **Bomb Group Elf** came with three years of dues from **Col. Douglas Paterson** of Maryland. He enclosed the label from the last newsletter marked Pd-99. **Doug**, your label on this issue should read Pd-02.

**Clair Black**, 63<sup>rd</sup> bombardier writes "I am not sure of my dues status. Here is \$30.00 toward it. I have been pretty laid up the past two years with leg problems. I get around pretty well for short distances and don't travel very well. If all goes well I am planning on making the reunion with my wife this fall in Las Vegas. I am in the process of moving. My new address is 1556 W 2500 SO, Syracuse, UT 84074. Phone (801) 776-3859". **Clair**, your dues are now paid through 2003 and I think you can drive to Las Vegas in about 5 hours. Thanks to your state for such a nice Winter Olympics!

A dues payment came in from **Joseph Esposito** 65<sup>th</sup> Navigaator. He writes, "I have enclosed a check for \$30. If that does not cover it, let me know. Respectfully, Joe Esposito. PS I just had a long conversation with **Bob Sausville**. It is great to hear from your old mates every once in a while." Good news, Joe, you are now paid through 2003. I like your return address sticker with a B-24 on it!

**Clint Brass** 65<sup>th</sup> Flight Engineer is also paid through 2003. He writes, "Haven't made any reunions but enjoy the newsletter".

**Dr. Max E. Johns** sent in dues with an application for membership that was not necessary because he has been a member for some time. He writes, "I saw in the last newsletter that I was missing, so now I am found! Hello to **Arnold Huskins** and **Glenn Bales**". **Max**, your address is different than the year 2000 roster, perhaps that is why someone thought you were lost. Anyone looking for him should look at 1589E. Crown Ridge Way, Oro Valley, AZ 85737.

✓ We have a new "life" member. He is **Timothy Gary Heck** who is joining on behalf of his grandmother, **Ann Ryan Palmer**. She is the widow of 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. **Robert C. Ryan**, 63<sup>rd</sup> B-24 bombardier who was killed in New Jersey in the service after returning from New Guinea. He was on Captain Charles Quinette's crew. Tim is seeking more information about **Bob Ryan** and the Scott project crews. Tim is a student and lives at 640 Silver Wraith Court, Zionsville, IN 64077 and his phone is (317) 873-0320.

**Elva Kinkaid**, widow of **Capt. Clement Kinkaid** who died in 1998 sent in a nice letter. She lives in a retirement home in Wichita, KS, reads every word in the newsletters, and misses the reunions. She saw **Art Curren**'s name in the newsletter and knows that her husband was his navigator. She and **Clement** had a nice trip to New Zealand and Australia eight years ago and he saw the favorite place where he was stationed. Also she remembers **Helen Green** whose name was in the last newsletter.

**Douglas P. Walker**, son of **General Kenneth Walker** is now current with his dues. **Doug**, thanks for the information you sent about your father. I hope to find room to publish it soon in a newsletter.

**Charles Parker** writes that he is sorry he missed the Nashville reunion due to sickness but he hopes to make it to Las Vegas. He said "tell all the guys in the 63<sup>rd</sup> Squadron hello and take care." He included this year's dues.

**Bill Wilson** actually got a letter of congratulations from **Joubert McCrea** for putting his name on the famous "Bad Boy" list. He states, "It is always pleasant to see one's name in print, I think??" He blames "senior moments" and the US mail for the oversight but admits that he probably wrote the check last year and forgot to mail it. He is now paid up through 2003 and sent in an extra donation. Thanks, **Mac**.

A neatly printed letter reached our treasurer from **Allen Chrisman**, 65<sup>th</sup> Navigator, from Montana who paid through 2003 also. As for the Las Vegas reunion, he writes "We will see what comes".

**Robert Burke** writes that he still keeps in touch with a couple of his crewmates in the 403<sup>rd</sup> and looks forward to receiving the news letter every three months. **Bob**, you are now current with your dues.

From Richard Nixon's home town of Yorba Linda, California, comes a letter from **Henry James**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Radioman. He is puzzled about not getting the January newsletter and a possible missing check. Henry, we are not certain that a check is missing. **The Elf** in Texas reports that your dues are now paid through 2005. We are sending you a replacement newsletter. We are happy that you feel good and are keeping yourself active. We are pleased that you plan to make Las Vegas this year.

From El Paso comes this letter from a life member, **Gerald Obermeyer**. He writes, "I do enjoy reading the newsletter, but seldom see a familiar name. I was a M/Sgt airplane mechanic with the 13<sup>th</sup> Recon. Sqdn.- mostly in New Guinea. I still travel to Juarez to work every day where I enjoy my duties as a consulting engineer. Take care. Everybody is needed." **Gerald**, your editor has crossed the Rio Grande to Juarez, Mexico a few times, also. The food is good there and the tequila is cheap!

Another Texan wrote to our treasurer from San Angelo. **Willard Ogle**, Gunner 63<sup>rd</sup> Squadron, is still able to work as a school crossing guard when he "is not in the hospital or going to one. Heard from the 63<sup>rd</sup> bombardier, **Stephen Perrone**, who is looking for input on 63<sup>rd</sup> crews. Maybe I can find time to help him out. I haven't heard from any of my crew in a long time. Enclosed is my 02 dues".

**Robert May**, 65<sup>th</sup> Bombardier, writes, "Dear Bill, Enclosed are my dues for a couple of years. Keep up the good work. Question #1. What have you left in the PX of 43<sup>rd</sup> memorabilia? Could you list those items that are available in the newsletter? Question #2: Why doesn't our web site [www.kensmen.com](http://www.kensmen.com) have a listing of men who served in the 43<sup>rd</sup>?

**Bob**, your editor believes that Bill does not have many items left in the PX. I believe that he has been having sales to reduce the load that he must carry to reunions. Each member gets a 70 page roster with names, addresses, phone numbers, and squadron & duty listings. A new one is coming. Our web site is too public a place to publish addresses and phone numbers. Thousands of persons all over the world read it. I get enough unsolicited junk mail now from advertisers and unwelcome phone calls. The advertisers actually sell lists of phone numbers and addresses to each other. If I get any more junk mail I must buy more trash cans to put it in. A funny thing happened at my house with my 43<sup>rd</sup> caps. I have been to about 17 reunions. My wife gathered up a car load of items to donate to the Salvation Army. Included were about 14 of my old 43<sup>rd</sup> caps. She allowed me to keep three. If the Salvation Army sells them for ten cents each, there will be some strange looking persons walking around in Los Angeles wearing 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group caps!

Welcome a new member, **Eugene J. O'Brien**, 11906 Paseo Lucido, Unit 151. San Diego, CA 92128-6259. His phone is (858) 487-4690. He was a B-24 bombardier who arrived on Ie Shima too late to fly combat missions because the war ended. He learned of our association from **Ed O'Brien** and is writing to his former co-pilot, **Bill Smetts**, our member in Florida. He has not communicated with **Bill** in 56 years! **Eugene** is a retired airport operations man with United Airlines.

**Abraham Hellman** 403<sup>rd</sup> Navigator has a change of address, but a small change. He is now in Apt. 619 Instead of 622 at 465 Ocean Drive, Miami Beach, FL 33139 -6625. He sent in a donation with his dues. **Abe** writes of his efforts to enlist in the Army Air Corps in January, 1942 as a cadet but they could not take him for lack of openings. So they paid him for four months to stay home in Brooklyn! Then they shipped him by "cattle car" to Kelly Field, Texas where he had to erect his own tent and dig ditches around it. See how well they prepared you for duty in the South Pacific, **Abe**?

**Rich Howard** in Montana sent in a new address for **James A. Watts**. It is 3066 N. Fenimore Ave, Tucson, AZ 85749. **Jim's** name on the "Bad Boy List" caused **Rich** to do this for his fellow 63<sup>rd</sup> member. This newsletter should go to the new address. Will one of you send in a phone number?

**Richard Bell** of Omaha sent in dues and notified us of the death of his wife of 42 years, **Florence**. So, with sad feelings we will remove her name from our roster. **Rich** was a 403<sup>rd</sup> Truck Mechanic. He was Florence's care giver at the hospice for a long time but could not prevent a stroke from taking her life on October 25<sup>th</sup>.

A dues check came if from **Ralph Paulsen** from just outside Yosemite Nat'l Park, a very scenic place.

This information is "hot off the press"; The web site [www.cilhi.army.mil/pr021202.htm](http://www.cilhi.army.mil/pr021202.htm) on Feb 12 issued a press release announcing the finding of two B-24s in the mountainous jungle of New Guinea in the Lae region near the village of Kunukio. Both B-24s departed from Nadzab on April

16, 1944 (Black Sunday). One was 22<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Group plane and the other a 403<sup>rd</sup> Squadron plane named "Here Tis" 42-72956 piloted by 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Raymond Cooley according to our own website. CILHI stands for Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii which is located at Hickam AFB. It is the largest anthropological forensic staff in the world. They have the job of identifying the remains of 21 crewmen on the two planes. The press release states that they have recovered remains of "at least 13 American Servicemen". It does not state that the remains of all 10 men on the 403<sup>rd</sup> B-24 were recovered. This is very sensitive information and I want to be very careful to report it accurately and name my sources of information. This listing of the crewmen on the 403<sup>rd</sup> plane is from the 43<sup>rd</sup> casualty report for March and April of 1944 supplied by Maxwell AFB on microfilm. It agrees exactly with another source, the American Battle Monuments Commission listing of WWII MIA's on the web site [www.abmc.gov](http://www.abmc.gov).

2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt. Raymond A. Cooley,	0-888887	Pilot	from Texas
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt. Dudley R. Ives	0-687035	Pilot	from Texas
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt. George E. Archer	0-685343	Navigator	from Oklahoma
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt. Donald F. Grady	0-685799	Bombardier	from Pennsylvania
S/Sgt. Joseph M. King	36576814	Gunner	from Michigan
S/Sgt. Thomas G. Knight	16126500	Gunner	from Illinois
S/Sgt. Norman L. Nell	17164634	Gunner	from Missouri
T/Sgt. Richard R. Sargent	13128550	Gunner	from Pennsylvania
S/Sgt. Blair W. Smith	33135850	Gunner	from Pennsylvania
T/Sgt. Steve Zayac	20522589	Radio Op.	from Ohio

Because of his rank, I suspect that T/Sgt. Sargent was the Flight Engineer.

For the past 58 years these men have been listed as "Missing in Action" and have been honored at the Manila American Military Cemetery. IT IS NOT CORRECT TO SAY THAT THE REMAINS OF ALL OF THESE MEN HAVE BEEN RECOVERED! The CLIHI will work diligently to identify the remains found but it is a very, very difficult and time-consuming job. To understand, you should get Susan Shehan's book "A Missing Plane", 1986 Putman & Sons NY. The work may take months or even years. Our thoughts and prayers should go to the relatives of these men at this time. They are our men, all heroes, who gave their lives in defense of their country. No greater sacrifice can be made.

I also have a listing of the 11 men on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Bomb Group plane if anyone needs it.

*Andy Anderson*

Your editor recently answered an inquiry on the Heavy Bombers web site from Carol Philips, a middle school teacher in Western Kentucky whose students have been given a grant to produce a book about the WWII veterans in their own local area. She wanted information about her uncle, **Ralph "Sleepy" Pittman**, who was a B-17 Bombardier on **Waldo Schauweker's** 64<sup>th</sup> Squadron crew. She knew many of the crew names from an old newspaper clipping which honored the men for sinking a Japanese ship in April of 1942.

I wrote a letter to **Waldo** and asked him to contact Carol. He did and helped her to make contact with **Grover Reat**, the Navigator, also. Grover supplied a photo of the crew. I was able to tell her that **Winslow Gardner**, their original co-pilot, had gone down with another crew. It seems that **Pittman**, after surviving 44 missions with the 64<sup>th</sup> was sent home and while stationed in Texas, he and another veteran stole a jeep, guns, and ammunition and went bird hunting in Oklahoma. When they returned to duty they were not court-martialed because of their war record. Instead, they were sent to the Eighth Air Force in England. This amounted to a death sentence because on his last mission with the 711<sup>th</sup> Squadron, 447<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group(H) his plane went down in the English Channel on May 24, 1944. **Ralph Pittman** is still listed as missing and is honored on the "Tablets of the Missing" at Netherlands American Cemetery, Margarten, Netherlands, I was able to send Carol a color print-out with a picture of that cemetery from the website [www.abmc.gov](http://www.abmc.gov). **Roger Kettleson** remembered her uncle and was able to contribute information, also. Carol states that her students now understand that the many sacrifices made by so many gave them the many freedoms that they enjoy today. She also wrote, "You gentlemen are really special and I hope

that we are able to help our students realize what a truly great group of men and women their grandparents and great-grandparents were.”

Your editor received a long letter from **Charles R. Cole**, MSGT, Ret., RR 1, Box 143, Roaring Branch, PA 177765-9764. His letter appealed to me very much. I hope our members like it. It is dated Feb.14, 2002

“Dear Andy and Fellow Members,

First off: Since I received that huge increase in Social Security, and my wife just increased my allowance, I desire to be removed from “Bills Bad Boy List” by including dues for 2001 and 2002.

My spouse keeps close tabs on me, as my age is 84 plus. I don’t buy green bananas anymore. I would buy a new car but the 7 year and 100,000 mile warranty would never mature, so I am left driving my 1952 Ford with 234,000 miles on it.

Second: I thoroughly enjoy reading the 43<sup>rd</sup>.newsletter. I especially enjoy reading of those who write about their experiences in WWII. They cause us to live over the era of the war. Whether that is good or bad, they cannot be erased from our minds. HATS OFF to all who put out an excellent newsletter. It keeps the 43<sup>rd</sup>. together.

I am sorry to have to report “TAPS” for several of my comrades of the 13<sup>th</sup> Recon. and the 403<sup>rd</sup> Sqdn., if they haven’t already been reported in the newsletter:

**Leroy Estergard**, Rockledge, FL. Maintenance, who died Sept. 2, 2000

**Lewis H. Waltman**, Lancaster, PA Radio Operator... died Nov. 26, 2000

**Michael Polechko**, Greensburg, PA Maintenance . who died July 27, 2001

**Quentin R. Ember**, Newport News, VA Maintenance...died Jan 7, 2002

All of the above, including myself, departed Brooklyn Navy Yard on Jan. 20,1942 on the S.S. Argentina, through the Panama Canal to Melbourne, Australia, arriving Feb.26. 1942.We were stationed at the RAAF base at Laverton, Victoria, Australia. There we were put to work repairing 19<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group war weary B-17 aircraft. From Laverton, the 13<sup>th</sup>. moved to Torrens Creek, to Mareeba, to Iron Range in Northern Territory, to Milne Bay, New Guinea, back to Mareeba, to 14 Mile Port Moresby, etc.

I’m saddened that “TAPS” was reported in the January newsletter for **Col. Charles B. Downer**, 403<sup>rd</sup> pilot from Chatsworth, CA Feb.2, 2001.While the 13<sup>th</sup> Recon. was at Torrens Creek, flight crews arrived without airplanes. B-17 type planes finally arrived and I, then Sgt. Cole, was made crew chief of Downer’s B-17 AF41-24540 which was later destroyed by a Japanese air raid on Jan.17, 1943 at Milne Bay, New Guinea. I was fortunate to remain as crew chief with Downer at Port Moresby on bombing and reconnaissance missions

On my second tour of duty of duty in the SWPA in Sept. 1944, I was awaiting assignment hopefully to my former 403<sup>rd</sup> Sqdn. In walked (then) Major Downer and said, “Come with me, I have a job for you.” Downer had just returned to the SWPA from leave and had received the assignment or pilot on **Lt. General Robert L. Eichelberger**’s personal plane, B-17 AF41-24353 “Cap’t and The Kids” Downer had searched me down as crew chief and aerial engineer, which was the best assignment in my whole Air Force career, although there were other good assignments, as well. AF41-24353 “Cap’t and The Kids” was renamed “Miss Em” after the General’s wife, Emaline. The life of “Miss Em” is enclosed as I have it.

I am in contact with two of my 13<sup>th</sup>. Comrades. One a **Carl Simpson** of Pitman, NJ, a maintenance man. The other, **Carl Averill** of Endwell, NY, radio operator, about 2 hours drive from me. We see each other about twice a year. Carl was on a crew that crashed on take-off from Port Moresby on June14, 1943. He was on B-17 AF 41-2664 named “The Jersey Skeeter” piloted by **Lt. James A. Pickard**. Carl spent five months in a hospital in Australia, the only survivor.

I have read several books this winter on the WWII in the South Pacific. I urge everyone to read them. **WARPATH ACROSS THE PACIFIC** by Lawrence J. Hickey Very good, with lots of pictures. **BLACK SUNDAY, HELLUVA PELICAN, & THE FORGOTTEN FIFTH** by Michael John Claringbold. Box 5136, Kingston, ACT 2604 Australia.



FORTRESS AGAINST THE SUN (The B-17 Flying fortress in the Pacific) by Gene Eric Salecker. Everyone should read the above book. There is a list of all B-17 numbers, crews, plane names, missions, etc. I highly recommend it as one of the best.

Another good book is "THE LAND WAR IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC" We in the Air Corps can be glad we were not in the Army Infantry. The infantry had it rough. Again the author is Gene Eric Salecker.

I also have the autobiography of Col. Charles B. Downer finished just before his death. Anyone knowing "Chuck" would enjoy reading it.

I sent the following poem to Downer on his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday, together with a picture of "Miss Em" and individual pictures of each of the crew. I am the last surviving member of the crew.

#### DOWN MEMORY LANE

Dedicated to Colonel Charles. B. Downer on his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday

We flew together in World War II  
Colonel Downer and all of his crew.  
We were up early each day,  
Eager to get "Mis Em" on the way.  
As soon as the General arrived,  
Following a salute, we took off into the sky.  
Downer, as pilot, could really handle the plane,  
And land it safely on any terrain.  
The General himself, Eichelberger by name,  
Was very friendly and always the same.  
That B-17 number AF41-214353  
Always got us there and back, safe and free.  
We scouted all of the islands of the Philippines,  
Looking for Japs that still might be.  
The Eighth Army found them, and drove them out,  
Leaving the Philippines free, no doubt.  
Corregidor was the greatest of all,  
As we were there on the day of its fall.  
To join the hangar in sky,  
We hope the Lord will be fair and just,  
And have a B-17 waiting for us!

In my estimation B-17 AF41-243253 with such a historical war record should have been returned To the U.S. and reserved in the Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio.

In regard to **Historian Eldon Lawson** securing a suitable place for the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group archives and historical material, it looks like the SAC museum in Nebraska has let us down and even lost the material.

As a suggestion, how about a space at the Air Force Museum at Dayton, Ohio, even if we have to buy space or give a substantial donation. We have the 5<sup>th</sup> Air Force Monument there as well as the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group Monument, which I saw when it was dedicated. Thousands of people visit the Dayton Museum each year.

I have scrap book material which I will earmark to be sent to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group to help preserve their history.

Respectfully submitted, *Charles. R. Cole*

P.S. Enclosed are the AAF Forms No.5 of Charles B Downer during the Eighth Army Campaign."

"From "The Octogram", THE BIOGRAPHY OF MISS EM.....GENERALS VETERAN B17

When some B-17s grow old and war-weary they are led off to the glue works, so to speak, and their bones are picked for usable parts. Others spend their declining years ignobly hauling supplies here and there. But one old fire horse out in the Southwest Pacific still is in there pitching, serving as the flying headquarters of Lt. General Robert L. Eichelberger, commander of the Eighth Army.

Her name is now "Miss Em", for General Eichelberger's wife, and her mission take the General to and from Eighth Army operations where the familiar smoke of battle still gets in her nostrils. Her guns are still ready to blast at snooping Jap fighters and she is not above a little ground strafing when the opportunity presents itself.

Miss Em before she became a member of Eichelberger's family, was known as the Cap'n and The Kids". She's one of the original skip-bombers, a veteran of the Bismark Sea battle where an entire Jap convoy was wiped out in March of 1943, of Rabaul, the Northern Solomons, New Guinea, Buna, and the Admiralties. Her silver skin has absorbed great chunks of Jap ordinance, but she has never lost a man.

Her pilot, medal-weighted Lt. Col. Charles B. Downer, of Alhambra, California, says she is "definitely a lucky ship." She has never seen a crash landing, although it is true that Jap slugs have put her on sick call a number of times. She had to have one tattered wing replaced, plus most of her windows, and both bomb bay doors, but she still gets around as spry as ever. "She's well broken in, all right", says Downer.

Since taking on the three-star insignia of a Lieutenant General, Miss Em has covered the Philippines like a blanket. She has flown over virtually all of General Eichelberger's 38 amphibious landings during the Visayan, Zamboanga, Sulu Archipelago, and Mindanao campaigns. She has landed on half-constructed airstrips where no self-respecting Fort would ordinarily be caught dead, and on one occasion had to be protected by a perimeter of machine guns, self-propelled guns, tanks, and doughboys. This was on the Libby strip at Davao, Mindanao, where our own artillery, firing across the strip at dug-in Japs, had to "cease fire" while General Eichelberger and his boys sneaked in for a landing.

He radioed ahead before that landing, saying "We're coming in so long as there is a reasonably fair chance of not getting shot up" and Miss Em flew, rather arrogantly, over a concentration of Japs and landed virtually under their quivering noses. The General delights in imagining the frustrated feelings of those particular Japs as they watched the silver-winged monster skim over their heads, powerless to do anything but wonder what was holding up the honorable Jap Air Force.

Most recently, Miss Em set herself down at Del Monte, Mindanao, heart of the most famous pineapple district in the world, the first B-17 to stop there since General Douglas MacArthur went through on his famous trip to Australia from beleaguered Corregidor.

Miss Em came to the Southwest Pacific in mid-1942 with the famous 43<sup>rd</sup> Bombardment Group, the oldest heavy bomber outfit in the theater. A year later the 43<sup>rd</sup> began using B-24 Liberators, and the big Flying Fortress became an armed transport, flying in food and munitions to forward battle areas where the C-47s didn't stand a chance. The old Fort simply shot her way through, when necessary, and put the munitions where they were needed, by parachute.

She is credited with 11 Jap planes shot down in aerial combat and eight Jap ships sunk on her own. The little painted bombs that mark her 40 combat missions fill up the whole side of her long machine-gun bristling nose. In all, Miss Em has flown 300,000 miles, or 12 times around the world.

In addition to Lt. Col. Downer, the pilot, Miss Em's crew includes: navigator, **Capt. Thomas E. Parada**, Lawrence, Mass.; her co-pilot **Capt. Sidney Webb**, Modesto, Calif.; her crew chief and engineer **M/Sgt. Charles R. Cole**, Roaring Branch, PA., Assistant engineer, **S/Sgt. Brian J. Marcarele**, Ipswich, Mass. **T/Sgt. Alfred Goldman**, Kenosha, Wis.; **Sgt. John R. Braneiforte**, Rochester, NY, and **Cpl. R.T. Sullivan**, Burbank, California."

Charles, your Editor believes that you should be nominated as "Poet Laureate" of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb

Group Association! Bill Wilson surely will use your testimony about your 234,000 mile Ford to sell more Fords! Charles, did you notice in Salecker's *Fortress Against the Sun* that your plane, while it was still *Cap'n and The Kids* and before it became *Miss Em*, was the last B-17 to shoot down a Japanese plane in the war in the Pacific. This happened while it was operated by the 433<sup>rd</sup> Troop Carrier Group at the end of February, 1944. The place was Los Negros Island in the Admiralty Islands. Also, while the plane was still a 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group plane, **General Kenney** watched from it while our paratroopers dropped on Nadzab. This is reported in Steve Birdsall's 1977 book *Flying Buccaneers*.

I could find no record of "Taps" being reported previously for your list of 403<sup>rd</sup> men, so thank you for your letter, Charles.

This editor has been meeting with **Ralph DeLoach**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Squadron B-17 pilot who lives in nearby Marina Del Rey, about five miles from my home. He lives with his wife, **Gene**, in the summer months in a small village near Oxford in England and in the winter months in California. Gene is a charming British lady. Ralph is famous for two reasons. He was selected to be the original "Marlboro Man"; not on the billboards and magazine ads that came later, but in films. Philip Morris pulled him off a ranch in Texas and brought him to the LA area. He was handsome and a cowboy, so he was perfect for the role. The money was too much to resist. When Ralph protested that he did not smoke, they simply said, "Let's talk about the money!" When they finally stopped paying him, Ralph stopped smoking! Otherwise, I do not believe he would be around today. Some of you might remember that a later "Marlboro Man" died of lung cancer.

**Ralph DeLoach** is famous for another reason. On July 11, 1943 Ralph was flying B17F 41-24521 **Black Jack** back from Rabaul in extremely bad weather with No.4 engine feathered and other engines not running well. The crew was lost and felt there was no way for them to get back to Port Moresby. As they passed by Boga Boga Island they could see the native villagers going to a church on a hill on this Sunday. So Ralph decided to try to set the plane down on the shallow water of a reef within sight of the natives who might be able to help the crew survive. But the plane was hard to control and slid off the reef into the clear but deep water. Ralph had to exit the plane through the pilot's side window and his leg got caught and was injured before he could finally free it. Three of his crew were badly injured but the others managed to get them free while the villagers were racing to the reef in their dugout canoes to take them ashore. An Aussie coast watcher radioed for help and eventually all were taken to Port Moresby for medical care. It was very fortunate that the day was Sunday. Otherwise the local population would not have been on the hill where they could see the plane go down. The famous plane which was flown by **Ken McCullar**, **Harry Staley** and others had **Black Jack** painted on one side of the nose and **The Joker's Wild** painted on the other side. **Bob Butler** flew many missions in it. It now rests in 150 feet of clear water.

The plane was re-discovered by men looking for another wrecked plane in 1986. It has since become a very popular scuba dive site. In 1988 Ralph was taken back to the site by National Geographic and Steve Birdsall and he and the plane are featured in the April, 1988 issue of the magazine in an article entitled "The Ghosts of War in The South Pacific" A short film was made of the plane and the story of what Ralph calls "The Last Flight of Black Jack" became famous. I believe **Steve Birdsall**, the Aussie writer, had something to do with the film. Ralph was able to dive down deep enough to see a clear view of the plane, which is still intact but its nose is a bit battered. For many years Ralph's injured leg did not bother him, but now it does and he carries a cane. Ralph got malaria while on the 1988 trip. Gene and Ralph indicated to me that they would like to come back from England about month earlier than usual so that they can make to their first reunion of the 43<sup>rd</sup>. But when they consulted with their travel agent they learned that they cannot cancel the flight unless they pay again for another flight. So, they will not be coming to Las Vegas.

Our Elf reports that **Gilbert C. Burns, John S. Edmisten , Joseph Percaro and Bernard Robertson** have moved and left no forwarding address.

Also the newsletter mailings to **Ted Kaufman** and **Earl Piefly** were refused. The newsletter mailed to **Eleanor Bryant** was returned marked "deceased". Eleanor was a widow of one of our members.

We are saddened to learn of the death of **June W. McMurray**, wife of **William McMurray** in Connecticut. She left a large family to mourn her death. **Ed Gammil** had the sad duty of forwarding her death announcement.

This Editor received a letter containing three years of dues from **Leland Loughy**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Navigator from Pennsylvania. He writes "Hopefully our history will be published while I am still paying dues". He goes on to write, "**Charlotte** and I met **Nancy and Bill Solomon** along with **Roger and Catherine Sullivan** at Marina's Jack in Sarasota recently for lunch while we were in Florida on Feb.5, 2002...A mini-reunion down South. Looking forward and enjoying each copy of the newsletter" This Editor believes that two pairs of snow birds flew south and found a welcome in Florida.

.....  
By Andy Anderson

I think that your new officers are more accurately informed than ever before on the status of our history book, "***Kens Men Against the Empire***", but the news is not good. It appears that there will be no book for us this year. As you know, the 22<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Group had a written contract with Larry Hickey and they sued him and "won". But they still do not have the book that they still want! Your officers do not have the legal right to force a book to be written by Hickey. Your editor was more foolish than some men. I sent a check for two books and some material for Hickey to use in his research. I will not ask for the material to be returned. That would only delay matters further. We know that Hickey is finally writing the text of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Group book now. Their book is "*The Revenge of the Red Raiders*" He has finally done something that he should have done many years ago. He has hired some help. Hickey wrote the best unit history ever written about the 345<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, 5<sup>th</sup> Air Force. He has tons of research material that belongs to him personally. The 345<sup>th</sup>.book is titled *Warpath Across the Pacific*. I loaned my copy to someone in the 345<sup>th</sup> years ago and he passed away without returning it. That book is still available at your local book dealer or through Amazon.com.

In the meantime, your editor will try to include historical stories in each newsletter and refer you to other books that I have read and can recommend. A book worth reading requires many years of research. For example, Salecker's *Fortress against the Sun, The B-17 Flying Fortress in the Pacific* required 15 years of research. The author is a retired policeman in Illinois. I have Lex McAuley's e-mail address in Australia. He has written four books. I know that one is about the Battle of The Bismark Sea and another is about the B-24 raids on Rabaul. Many of you men were involved in that. I do not know what the other two are about. I have not yet read any of them but I will try to get them.

My wife and I are leaving for Australia on April 8 and returning on April 22. Qantas Airlines has an economy tour that was advertised in the Los Angeles Times. We will spend 4 days in Sydney, 4 days in Cairns and 4 days in Melbourne and, of course, one day going and one day returning. We will be given six local bus tours and all breakfasts are included as well as insurance and all transfers to and from airports. We felt that we must go soon before the winter season begins "Down Under". Our travel agent booked the trip for us at no extra cost. We wanted to be home before the 30<sup>th</sup>. to help my son celebrate his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. I have Steve Birdsall's address in Sydney and hope to meet with him. I checked the map and we do not fly over the mountainous jungle of New Guinea, so perhaps it is safe! **Keep sending me letters.** The post office will hold my mail. My computer will continue to receive e-mail. My e-mail address is now [andyanne@attbi.com](mailto:andyanne@attbi.com).

+++++TAPS - LAST ROLL CALL+++++

**Alan Clatsworthy** 63<sup>rd</sup> Pilot on October 24, 2001 Reported by **Roland Fisher**. God Bless.

**George T. Kisel** 403<sup>rd</sup> Squadron on October 6, 2001 Reported by his daughter, **Barbara Gannon**. God Bless.

**Jim Klein** 65<sup>th</sup> pilot from Stillwater, MN on Dec. 17, 2001 reported by **Max Alelsen** . God Bless.

**Dominic Angerame** 63<sup>rd</sup>. Maintenance from Albany, NY. Reported by **ED Gammil**. God Bless.

**Floyd Redding** 63<sup>rd</sup> pilot from North Fort Myers, FL, on July 27,2001. Reported by his wife, **Jean Redding** God Bless.

**Elizabeth Labie**, wife of **Francis X. Labie** of New Port Richey, FL. Reported by her husband. God Bless

**Florence Bell**, wife of **Richard Bell** 403<sup>rd</sup>. of Omaha.on Oct. 25,2001. Reported by her husband. God Bless.

**Lewis H. Waltham**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Radioman of Lancaster, PA on Nov.2,2000 Reported by **Charles Cole**. God Bless

**Quentin R.Ember**, 403<sup>rd</sup> Line Chief of Newport News,VA On Jan.7, 2002. Reported by **Charles Cole** God Bless.

**Leroy Estergard**, 403<sup>rd</sup>.of Cocoa, FL on Sept. 2, 2000 Reported by **Charles Cole**. God Bless.

**Harold T. Barret** 403<sup>rd</sup>. Pilot of Tahoka,TX on Jan.18, 2002. Reported by his son, **Alan Barret** God Bless.

**June McMurray** wife of **William McMurray** 63<sup>rd</sup> Maintenance of Berlin, CT. Reported by **Ed Gammil**. God Bless

**Eleanor Bryant** widow of **W. D. Bryant** of Concord, CA Reported by **Elain Pierce**, **The Elf**, in Texas when the January newsletter was returned stamped "Deceased". God Bless.

## Quarterly Humor

From Hong Kong by e-mail comes this story:

It seems that a young man volunteered for military service during World War II. He had such a high aptitude for aviation that he was sent to Pensacola Naval Air Station, skipping recruit training. The very first day at Pensacola he solos and is the best flier on the base. All they could do is give him his gold wings and assign him to an aircraft carrier in the Pacific.

On his first day aboard, he took off and single-handedly shot down 6 Japanese planes. Then, climbing to 20,000 feet, he found 9 more enemy planes and shot them down as well. Noting that his fuel was getting low, he descended, circled a carrier and came in for a perfect landing on the deck.

He threw back the canopy, climbed out and jogged over to the captain. Saluting smartly, he said, "Well sir, how did I do on my very first day?"

The captain turned around, bowed politely, and replied, "You make one velly, velly, selious mistake!"

**For men only:** "If sometimes you feel yourself little, useless, offended, and depressed, always remember that you were once the fastest and most victorious sperm in your group."

### OLD IS WHEN:

Your sweetie says, "Lets go upstairs and make love." And you answer, "Honey, I can't do both"

A sexy babe catches your fancy and your pacemaker opens the garage door.

You are cautioned to slow down by your doctor instead of the police.

An "all nighter" means not getting up to pee.

Only in America.....can a pizza get to your house faster than an ambulance.

Only in America.....are there handicap parking spaces in front of a skating rink.

Only in America ....do drugstores make the sick walk to the back of the store for their prescriptions, while healthy people can buy cigarettes at the front.

Only in America....do we buy hot dogs in packages of ten and buns in packages of eight.

**Subject: Fifi** (By e-mail from a woman in Australia ....shame on her!)

During World War II the train from London was very crowded, so the American soldier walked the length of the train looking for a seat. The only unoccupied seat was directly adjacent to a well dressed middle aged lady and was being used by her little dog. The weary soldier asked, "Please ma'am may I sit in that seat?"

The English woman looked down her nose at the soldier, sniffed and said, "You Americans. You are such a rude class of people. Can't you see my little Fifi is using that seat?" The soldier walked away, determined to find a place to rest, but after another trip down to the end of the train, found himself facing the woman with the dog. Again, he asked, "Please, lady. May I sit there? I'm very tired."

The English woman wrinkled her nose and snorted, "You Americans! Not only are you rude, you are also arrogant. Imagine!"

The soldier didn't say anything else. He leaned over, picked up the little dog, tossed it out the window of the train and sat down in the empty seat. The woman shrieked and demanded that someone defend her and chastise the soldier.

An English gentleman sitting across the aisle spoke up, "You know, sir, you Americans do seem to have a penchant for doing the wrong thing. You eat while holding the fork in the wrong hand. You drive your autos on the wrong side of the road. And now, sir, you've thrown the wrong bitch out of the window!"

A Chinese couple, Mr. and Mrs. Wong, had a baby. The father was delighted until he saw the infant, which had no oriental features, only Caucasian features. He named the baby Sum Tings Wong.

Just before this newsletter "went to press" your editor received this letter from our Aussie member of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Association who lives on Samar Island in the Philippines. His name is Tom Fitzgerald.

"Dear Howard,

I am your 24 Squadron member RAAF member and was attached to the 65<sup>th</sup> Sqn. HBAU at Nadzab for a short period.

In your Jan. '02 newsletter which I just received I noted on a few pages members or ex-43<sup>rd</sup> boys who had never spoken of their wartime combat experiences.

Until 1990 when I formed 24 Sqn. RAAF Assn. NSW I was one of those. Until then, if my wartime combat experiences were discussed it meant 3 to 4 nights afterwards of tossing and turning in bed until I finally fell asleep about 3:30 to 4 a.m. As secretary, we had no Pres., Vice Pres., Committee, etc. The boys started "opening up" to me with their combat experiences to help me with my newsletter.

After 3 to 4 months I realized that that I was dropping off to sleep normally.

Therapy: Discuss your combat experiences regularly. During and after WWII we called it "Shooting a line" or "Glory Grabbing". It is that no more, so LET IT OUT, do not keep it bottled inside of you. Your boys are "opening up" with their diaries and personal combat experiences.

They make such great reading and cause me no more sleepless nights and you will find more of your members writing in with their experiences.

Things are great on Eastern Samar. During my monthly visit to Tacloban City, Leyte a Filipino friend took me to "Red Beach" near Palo where Gen. MacArthur landed. It is a WWII dedicated reserve, large, with a fine war memorial and is a popular spot for swimming and picnics.

Carry on the good work Best regards, Tom"

Tom, this editor reads you "loud and clear". I agree with your comments. So, you gray haired "boys", as Tom calls you....send me your mission lists, tales, and experiences. Others will read them and smile.....thinking, "I had a very similar experience".

Tom, I must tell you this story about Samar. When General Eichelberger got ready to make an amphibian landing on your beach he worried about casualties and asked his pilot of "Miss Em" to make a low pass just off shore and the General took over the waist machine gun on the B-17 and pumped hundreds of rounds into the jungle overgrowth along the water's edge. I have a mental picture of him doing that. Now, as you walk along that same beach, perhaps you will have the same mental picture.

Tom, I was at Red Beach. I believe I spent my 20<sup>th</sup> birthday at Tacloban. They moved my B-24 crew there too soon. We had about half of the island, and the enemy had the other half. We could not fly off of the air strip with a bomb load because it was too short. We had no food until some officers bribed the "Duck" drivers who hauled supplies ashore to bring us some canned food. They used parachutes as the bribe because the drivers could trade the cloth in the chutes for "favors" from the local ladies(?).

There were monkeys on Samar and an enlisted man in our 64<sup>th</sup> Squadron tent area bought one from a Filipino man. It was tied with a long chain to a coconut tree. How I hated that monkey! His name was Joe! He was large and rough. When he jumped on me he would steal sunglasses, gum, cigarettes and anything else and refuse to give them back. But soon my crew and others were sent to Mindoro Island to fly missions from there. And later, we were transferred to Clark Field on Luzon. Eventually, I remembered Joe, the monkey, and I asked what happened to him. I was told that his owner took him on a B-24 to relocate to Clark Field but the plane had to go to high altitude to avoid a very bad storm. Alas, poor Joe did not have an oxygen mask and he did not survive! It was a sad day for monkey lovers, but I was delighted! I do not know if that story is true, but that is what I was told.

So, Tom, if there are still monkeys on Samar, please do not send me one! Now, there is a saying that if a person is on drugs, "He has a monkey on his back". Perhaps that is why I never experimented with drugs. I can't stand a monkey on my back!



On this page your Secretary/Editor will relay appeals for information from our members. You men may be their only source of information for some of the historical events that they are interested in.

George Wyatt in Oregon is an associate member, the only ex-Marine Corps Gunnery Sergeant member that we have or are likely to have! He does research on B-17s and his e-mail address is [B17res@outdrs.net](mailto:B17res@outdrs.net) George needs to know who was the pilot on 41-24384 *Pluto* which became missing with General Ramey on board on 26 March, 1943. Salecker's *Fortress Against The Sun* incorrectly lists Herbert Derr as the pilot. Since Derr is known to be alive after that date, that is impossible. I think the plane was "borrowed" from our 63<sup>rd</sup> Squadron.

George also wants to know what was the plane's destination when it went down. One report states that the plane was on a reconnaissance mission to the Carolines and Truk. Another report states that the plane was lost in the Port Moresby, Merauke, Horn Island area. George's address is 4856 Pioneer Road, Medford, Oregon 97501 and his phone is (541) 857-0211. If you surprise him with the answers, he might buy you a beer in Las Vegas!

I would like to quote a recent posting on our website [www.kensmen.com](http://www.kensmen.com). by our newest member. "I'm a writer in Dallas who would like to speak with ANY 43<sup>RD</sup> Bomb Group members who served in it ant any time from its inception through the summer of 1943. I'm looking for personal reflections on serving with the 43<sup>rd</sup> during that time period (essentially the B-17 era)

I am also deeply in need of finding members of the 403<sup>rd</sup> or 65<sup>th</sup> with personal wartime knowledge of the following men: **William Vaughn, Herb Pugh, Hank Dyminski, Johnny Able Jr., Bud Thues, George Kendrick, Ruby Johnston, Forrest Dillman, and J.T. Britton.** Most, if not all of these fine men have passed away, so any idea of who and how they during the war I can only gain from those who served with them. If you knew them , or know someone that knew them, I'd like very much to hear from you. Any assistance is greatly appreciated. Please contact me at [TexVnWinkl@aol.com](mailto:TexVnWinkl@aol.com) or by phone. (I'll call you back) at (214) 341-2569. I 'm home evenings after 6:00 p.m. CST **CLINT HAYES**

Your editor recognizes the above list of men to be **Jay Zeamer's** crewmen on his famous Medal Of Honor Mission. **Clint** they accept Texas money in Las Vegas. If you do not win, you might at least get answers to your questions.

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### **Subject: Everything You Need To Know**

Everything I need to know about life, I learned form Noah's Ark. One: Don't miss the boat. Two: Remember that we are all in the same boat. Three: Plan ahead. It was not raining when Noah built the Ark. Four: Stay fit. When you are 600 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big. Five: Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done. Six: Build your future on high ground. Seven: For safety's sake, travel in pairs. Eight: Speed is not always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs. Nine: When you are stressed, float for a while. Ten: Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs: the Titanic by professionals. Eleven: No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting.

The Newsletter is published 4 times each year. **January, April, July and October.** It is written in the prior month. If you have items for the Newsletter, please have it in the editor's hands absolutely no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month before publication. Late arriving material will be included in the following issue. **PLEASE WRITE LEGIBLY AND AVOID SENDING MATERIAL AT THE LAST MINUTE IF YOU CAN SEND IT EARLIER.**

**Dues are \$15 per year or \$100 for life.** Make the check out to 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group Assn. And send to **Bill Wilson**, Treasurer or to **Howard "Andy" Anderson**, Secretary. Check the mailing label on your envelope for this edition to find out your dues status. The association's fiscal year is the same as the calendar year.

You may send e-mail to the Secretary/Editor to [andyanne@attbi.com](mailto:andyanne@attbi.com)

Please do not send attachments that you did not create. You could be spreading a "worm" or "virus" which you are not aware of and once infected your computer can send such worms from your computer without your knowledge. If your editor is not familiar with your name please use "a subject line" that I can recognize, such as "43<sup>rd</sup> Member". I will not open e-mail from strangers if they have an attachment. I will delete such mail without reading it. I cannot afford to have my computer rendered useless.

The Post office department will not forward the Newsletter. If you have a change of address, please send **Bill Wilson**, Treasurer, the change as soon as possible.