



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

NEWSLETTER 84th EDITION
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*****FROM ROGER KETTLESON, PRESIDENT*****

The week after the Las Vegas reunion the temperature declined from the high 90's to 100 degrees to a more reasonable 70 to 80 degrees, but we enjoyed the indoor comfort and facilities of the Golden Nugget Hotel and Casino for our 22nd reunion. I appreciate and thank each of you who were able and made the effort to attend. For those who were unable to join us, we missed your companionship.

Those who were here had the opportunity to visit the Hoover Dam site, a chocolate factory, and a tour of the Las Vegas Strip with a viewing of the Follies Bergere show. 171 people registered and we were honored by the presence of **Lisa Hamilton**, the daughter of our deceased Group Commander, **James Pettus**, and several other guests who joined us at the dinner dance.

The highlight of that evening was an informative talk by the Commander of the Predator Missile Organization, **Col. Gibbs**, stationed at Nellis AFB. He described his organization and its capabilities in the execution of their duties in operating the weapon in support of the Air Force's mission. Briefly, this weapon is an electronically operated aerospace machine where the pilot stays on the ground. From this position, his mission is accomplished with computer type controls in conjunction with a Ground Positioning System provided by satellites. Once the mission is accomplished, he brings the Predator back to fly again on another mission. I consider this to be Distinguished Flying. The Air Force gets more like "Buck Rogers" as time marches on.

Alton "Doug" Leaman (tail gunner- 403rd) sent a letter saying his health isn't permitting him to get out as much as he would like, but oxygen keeps him going. I'm sure he'd appreciate a note of encouragement. Hang in there Doug!

A call from the granddaughter of **Louis Newport**, (Navigator-65th), told of his passing shortly before our reunion. She mailed copy of his effort to record his military service which was displayed on the memorabilia table. This information and the other historical data that members forwarded for review was assembled and taken by our Historian, **Eldon (Bud) Lawson** to add to his collection of 43rd Bomb Group Memorabilia. We thank each of you and encourage our members to forward to Bud the information that outlines your participation with the 43rd Bomb Group.

I received an E-mail from **Claudia Wiggins**, the daughter of **Hugh Himes**, (Hq. Sq.), telling of his death on March 22, 2002. She regrets the late notice, but had been busy attending to his business activities. She can be contacted at 6805 N. College Drive, Cheyenne, WY 82009-3031. She said he loved the WWII reunions and she wanted his friends to be informed of his passing.

The Memorial Service conducted by **Andy Anderson** recognized the following members who made their last flight to the Everlasting Base since our reunion in Nashville. Taps for the 43rd Bomb Group:

63rd Squadron:

Russel L. Sadler, Herbert C. Pfleuger, Robert B. Murphy, Alan Clatsworthy,

**Dominic Angergame, Floyd Redding, June McMurray, Zigmunt Janoski
Earle J. Bishop, Robert Greenfield. Charlotte Fischer
64th Squadron:**

**Anthony Pilcavage, Robert L. Schultz, Elizabeth Labie, Otis H. Godfrey, Phil Hofferker
Lewis B. Whitworth**

65th Squadron:

**Dorwin W. Graham, Miriam Fletcher, Joseph Shapuras. Charles D. Stewart,
Edmond L. Troccia, Harold H. Kahler, Jim Klein, Louis Newport, Bob Allison,
James Rae, Garnet L. Peeling, Eugene Benedetti**

403rd Squadron:

**George T. Kisel, Florence Bell, Lewis H. Waltham, Quentin R. Ember, Leroy Estergard,
Harold T. Barret, Martin L. McBee, Gilbert Sena, Charles Downer, Kenneth O. Houts ,
Dorwin Wilson, Arthur Durbeck**

Hq. Squadron:

Cyrus Michaels, Betty Pettus

Squadron unknown:

Robert Lewis Morhart, Elanor Bryant, Edmund Matczak

The year 2003 reunion is planned to be held in **Corpus Christi, Texas from Monday, October 6, 2003 to October 13, 2003**. So make your travel plans to include those dates at that location.

Audrey and I wish good health and happiness to each of you. *Roger*

Minutes of the board meeting of Sunday, Sept. 22, 2002

Present were Roger Kettleson, Andy Anderson, Bill Wilson, Charles Rauch, Jim Cherkauer, Max Axelsen, Jim Murphy, Ed Gammil, George White, Sam Commons, Eldon Lawson, Fred McAlister, Neal Fugate, Chalky White, Max Osborn and Don Evans of the 22nd Bomb Group (an invited guest)

There was a reading of the minutes of the board meeting of 2001 in Nashville.

Don Evans was introduced to the board members. Don has been handling the **Lawrence Hickey** problem for the 22nd Bomb Group for many years. Their book, "The Revenge of the Red Raiders" was expected to be written and published by Hickey many years ago followed by the 43rd s book, "Kens Men Against The Empire", followed by the 38th Bomb Group book and the 312th Bomb Group book. Hickey promised a series of books called "Eagles Over the Pacific"

After many years of broken promises and outright deception, the 22nd sued Hickey and the case was settled "out of court" just before going to trial. The 22nd won \$100,000 and the rights to all of the material that Hickey had collected about their bomb group. **Don Evans** was very informative and answered many questions from your officers. He had given us the name of their attorney some time ago and **Max Axelsen** has already met with him in Colorado. Any legal action must be taken in Colorado where Hickey does business. We have been advised that it may take many months and several thousand dollars to get the case on a court calendar. Max also made a surprise visit to Hickey's home where he now has a full time helper and two part time helpers but no one at all to help him to write. Hickey has sent Don Evans many good sections of their book, a good photo section but hardly any text. The 22nd will need to make a decision sometime this year what their next step will be. To quote Don, "There is no good solution to the Hickey problem". **Max Axelsen** was appointed to consult with the attorney, **Pittman**, who has advised Max that we should win a court case (if it goes that far).

**Bill Wilson made the following treasurers report:
43rd Bomb Group Association 01-01-2002 to 09-22-02**

Income

Dues	\$ 3213.00
Life member	\$ 550.00
Donations	\$ 497.00
Interest	\$ 1141.00
PX	\$ 50.00
Total	\$ 5451.79

Expenses

Printing	\$ 3039.31
Postage	\$ 1232.31
PX supplies	\$ 933.66
Telephone	\$
Total	\$ 5205.58

Net

Profit for 2002	\$ 246.21
01-01 2002 Starting Balance	\$ 24417.54
09-20-2002 Balance	\$ 24663.75
C D Ford Motor Co.	\$ 30000.00
Net Worth	\$ 54663.75

It was announced that the next reunion will be in **Corpus Christi, Texas October 6 to October 13, 2003**
Max Axelsen will be our host. No other offer to host a reunion was made at this reunion.
It was suggested by Andy Anderson and approved by the board that **Larry Hickey** be removed from our mailing list. He has been receiving complimentary newsletters and rosters for many years.
The squadrons were informed of the need for elections of new Directors.
Respectfully submitted by *Andy Anderson*

Minutes of the General Membership Meeting on Sept. 25:

Don Evans of the 22nd Bomb Group was introduced and delivered a very informative address to our general membership concerning the problem of getting their book and the chances of a 43rd. book. His remarks have been summed up in the board meeting minutes.

Max Axelsen informed our membership of the date and time of our next reunion. The aircraft carrier, Lexington, several good museums and other attractions are located in Corpus Christi.

Our president's wife, **Audrey**, was introduced and our famous "Elf" from Texas, **Elain Pierce**, was asked to stand. This was the first time she had graced our reunion with her lovely presence.

A motion was made to reduce the surplus in our treasury by discounting the price of attending the Corpus Christi reunion and a vote was taken by a show of hands. The motion failed. Many members felt that with the large cost of possible legal action against Hickey on the horizon the timing was not right for such action.

With the slot machines waiting for some action, the meeting was adjourned.

Andy Anderson

of meaningful recreation facilities. The South Pacific was a particularly grueling place to fight a war.

It was a dangerous job for everyone, not just the aircrews, but all of those amazing young men who made up the 43rd. We all equally faced the hazards of the environment, and those and the tight quarters in which we traded blows with the enemy, resulted in the loss of some good kids whose main job was typing or baking or helping the chaplain. The youthful aircrews often had to work way beyond the design capabilities of their planes, flying out of makeshift airstrips, often at night and in bad weather. Some who went out did not return.

It was hard and dangerous, but we made it work. The dedication of our ground crews—I mean all of them—from the clerks and cooks, the mechanics, the engineers and electricians, and the willingness of our aircrews to go right to the edge, made it work. We suffered losses, but we got on with our jobs to a successful conclusion.

We did this all for a reason: to protect the freedom of all to worship and to speak as they chose. We faced tyranny with a united belief in defending freedom. That belief was the core of our cohesiveness as we fought for freedom.

There was a high price: Seven hundred of our comrades who shared in that belief—seven hundred of those amazingly young men—died.

When we finished our job we got on with our lives, and the united voice with which we spoke our common mission scattered into thousand echoes of the sounds of those meaningful years: echoes that as time has passed and more of our comrades have left us, have grown fainter.

But they are still heard. They are still significant. They have joined the echoes of the sounds of brave men who struggled long before us in order to protect freedom. Our echoes blend with the “thunk” of ice floes hitting George Washington’s boat as he crossed the Delaware that fateful night; with those of the “boom” of minutemen muskets as they stopped the Redcoats when they saw the whites of their eyes. They sound with the cries of the American doughboys at Belleau Wood when they charged the Huns in World War One, with the whine of Rickenbacker’s Spad as he was in a snarling dogfight with Fokker triplanes. They are heard with the sounds made by thousands of our countrymen and women who fought who fought with us against oppressors in our war. They combine with the noise of the icy battles in Korea along the Yalu river and at Chosin reservoir.

They are mixed with the throb of chopper blades in Vietnam, and the roar of tanks in Desert Storm, the shriek of Tomcats in Bosnia.

The echoes of the thunder of the war of our time have become a art of a magnificent symphony of sounds of acts of courage: of cries of dedication to freedom by Americans for over two hundred years.

But still, even standing in the light of that long, illustrious record of valor, there are those who hold a desperate resentment of the great social advances in America: whose culture does not allow personal freedom for men and women: who will go to extreme measures to destroy our freedom. Just a bit over a year ago, we were given a loud crashing reminder of that, when fanatic terrorists smashed jetliners into the World Trade Towers and Pentagon. Again, brave men and women rose to the need to protect our free way of life. There were hundreds of heroes on that bitter, shocking day. Some were in uniform; some were not.

The spirit of the many acts of that event were epitomized by that handful of passengers after terrorists had killed the pilots in flight and struggled with and taken control of United’s Flight 93; they charged into the cockpit, struggled with the terrorists and forced the big Boeing into a crash in a Pennsylvania field---a crash in which they all died. The cry of those brave people, “LET’S ROLL!” will echo for years along with the sounds of the many before them who died protecting freedom.

Once again, the worst of humanity was met with the best of humanity and, with great sacrifice, the best won.

The actual sounds of those events are no longer heard; just the echoes—like Hank, just echoes. But they are the echoes of sounds of battles for freedom over centuries. And they reverberate again and again in a harmony of voices with a common theme, freedom is worth fighting for. And, as our seven hundred comrades of sixty years ago historically proved, freedom is worth dying for.

As I wrote this, I searched my mind, and the records of others, for words that adequately recognize their great sacrifice—their devotion to the cause of freedom; words that honor our comrades we have lost since the war. I found them in Abraham Lincoln's address at Gettysburg. I cannot write words with his majesty. But I can recognize the application that his words have to our fallen comrades. It is true, we are but an echo of the power we once were as part of the 43rd. But part of that power is still living. Some of us still live and some of us still can influence others who still live. And that gives us our definition of how we can apply a selection of Lincoln's words.

He said,

It is—for us, the living, — to be dedicated here to the unfinished work for which they fought—have thus far so nobly advanced.

It is rather for us to be dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation—shall have freedom

Roland Fisher 63rd Bomb Squadron 43rd Bomb Group Fifth Air Force

Your editor is pleased to bring you **Roland's** profound words. We thank him for sharing his thoughts with those who could not be at the reunion.

Max Axelsen reports these winners of our golf outing at Las Vegas:

Jacob Timmons: lowest gross and longest drive. (We will adjust his handicap next year to give the older folks a greater opportunity)

Oldest participant: **Cletus Angermier.** A most pleasant person, and we were delighted to see him golfing.

Highest score, but claimed the longest putt: **Robert Yeck.** **Bud Lawson** was a strong contender but no one had a tape measure!

Closest to the hole: **Sam Commons,** with a chip in from around 30 yards!

The bridge tournament, arranged by **Annie Anderson,** had the following winners:

Mary Myles; First place.

Terry Nelson; A close second place.

At the Wednesday night dinner-dance **Sandra Smith** was introduced. She came all the way from West Australia. The "father she never met" **Joseph Thompson,** fought and died with the 43rd. Also at her table was **Dolly Small,** her cousin from Wisconsin. These two met for the first time at our reunion!

A the reunion Squadron meetings the 63rd did not need to elect new directors. **Roland Fisher** serves through 2003 and **Neal Fugate** serves through 2004. The 64th elected **Charles McClenny** to succeed **Joe Jancosko** whose term expired and **Steve Blount** will serve through 2003. The 65th re-elected **Bud Lawson** whose term expired and **Chalky White** will continue to serve through 2004. The 403rd Squadron re-elected **Joe Snyder** and **Bill Solomen** was chosen to complete **Art Durbeck's** term. **Fred McAlister** will continue to represent Headquarters Squadron through 2004.

Directors serve for three years.

When your editor got home from the reunion, I received a letter from **Ed Gammil** from Phoenix. He had just received his year 2002 roster of membership and wished to report his success rate as our membership chairman. He had mailed application for membership to 53 persons and 21 of them have become

members. **This is a 40% success rate!** Ed listed the web site "Search Engines" that he uses to find people. They all begin with <http://www>. so I will omit that part.

state.in.us/ser/iwm_veteran

strangepages.net/search.html

nedsite.nl/search.html

people.yahoo.com

usmilitary.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http://www.usaf%2locator.com/

lawreaearch.com/v2/search/cepeople.htm

bigfoot.com/

allfreeport.com/findpeople.html

you may omit the <http://> but do not omit the **www**. I did it because I did not want my computer to recognize it as a web site. If my computer recognizes a web site, it underlines it and changes the print to a light blue color. This newsletter will be photocopied and light blue does not copy well. Sometimes my computer does things that I don't want it to do! I have not tried these web sites so, good luck!

As of October 11, 2002 your Secretary/Editor has received 82 Assignment Sheets from members who sent approximately \$ 6983.50 to Larry Hickey. Many members and widows attached photocopies of receipts, cancelled checks and letters from Hickey promising results. We did not ask for this but it is very good idea. I will attach an assignment sheet to this newsletter for those who still need one. Several persons have become a member since the July newsletter was mailed and some may know of persons whose address is no longer on our roster but who sent Hickey money. Some sheets have been returned to Roger Kettleson and Bill Wilson when they should have been sent to your secretary at the address on the front of this newsletter.

I wrote in the July newsletter about the B-24D 42-40475 "The Swan" flown by **Captain Robert Coleman** 63rd Squadron CO which went down on Dec 3, 1943 and had been located in New Guinea. I mentioned that the last message from the radioman to their base at Dobadura was "Why aren't the lights on?" This triggered memories for **Isadore B. Miller** of Camden, CT 63rd Squadron Cryptographer who received that message. He wrote, "I recall the B-24 475 The Swan. I gave the radio operator his code information. When they asked 'Why aren't the lights on?' I ran out of the tent and the lights were on. God only knows what went wrong". What went wrong, Isadore, is that the plane was very much off course and slammed into the jungle far north of of Dobadura, where it still lies.

Isadore also writes "It is always a pleasure to receive the 43rd newsletter. Enclosed is the assignment sheet for our book that I sent away for. I cannot believe that so much time has elapsed since I mailed my check in. I was one of the Queen Mary boys. I was caught in the second draft and sent to Bangor Air Base right from Camp Devens. We did not have any basic training and when I was sent home after 33 months one of the questions that they asked me was if I had my 13 weeks of basic training. Being a good soldier, I lied. We still won the war.

Best regards to **Ed Gammil** and keep up the good work. I had a heart attack 15 years ago that left me with only 25% of my heart. I take pride that I was a member of the 63rd.

God Bless America and the 43rd. **Isadore B. Miller**

May God bless you also, Isadore. Don't be surprised if **Sandra Smith** writes to you from Australia and asks if you remember her father, **Joseph Thompson**, who was on The Swan when it went down.

The following report was sent in by **Richard Golze**, 65th Pilot of Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.
(Your editor was skeptical that a B-24 could be used as a glider, but I became convinced)

SILENT FLIGHT

Lt. Dorwin Graham and I graduated from single engine advanced at Eagle Pass, Texas. We went through aerial gunnery and P-40 transition. We both did a superior job in aerial gunnery. I was told I broke a Training Command record in aerial gunnery. We both wanted to fly P-51 fighters. The graduating classes from Central Flying Training transitioned to P-47 fighters. A Captain in the gunnery squadron approached us with an offer to fly P51 fighters if we would teach one class in aerial gunnery. We accepted his verbal offer. A month later we were posted to Lowrey Field in Denver, Colorado for B-24 copilot training.

The training was a dual effort. We flew 10 B-29 flight engineers on training exercises. One of the exercises was engine shut down with prop feathering. All 10 men aboard feathered an engine. They were shown the influence of yaw on the trim of the aircraft. Comparison of inboard to outboard engine out was significant. We then demonstrated yaw with combinations of inboard and outboard engine out. One of the students said he was told "the plane would drop like a rock" if only one engine was in operation. We demonstrated controlled decent when only the #3 engine was used. I then explained the plane was an aerodynamic body which used engines for altitude control. Engines #1, #4, #2, and #3 were feathered in that order. Cowl flaps were closed to keep as much heat in the cylinder heads as possible. When the fourth engine was feathered, a nose down angle was set to maintain control. A couple of shallow turns were made and then the engines were unfeathered in reverse order. They were operated at low power levels until the head temperature was at cruise speed.

The exercise dispelled some of the incorrect rumors about aerodynamics.

I called **Dorwin** to verify this event. His wife said that he had passed on October 30, 2001.

We have a new enthusiastic member, **G. Fred Bostic**, 403rd Engineer, who is now listed in our new roster. He found our reunion notice in the Legion magazine, called **Roger Kettleson**, and wrote a 2 page letter to our treasurer including dues. He was part of the original 43rd, was sent to Sydney and Mareeba, was crew chief for **Capt. Brecht's** B-17 crew, moved on to Port Moresby, then Milne Bay before being sent home in the spring of 1943. He became a Chief Engineer Instructor at Avon Park, Florida. Then he was sent to England and flew on B-17s with the 303rd Bomb Group "Hells Angels" for 30 more missions, mostly as lead crew. After the war he used the GI Bill to complete his education, became an attorney and practiced law in Cobb County, Georgia until retirement in 1990. He wrote, "I am 82 years old and still kicking. We have a 3 piece group and play and sing Country, Blue Grass, and Gospel music and do some comedy work while traveling throughout the Southeast." His group's name is "Joyful Country Boys" Fred, if you will contact **Max Axelsen**, whose address in your roster, perhaps he will allow you to "sing for your supper" at our reunion in Corpus Christi. The distance is not so far from Georgia. Welcome to the 43rd. Look on page 58 and 59 of your roster for other 403rd names. His first name is **George**. In another letter to our Elf, **Elain Pierce**, he told of being wounded on his last mission over Germany. He Also mentions other names that he remembers in addition to **Brecht** he lists **Smith, W. Norman, Atchew, Goldberg, and V.V. Salo**.

Another new associate member is **Roseann "Ronnie" Shipley** who lives in Santa Ana, California. Her address and phone number are now in our new 2002 roster. Your Editor failed to introduce her at the dinner-dance in Las Vegas. She writes:

"My friend, **Sgt. Robert A. (Bob) Curry** was a side gunner on the Honikuu Okole, a 64th B-17 41-9244 that was shot down on the early hours of the morning on 21 May 1943 by a Japanese night fighter. It was thought that **Lt. John S. Rippy** and The Bombardier, **Gordon Manuel**, were the only ones to bail out. However, in a letter dated 27 October, 1945 written by **Fr. Joseph Lamarre**, a Cathrolic missionary to Bob's father, **Mr. Simon P. Curry**, we learned that Bob also bailed out that night, swam 6 miles to shore and say there exhausted only to be captured by the Japanese, taken aboard a destroyer to Rabaul. Fr. Lamarre met up with Bob in August of 1943at the Japanese Naval Prison at Rabaul. He said that Bob was first taken to Kokopo near Rabaul where they continued to torture him and he continued to refuse to give

any information. Bob and 11 other prisoners were taken away on 25 November, 1943. Later Indian prisoners of war told Fr. Lamarre that 12 American airmen had been beheaded on the outskirts of Rabaul.

I was lucky enough to get a copy of "Down Under" and "The Siege of Rabaul" through the inter-library loan system. In "Down Under" on page 57, the bottom photo, 2nd from the left (standing) is Bob. If the 43rd. B.G. has any kind of historical archives, I would just like to be sure Bob's ordeal is included. I would also like to request anyone who has a copy to look at page 57 and perhaps someone out there remembers him and would be willing to share some memories. His nephew and namesake is a good friend of mine and all this information concerning Bob has been given to him. It would be wonderful if he could hear from someone who actually served with Bob.

Many thanks, *Ronnie Shipley* "

Ronnie sent your editor two photos of Honikuu Okole. In the close-up view S/Sgt. **Phil Hoeffecker** is sticking his upper body out of the pilot's window. Phil recently passed away at the age of 91. Painted on the nose of the plane was about 84 bombs indicating the number of missions flown, six ships indicating the number of enemy ships sunk, and 18 "rising sun" flags indicating the number of Japanese planes downed. Also there were nine heart shaped symbols which may indicate the number of wounded crewmen.

There is a lot more to the story. **Gordon Manuel** survived the bail out and wrote a book called, "70,000 to One" about the many months that he hid out with natives on New Britain Island to avoid capture and how he was eventually rescued with the help of an Australian Coast Watcher. Your editor now has that book. **General Kenney** interviewed Manuel after he was brought to Australia. After Bob Curry was murdered and his remains were buried, the Japanese eventually dug up the bodies and cremated the remains to destroy the evidence. **Lt. John Rippy** was **Roger Kettleson's** co-pilot at one time. Manuel saw one other chute floating into the ocean and thought that it was Rippy's but it may have been Curry's. **Major Paul I. Williams** was pilot of the plane. **Michael John Claringbould** has written about the incident in his web site and states that the remains of the rest of the crew were recovered in 1949 by an Aussie recovery expedition and taken to the USA for burial. He also states that the fuselage of the plane now rests on land near the village of Put Put. Our own **Janice Olson** has been there and states that no wreckage exists there. Gordon Manuel stated that the wreckage burned and sank

On page 40 of the book, "Siege of Rabaul" is a photo of Pilot Officer 1/C Shigetoshi Kudo who received a ceremonial sword for shooting down this B-17 and the 65th B-17 Naughty But Nice" of **Jose Holguin** with the night fighter that we called "Irving's". The Japanese called them "Gekkos".

Another new member is now listed in your 2002 roster. He is **Alfred M. Baron**, 63rd Tail Gunner whose wife is **Marjorie**. He was one of the original Queen Mary boys and spent three years at Port Moresby where he became a tail gunner on the B-17 OLD BALDY. His e-mail address is **ammjbaron@juno.com** . He writes that he was given the nickname of "bluey" by his good buddy Ted Eoff of the 63rd.

Still another new member with a delightful story to tell is **William R. Snyder Jr.**, 403rd Gunner. He was another of the men who were sent to get in 10 missions before being allowed to train Aussie crews. He writes, "The crew I was flying with as replacement gunner developed problems on the way to the Celebes. We had turned back but elected to drop bombs on Biak, which was soon scheduled to be invaded. We made a nice slow and low approach and dropped our bombs. Then the sky exploded. We got nailed good! Now we had critical problems; 2 engines out! The pilot told us he was going to try to make it to Wakde where the marines held only half of the island strip. We just barely made it; no second tries; straight in fast and hard, locked brakes and because the strip was short and went sliding toward the Japanese held end of the strip! We had to come down and landing in the water was a 'no-win deal.' We got stopped just before we went off the strip but inside the Japanese held area. The big B-24 sliding down the strip apparently scared the hell out of the Japanese and they broke and ran. Our Marines

followed us down the strip and hit the Japanese before they recovered, saving our butts from being captured after surviving being shot down! We were honored guests of the Marines for three days before the 43rd knew we were alive. The Marines repaired the strip enough for a C-47 to pick us up. I would very much like to thank that pilot of that B-24 but I do not know his name, and all of my records were burned in a fire. Oh yes, I flew on the Biak mission on invasion morning when our Navy fired at us while making our run over the fleet.

I flew on a B-17 supply drop in the mountains above Rabaul. I finished WWII with the 90th Bomb Group, 400th Squadron for 44 more missions."

Welcome to the 43rd, **Ray**, and thank you for your story.

Do not be confused by the name **Lewis B. Whitworth**, 64th Flight Engineer, on our new roster. His son, **Thomas** sent in obituary notices of his death and his name is listed in the Taps section of this newsletter. Lewis was a very prominent citizen of South Florida. But his son wished to receive the newsletter with his father's name on it in New Orleans to honor his father's memory. He sent in Life Membership dues. He writes, in part, "I cannot tell you how many times thru the years of my childhood that my father spoke about his experiences of the war and his life as a member of the 43rd Bomb Group.....I close by relating a story. Not long after my father's death, having returned to my home in New Orleans after making arrangements for my parents home in Florida, I looked up from my front yard one afternoon at a large, low flying aircraft passing overhead. It was clearly a B-24, which my father had described to many times throughout my life. Lakeport Airport (a civil aviation airport in New Orleans) is close by, so the next day I drove over to investigate. Sure enough, it was "The Dragon & His Tail", the restored B-24 that tours the country. I paid the admission price and was able for the first time to stand in, see, smell, and experience the aircraft that my father had talked about throughout all those years of my life. It was a meaningful and maybe, somewhat coincidental experience for me. My thanks to you for updating my father's membership and I look forward to receiving the next newsletter. Good luck to you at your reunion in Las Vegas".

Thomas Whitworth

Still another member is now listed in our new roster. He is **Walter S. Lyon** 65th B-24 pilot. He writes, "I would like to find any and all of my crew." He lists them by MOS: 1051 **Walter V. Terry**, 1034 **Sylvester A. Thozesky**, 1035 **James J. Coletta**, 748 **Willibald J. Wyson**, 757 **Franklin J. Jones**, 612 **Larry L. McGraw**, 611 **Joseph E. Jurban**, 611 **Thomas W. Mayo, Jr.**, 611 **Richard E. Mayo, Jr.**, 611 **Richard E. Dilley**. Walter, if you will sent your list to **Ed Gammil** in Phoenix he will try to locate them and recruit them as our members. Ed is listed in your new roster. It would help if you could tell Ed what state or city they were from I would suggest that you contact **Jim Cherkauer** who also lives in the state of New York and was a pilot in the 65th at the same time as your service. He also writes, "Would like copies of pictures at Clark Field and Ie Shima, will be glad to pay for them. I would like pictures of plane 44-41540."

Also, Walter, you should check out our web site that is listed on page 1 of this newsletter.

Urban C. Nye, 64th Gunner has a new address that is listed in our new roster. He writes, "You people do mighty good work on the bulletin and it's enjoyed. Thanks again for your hard efforts."

Wilbert Householder, 63rd Navigator has a new address but is was sent in too late to make the new roster. It is 6501 May Drive, Zelienople, PA 16063 . He did not mention a new phone.

Belford M. Frisby, 403rd sent this note with his dues. "I received the 43rd newsletter this week. I appreciate very much your time, effort and interest for publishing it. My wife and I will not be able to attend the reunion this year and will build our hopes to attend next year. Our health is fairly good , just getting old. Is it safe to fly? Ha!" **Belford**, Oklahoma is so close to Corpus Christi! If you are afraid to fly, perhaps **Max Axelsen** will send a limo for you!

With his dues **Tom Casey**, 63rd Navigator, sent this letter to **Bill Wilson**. "May I impose on your a bit. Someone in the 63rd contacted me several months ago. The gist of the letter was to inform me that the fellow in Australia who agreed to do a book on the 43rd seemed to be a dud. He wanted to do something similar with regard to the 63rd Squadron. In he course of time elapsed, I have lost his name. He was in the 63rd , in what capacity , I don't know. I believe I am a year or two behind in my dues, and enclosed if a check to cover. I will appreciate anything you can do in this regard." Tom, your Secretary/Editor will forward your lengthy and interesting report to **Steve Perrone** in New Jersey. His address in your 2002 roster. The "dud" you spoke about is not in Australia. He is in Colorado! But Bruce Hoy, in Australia, once agreed to co-author what some call "the book that will never be written." Hoy did do a lot of the research for the book. His address is also in your roster.

The **INTERNATIONAL B-24 CLUB** now has a new year 2003 calendar. It includes some color photos, black and white photos, historical descriptions and dates. It retails for \$10 plus \$ 2.50 for shipping. If you order it and mention the 43rd. Bomb Group they will reimburse the 43rd 50 cents for every calendar sold. The address is Attention; **George Welch**, International B-24 Club, 1672 Main St., Suite E, PMB 124, Ramona, CA 92065. Phone (760) 788-3624 FAX (760) 789-9011. Your editor finds their newsletter very interesting. There have been articles in it written by our members. Make checks payable to B-24 Liberator Club.

When your editor got home from the reunion I received a nice e-mail from **Sam Commons** praising the reunion. He stated that "the reunion was well run and the hotel was just right." He also recalled some funny incidents that happened while his 65th Squadron was training Aussie flight crews to fly B-24s. He writes, "I trained several men to perform the various duties of flight engineer. While flying with us on one mission one of their bombs hung up and the engineer manually triggered the top rack 1000 lb. bomb and it bounced off the bottom bomb and took out the bomb bay door on that section. Upon landing the Aussie engineer stated, 'I say, that was bloody stupid of me!'

"While they were in our squadron they had to do squadron duties. One daily job was to go to the latrine, lift the lids and pour kerosene in to burn off the waste, paper and flies. One day we watched from our tent as one Aussie chap with a beautiful full red beard performed this duty. Unbeknown to us, he was slopping 100 octane gasoline into the openings and when he lit the match we heard an explosion and the hopper lids flew 20 feet into the air! The once beautiful red beard was a singed mat of paper and "other stuff." As we went to his rescue, he commented, 'I just lit the match and the shit and paper flew!' Other than his beard and pride he escaped injury."

Sam also provided a source for replacement wings, medals, patches and ribbons. He said several persons asked about this at our reunion. He has gotten these for members of his VFW post and his golf club. The address is: Medals of America , 114 Southchase Blvd. , Fountain Inn, SC 296644. (986) 862-6425. Their web site is www.usmedals.com and a catalog can be obtained by calling (800) 308-0849.

Sam also inquired about a list of reunion sites. Since **Jim Cherkauer** provided me with this, here it is.

1. 1981 San Antonio, Texas
2. 1982 Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
3. 1983 Long Beach, California
4. 1984 Washington, DC
5. 1985 Omaha, Nebraska
6. 1986 San Antonio, Texas
7. 1987 Bossier City , Louisiana
8. 1988 Dayton, Ohio
9. 1989 Colorado Springs, Colorado
10. 1990 St. Louis, Missouri
11. 1991 Norfolk, Virginia
12. 1992 Anaheim, California

Does this list bring back memories??
Of course don't forget Corpus Christi in 2003!!

The dates; Monday October 6 to Monday
October 13
We will be at the Omni Hotel

13. 1993 Omaha, Nebraska
14. 1994 San Antonio, Texas
15. 1995 Cheyenne, Wyoming
16. 1996 Kissimmee, Florida
17. 1997 Albuquerque, New Mexico
18. 1998 Springfield, Massachusetts
19. 1999 Tucson, Arizona
20. 2000 San Antonio, Texas
21. 2001 Nashville, Tennessee
22. 2002 Las Vegas, Nevada

The following information is from Stephen Perrone, 63rd Bombardier and describes a book that he is compiling entitled "World War II B-24 Snoopers"

"This is the story of the World War II B-24 aircraft Snoopers squadrons- low level anti-shipping black painted night bombers in the Pacific Theater. After the Midway and Coral Sea air-sea battle losses, the Japanese, in order to supply and strengthen the hundreds of islands they occupied after December 7, 1941, decided to use small groups or single ships and barges under the cover of darkness, moving among the clusters of islands or in the open ocean in inclement weather to avoid being intercepted by American Aircraft.

The Snoopers came into being because in May 30, Commanding General Army Air Forces, Hap Arnold ordered the Director of Technical Services to establish the Sea Search Attack Development Unit, with headquarters at Langley Field, Virginia. This group was originally formed to develop tactics and techniques of anti-submarine warfare, but development of the SCR-717B Long Range Search Radar and the super-secret CSR-729 Low Altitude (LAB) Radar Bombsight mounted in the ASV Radar Equipped B-24 airplane gave birth to the Snoopers.

On the night of August 27-28, 1943, and continuing nightly until the end of the war, two B-24 Heavy Bombardment Squadrons sank hundreds of thousand tons of Japanese warships, troop and supply ships, bombing with precision at an altitude of 1000 to 1500 feet in fair weather or foul. The two squadrons were the 868th Bombardment Squadrons of the 13th Air Force and the 63rd Squadron of the 5th Air Force. This story is told by men of the crews who flew these missions that ranged over 1500 miles of the Pacific on each flight search, average mission length 13 hours. Each plane flew alone-take off time at dusk, return the next morning with luck and acquired skills.

The audience for this book includes historians, World War II enthusiasts, present day Air Force members and the general public. Because of the security classifications of the applications used in this type of anti-ship warfare, the information in the Air Force archives was difficult to find and categorize: therefore, the records and exploits of the Snoopers squadrons were covered piecemeal in page or two in several wartime histories of that area and time. It was almost a forgotten adventure of the Pacific war.

The author-editor of this book is a former member of a World War II snooper aircrew and he flew 37 combat missions totaling 495 hours, 10 minutes. (These missions are described by members of the crew in one of the chapters)"

Additional information can be obtained from Steve Perrone at the address and phone in your newsletter

Because of the Hickey problem, your editor will no longer purchase books before they are published.

A note arrived from **Folmer J. Sogaard** of Centralia, Washington with his dues. He writes, "Hope to make the reunion this year. The wife can hardly get around with two hip replacements. I'm putting on the years, too.....but still fit!!"

Marjorie Benedetti, widow of **Eugene "Dutch" Benedetti** whose passing is reported in this newsletter, would like to know the whereabouts of **J.T. Britton** who once lived in Albuquerque. J.T. had flown together with Dutch in New Guinea and had promised to come and visit them, but his address is no longer

in the roster and she has lost touch with him. Both were pilots in our 65th Squadron. She had sent in a lengthy obituary and your editor phoned her to say I would try to find out where J. T. lives. **Benedetti** was very remarkable man in many ways. He was trained as a fighter pilot but wound up flying B-17s. He obtained a bachelor's degree from UCLA and a doctorate from USC. He taught at Roseville High School in northern California, became an attorney, then a Law Professor at Cal State University at Los Angeles. He was honored as "Outstanding Professor" and "Outstanding Professor at CSULA" Noted Anthropologist, Margaret Mead, presented a citation for "Exceptional Teaching Ability and Unusually Competent Performance" to Dutch. He was the author of several law books. At the age of 67, he took up the sport of long distance running. He ran more than 55 marathons (26 miles each) from the age of 68 until 80. He often ran with his daughter, Janis, who introduced him to the sport. His last race was the Los Angeles Marathon after being diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. One would expect that a man who had accomplished all of these things to have no physical handicaps. Not so!! **Benedetti** had an eye shot out by a Japanese Zero pilot while in New Guinea!

A letter and dues check arrived from **Joe C. Harvey**. 403rd Gunner, from Holicong, PA. He writes, in part, "Please excuse the writing but I have arthritis in both of my hands and the pen will not write what I want it to write. Reading the newsletter, I guess we are still waiting for the book. A few years back, I saw in the newsletter where Larry Hickey wanted anyone with photos of our planes to send him the pictures and he would see if they could be used. A few years later I received my photos back and a letter stating that he could use some of them. So far, nothing! Oh well, maybe sometime.

Yours truly, **Joe Harvey** "Cocktail Hour" nose gunner, 403rd Sq.

Joe, your editor also flew in 44- 40428, "Cocktail Hour."

Our Treasurer, **Bill Wilson** is now a hero in the Philippines! He received the following letter from **Tom Fitzgerald** whose address is in our newsletter. The letter was dated Aug 27, '02

"Dear Bill, The biggest THANK YOU to you and the 43rd. The Stars and Stripes arrived yesterday. So we got Rocket mail both ways...no snail mail.

Our post of the Philippine Veterans Association will think I work magic when I hand in one of your flags at our meeting on Sept. 7th. I will retain one flag for safe keeping with my Australian flag and hope to have your flag set up with a 'carry pole' for our march in November. Two days before the flags arrived they came into my mind. So there is definitely ESP or in Australia years ago we called it "Bush Telegraph."

"I am still working on a project for **Joe Snyder**, who is trying for further information for me to follow up. From your April newsletter I wrote to **Michael Claringbold** in Canberra for costs etc, on his book "The Forgotten Fifth". Mike sent me the book on credit plus info on another book "Forty of the Fifth", so I sent him a cheque (check in US) from my OZ bank to cover both books.

By the way, our 6 B-24 crews with HBRTU attached to the 43rd's 65th Sq. at Nadzab plus other RAAF crews that went through CRTC then HBRTU were officially signed into the USAAF, possibly the 43rd's 65th. It was only for one or two hours. We did not take our Australian leather wool lined flying boots with us and just had our black hobnailed work boots. On the first day at Nadzab, we went to look over the B-24s and the US ground crews said, 'You are not getting on our aircraft wearing those, as one spark will send the whole lot up'. After a quick conference with our skippers, and the 65th, we were all signed up into the 43rd so that we could be issued those beautiful suede leather, rubber soled boots. Then we were discharged from the 5th USAAF. I know it was only a 2 hour technicality, but "official is official".

While being issued the boots, I noticed a table stacked with short peak and long peak cloth caps. I asked, and was told to take one. It was good as with our RAAF NCO's Forage Caps they kept slipping down one side of the head when wearing intercom head phones. Later at 24th Sq. Fenton, my cap was stolen and in 1990 I saw a photo of my best mate's crew and his skipper was wearing my cap! Soon after, that crew

was going out on an armed reconnaissance mission with forward bomb bay fuel tanks and bombs and received a direct hit from heavy flack and 'went in' in and instant. I no longer regret the loss of that cap!

So, once again Bill, the biggest THANK YOU for answering my call for HELP.

Best regards, *Tom Fitzgerald*"

Joe Snyder, 403rd Gunner, is seeking help from **Tom Fitzgerald** to acquire a photo and a souvenir piece of metal from the 403rd B-24L 44-41672 which crashed into a mountain on Leyte. Island while on a flight from Clark Field to Tacloban on March 9, 1945. Since the flight was not a combat mission the gunners and bombardier were not aboard the plane.

The crew consisted of:	2 nd Lt. Lt. Paul W. Wittenberger	pilot
	2 nd Lt. Clarence Miller	co-pilot
	2 nd Lt. Willis Bundy	navigator
	T/Sgt Dale Swonger	engineer
	T/Sgt Sarafin Urbanski	radioman

Joe sent your editor a copy of an e-mail from Wiliam R. Gadrouy, Deputy Director, Casualty Data of Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii. The crash site was not located until September. 1952 and the remains are interred in Grave 46, Section 84, Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, St. Louis, MO. The crash site was a thick rainforest jungle on a mountain 18 miles Northwest of the town of Patoc some 24 miles off of the plane's intended course.

Tom has two Filipinos who are trying to help him but they report that the National Peoples Army, a resistance group, who oppose the Philippine Army now occupy the area and will not let anyone into the area. But Tom has not given up and still hopes to pay a small "consideration" to the NPA to allow his Filipino friends into the area to get a souvenir and photo.

Joe sent me a copy of a three page letter from Tom again praising **Bill Wilson** for sending the US flag which is to be used in a parade on their Veterans Day, November 11. Tom was astonished that the three flags, USA, Australia and Philippines, had never been paraded together in Dolores and possibly on the whole island of Samar. He reminded the Filipinos of who was responsible for their freedom from Japanese rule!

Tom, an elderly friend of mine and his sister was a visitor to your island in 2001 to attend a celebration at the town of Balangiga, Samar. The celebration was the 100th anniversary of a famous battle in the Spanish American War, which was won by the Americans and Filipinos. All of my friends life he had heard from his father about that battle in which his father participated. I asked him how he got there and he stated that he flew to Tacloban, rented a car and drove to Samar. I said, "Do you mean to say that there is a bridge now!" He told me that the residents of that town would like to have their bells returned. It seems that the American troops considered their church bells, made in Spain, to be "spoils of war" and removed them. One bell is reported to be with an American infantry division in Korea and the other three are at Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne, Wyoming. They are not likely to be returned because the weight of the bells is enormous.

Victoria Compton, daughter of **Erwin "Texas" Compton**, 403rd pilot is now and Associate Member of the 43rd. She attended our reunion from her home in Friday Harbor, WA...a most beautiful place. She gave her e-mail address as victoria@rockisland.com. If you knew her father I am sure that she would like to hear from you. Her address is now in our new roster.

After the reunion I had a note from **George O. Anderson**, 403rd pilot, and his wife, **Jean**. He writes, "Sorry to have missed the last two reunions! Best laid plans always seem to go astray. Had a long call from **Bernie Lee** last nite. It was good to hear hat she was OK but sad to hear that **Art Drubeck** had died.

He was a fine fellow and will be missed. Will try to make next year's reunion in Texas. Who knows what the future holds for any of us. We miss all of our old friends from the 43rd and wish them all the best."

In the last newsletter I wrote about **Bob Hope** and asked what happened to the 64th B-24 "**Bobs Hope**." This triggered the memory of **Joseph A. Greenwell** in Texas and he wrote that he was in the hospital in New Guinea and at MacArthur's HQ in Brisbane and returned to Nadzab one day too late to catch the Bob Hope show. He described the plane as "factory fresh, no paint... it shined like a diamond. It had 'Bobs Hope' painted on the right side and below the co-pilot's window was a circle with an Indian riding a bomb. I was told that it was lost on its first mission. I have photos of Frances Langford, whose head is done in large braids on each shoulder and she is dressed in a halter top. With her is Jerry Colona, Bob Hope and **Col. Hawthorne**. By the way, **Hickey** still has my photo album after ten years."...

Elmer Hansen, 63rd pilot of Thorndale, TX sent his dues to me instead of Bill Wilson but that gave me a chance to help the **Elf** get his address updated and his first name spelled correctly.

Clinton Lockamy, 64th Navigator also sent his dues to me also, and writes, "Thank you for your service to the association and I hope to meet you in person at a future reunion." Clinton, it is not far from Houston to Corpus Christi. Us 64th men must stick together!

Also it was nice to hear from **Vivian Pflueger**, widow of **Herbert**, 63rd Bombardier. We have her first name spelled wrong in our new roster. Vivian, dues for widows are not required.

Nick Aribinko sent your officers an e-mail from Florida concerning the new 2002 roster that reads, "Congratulations to one and all for a superior publication. Professionally laid out, easy to read (Without Using the Hubble Telescope) and printed on Class A parchment. I salute you one and all) Cheers, **Nick Arabinko**

Nick, of course we will take the credit, but if you will look on the Table of Contents page at the bottom, you will read, "Created by the 43rd Bomb Group Elf". Now you know who did the work!

We should present **Elain Pierce** at Snyder, Texas, with a Distinguished Service Medal and an Oak Leaf Cluster for each newsletter she has sent out!

Taps

Helen Jancosko, wife of Joe Jancocko 64th Squadron. Reported by Emil Lange.

Joe and Helen have been coming to our reunions since the 43d Association has been in existence. Joe was a member of your Secretary/Editor's B-24 crew. Helen will be missed. I will treasure a photo that I took of her smiling face at the Tuscon reunion.

Since this newsletter lists all persons list all persons who passed on just before and during the reunion there are no other names to report.

Quarterly Humor

Subject: Listen, listen, listen. "To be six again."

A man asked his wife what she'd like for her birthday. "I'd love to be six again," she replied. On the morning of her birthday, he got her up bright and early and off they went to a local theme park. What a

day! He put her on every ride in the park: the Death Slide, the Screaming Loop, the Wall of Fear, everything there was! Wow! Five hours later she staggered out of the theme park, her head reeling and her stomach upside down. Right to a McDonalds they went, where her husband ordered a Big Mac along with extra fries and a refreshing chocolate shake. Then it was off to a movie- the latest epic, and hot dogs, and popcorn, Pepsi Cola and M&Ms. What a fabulous adventure! Finally she wobbled home with her husband and collapsed into bed. He leaned over and lovingly asked, "Well, dear, what was it like being six again?" One eye opened, "You idiot, I meant my dress size." The moral of this story: Even when a man is listening, He's still gonna get it wrong!

ETERNAL TRUTHS

Going to church does not make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.

If you look like your passport picture, you probably need the trip.

A balanced diet is a cookie in each hand.

Learn from the mistakes of others. You can't live long enough to make them all yourself.

I love cooking with wine. Sometimes I even put it in the food.

Middle age is when broadness of mind and narrowness of waist change places.

Bills travel through the mail at twice the speed of checks.

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The Newsletter is published 4 times each year: **January, April, July and October**. It is written in the previous month. If you have items for the Newsletter, please have them in the Editor's hands no later than The 15<sup>th</sup> of the month before publication. **Please write legibly and avoid sending material at the last moment, if possible.**

**Dues are \$15 per year or \$100 for life.** Make the check out of **43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group Association** and mail to **Bill Wilson, Treasurer** or **Howard "Andy Anderson, Secretary.** Check the mailing label on your envelope for this edition to find out you 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). E-mail is the referred method of communication, but please do not send "attachments" created by someone else. I will not open such attachments for fear of viruses.

The Post Office Department will not forward the Newsletter. If you change your address or phone number, please send a notice to **Bill Wilson, Treasurer** as soon as possible.



## ASSIGNMENT

I hereby assign to the 43rd Bomb Group Association Inc., my claim against Lawrence J. Hickey and the International Research & Publishing Corporation for reimbursement and redress for failure to publish and provide me with \_\_\_\_\_ copies of the history of the 43rd Bomb Group during World War II.

On or about \_\_\_\_\_, I paid to Lawrence J. Hickey or the International Research & Publishing Corporation, the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ copies of the history scheduled for imminent publication.

After a failure to meet the promised date for delivery, Lawrence J. Hickey and the International Research & Publishing Corporation made a series of promises to me and the 43rd Bomb Group Association that publication was in the immediate future. These broken promises have continued to be reiterated until the present date, and the product has not yet been delivered.

I further authorize the 43rd Bomb Group Association to act in my behalf to secure immediate publication and delivery of the Group History, which is to be published by the International Research & Publishing Corporation under the title of "Ken's Men against the Empire." I also authorize the 43rd Bomb Group Association to act in my behalf to obtain redress for my losses, both financial and personal, in the case that the history is not published and delivered to me expeditiously.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ 2002

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_