



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

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*****FROM ROGER KETTLESON, PRESIDENT*****

You will be receiving this newsletter after the Christmas holiday season, but this a time of the year that we reflect on the blessings we have enjoyed. There are those who have overcome personal crises, and are stronger in will and spirit, and hope for a brighter future. We are indeed fortunate for the country we live in and the freedoms that we enjoy. We need to appreciate the efforts our forefathers and the leaders of our nation have made to sustain our way of life. We share in a generous bounty and we all need to be thankful.

Virginia Durbeck informed us of the passing of Arthur in Sept. and Fran Osborn gave us the sad news that Max left this earth on 17 Nov.2002. These were two great fellows who served as Directors in their respective squadrons. Art in the 403rd, and Max in the 65th who served as a past president of the Bomb Group and hosted a great reunion in Cheyenne. We need not only to recall their contributions to the 43rd Bomb Group but the support that both Virginia and Fran gave to their respective husbands. They each suffer a great loss—may they find peace and comfort in their memories of their men of the "Greatest Generation.

James Martin, 63rd Squadron sent a check for \$45 to cover membership dues. I forwarded it to Treasurer Bill Wilson to figure out if James was catching up on past yearly dues or projecting a couple of years ahead. Thanks, James.

An E-mail came from Victoria Phillips, daughter of Vernon Phillips, 63rd Squadron with the news that her father passed away in January of 2000. She had assembled some photos and memorabilia and didn't want them destroyed. She was advised to forward them to Eldon "Bud" Lawson, our historian. Thank you, Victoria.

Ted Munselle advised me that his father, George Munselle, 403rd Squadron, passed away Oct. 7, 2002. He said his father was 88 years old, enjoyed his membership in the 43rd and always looked forward to the reunions. Ted, your dad had a good long life, May your memories of him give you comfort.

Bob Augustine, 64th Squadron sent a notice to advise members his phone number has been changed to 574-342-8122. He is 85, and still on the go. Keep it up, Bob.

For those who knew of our house fire the last of July, the rebuilding process is proceeding somewhat slower than we hoped—but the new roof is on, the interior walls and insulation are in place, the exterior siding, cupboards and flooring have been selected and we are hoping to move back home Feb. 1, 2003. In the meantime, our rental house and rental furniture are serving us well, so life is not so bad after all.

I urge the membership to include a visit to Corpus Christi, Texas in October when you plan your travels for 2003. **Max Axelsen** has organized a great program.

We wish each of you a great 2003. **Roger Kettleson**

By Andy Anderson, Editor

I regret that I sometimes pass along misinformation. I reported in the July Newsletter that the 63rd Squadron B-24D 42-40475 *The Swan* flown by Capt. **Robert Coleman** had been located by **John Douglas**, Field Officer for **Michael John Claringbold** of Aerothentic Publications. It is true that some natives found the crash site more than two years ago in the dense jungle of New Guinea but John Douglas reports in an e-mail to **Sandra Smith** that he has not yet been to the crash site but that natives from at least two villages have been there. Douglas lives at Port Moresby. The Central Identification Laboratory (CILHI) in Hawaii, who is responsible for recovering the remains of the eleven crewmen has flown over the area in a helicopter, but they have not yet located the wreck or visited the site although their teams continue their search. It seems that the local villagers are interested more in monetary reward than in helping the authorities find the crash site. It is known that the site is the correct B-24 because one villager still has a “dog tag” belonging to one of the crewmen who was known to be on the plane. Sandra is interested in providing DNA requested by CILHI to help in separating the remains. She has been communicating with **William Gadoury** of CILHI who has advised her that her own DNA will not be helpful since DNA passed from fathers to children is not “long lasting” while DNA passed by females is useful even after many generations, so long as it is passed through female family members; grand-mothers, mothers, aunts, sisters, daughters, nieces, etc. So, **Sandra Smith**, who is the daughter of **Joseph Thompson**, one of the crewmen on this B-24 has now found a DNA donor who is a descendent of Elizabeth Miller, Joseph’s mother who once lived in Mankato, MN.

We have a new member, **Larry L. McGraw** of 33124 Highway 19, Kimberly, Oregon 97848. He was a member of **Walter Lyon’s** 65th Squadron B-24 crew that got in 23 missions near the end of the war. He sent your editor a newspaper article that included a letter from Lyon, a photograph of their B-24 crew, and a story of bombing a Japanese aircraft carrier at Kuri Harbor late in the war. The crew all received air medals for hitting the carrier. **Lyon** went on to participate in the Korean War by surviving 27 more missions in B-29s and now lives in Branchport, NY. He asked for help in finding **McGraw** in the October newsletter.

James H. Brown, 65th Crew Chief sent in a new address after the 2002 roster was published. He is now at 9956 Old Erie Pike, Clearfield, PA 16830. He did not mention a new phone number.

Ernest N. Morgan of Albuquerque sent a letter with his dues asking to be listed as a pilot in the 403rd Squadron. His request was forwarded to Texas where the roster records are kept. He also wrote, “As I read the October newsletter and the 2002 roster, my heart aches. These people are part of my past, and the list changes and shortens with each issue. We are being replaced by survivors, and the people that I knew are disappearing into the past. **Art Dubeck**, **Henry Waugh**, **Gilbert Sena**, and **Harold Smith** were friends of mine. Somehow, I feel they will always be a part of the 43rd and all the others who dared so much and worked so hard to make our efforts so successful. Even if they are not still here. Even if they fail to pay dues to keep them on the roster, and you do not list them anymore. **They will be remembered!**”

Charles Parker, Crew Chief 63rd Squadron of Marion, NC sent this note with his dues, "Sorry we missed the last reunion due of sickness.. Tell all the guys in the 63rd hello. I am still stump jumping in the Blue Ridge Mountains of NC. We hope to get to the next reunion.

The old rebel of the South, Charlie Parker"

The subject of the B-24 *Bob's Hope* has come up again. In the July newsletter I asked what had happened to the plane. In the October newsletter **Joseph Greenwell** described the plane and stated that he had heard that it went down on its first mission. Now, **Helmer Johnson** 64th pilot from Fort Worth has sent proof that it was still flying in 1945 from Clark Field in the Philippines. He sent me a color video tape of his crew flying the plane on a mission to Formosa (now Taiwan). The film shows anti-aircraft shells bursting around the plane and the crew inspecting the plane for holes after the mission. The film also shows brief glimpses of other planes such as *Million \$ Baby* and other activities. I plan to bring the tape to the Corpus Christi reunion and show it in our meeting room. Since **Greenwell** described the 64th Squadron emblem that was painted below the co-pilot's window, those comments triggered the memory of **William Jobe**, 64th radioman from Bremerton, WA, who went to his diary and found this entry for 22 May 1944. "Our new squadron insignia was finished and hung over the road. It shows an Indian looking through a telescope sitting on a bomb going down. At the top is '64th Bomb Squadron:' underneath the picture is 'Pride of the Air Force'." The road that **Bill** refers to was at Nadzab, New Guinea.

Helmer Johnson also sent me a photo of Hope's USO entertainment crew sitting beside *Bob's Hope* and another photo of the nose art on the 64th Squadron plane *Cocktail Hour*. I am going to copy them in this newsletter on a page that has no printing on the reverse side. The photos are tiny, so I will enlarge them a bit in my scanner and darken them slightly. If successful, I will invite more photos to be sent to me.

The following report is from the 43rd Bomb Group's January, 1945 casualty list and was probably written by **Capt. B. C. Wren**, Statistical Control Officer.

"LOST- VALUABLES

On January 9th., the 63rd Squadron lost its commanding officer, five other officers, and eight enlisted men in a fatal crack-up at Owi Island. The Squadron C.O. was bringing up the remnants of the rear echelon from Owi to Leyte. Most of these men had never seen the Philippines and were fated not to. These men were not expendable! Their worth to their squadron was beyond estimation. Their loss is regretted by many.

The plane took off at 0100, became airborne momentarily, faltered, and crashed 100 yards from the northeast end of the runway, and then burned. No one survived. Possible causes of the accident are only conjecture.

THOSE LOST INCLUDE

Major Merrill F. Sargent, 27, Squadron Commander
Captain Evan H. Chesser, 23, Squadron Adjutant
2nd. Lt. Charles M. Thompson, 22, Copilot
2nd. Lt. Ernest M. Hixon, 27, Passenger
2nd. Lt. Theodore T. Huffman, 24, Co-pilot
2nd. Lt. Thomas H. Rorke, 25, Navigator
T/Sgt. Isaac B. MacDonald, 33, Radar Operator
T/Sgt. Robert J.W. Fagan, 20, Aerial Engineer
T/Sgt. Garvin G. McKanly, 23, Radio Operator
T/Sgt. Benjamin O. Spencer, 25, Radio Operator
S/Sgt. Adam G. Bohnert, 27, Asst. Aerial Engineer
Sgt. Kermit C. Crabtree, 24, Armorer Gunner
Sgt. Charles E. Ragsdale, 24, Armorer Gunner
Sgt. James. J. Hughes, 21, Armorer Gunner "

We have another new member whose name is **Rudolph P. Arndt** , 1579 Kenard St. NW, Salem , OR 97304-2649. His e-mail address is **RPArndt@webtv.net** . He served with the **Ferret Detachment**, Sec. 22 GHQ that was attached to the 43rd. Group 63rd Sq. from Sept. 1, 1944 to Jan 7, 1945. He flew 12 missions in two very special B-24s manned, flown and maintained by the 63rd Squadron. All of his missions with the 63rd were from Owi Island in B-24s #991 ***Duchess of Paducah*** and # 045 ***Atom Smasher***. These missions were very long combat missions over enemy territory but no bombs were carried. Instead the front 2/3 of the bomb bay was filled with extra gas tanks and the rear 1/3 was a special radio room with UHF receivers and a 5in. oscilloscope to locate enemy radar sites and map them. Some of the 63rd pilots that he flew with were **Lt. Col. Pettus, Lt. Wilson, Lt. Miller, Lt. Pothoff, Lt. Clatsworthy, Lt. Church, Lt. Zimmerman, Lt. Walters, Lt. Hackler, Lt. Butts, and Capt. Welch.** **Rudolph** moved up to Leyte with the 63rd on **January 10, 1945**. He states, "I will be forever grateful to the Operations fellows of the squadron as I offered to go up on the ill-fated flight the night before, but they had their log filled out and did not want to bother to add me to it !! Providence does help us out at times." (See the list of names on the reverse page)

The crew of **Charles Rauch**, our Vice President, went overseas as a Ferret Crew but soon switched to bomb carrying duties, I believe. **Rudolph** also sent several photos of B-24s which are clear enough to put in a future newsletter. **Rudolph**, the **Lt. Wilson**, above, that you flew with was **not** our treasurer.

With his dues **Dwane Reed** 63rd Squadron of Pasadena Texas sent this letter, " I enjoy the newsletter very much. I'm still trying to get in touch with some of our crew members. Our pilot, **Howard Booth**, saw my name in the newsletter and he contacted me. **Donald McDonald** was our radioman. I have been in contact with him but none of the rest. Thanks for the newsletter, Yours truly, **Dwane Reed.**"

This note came to our Treasurer, **Bill Wilson** , from **Romeo E. Furio**, 65th Maint. Man who lives in Monessen, PA. " I joined the 65th at Mareeba....then on to Port Moresby, Dobadura, Nadzab, Owi , Leyte, Luzon, and Ie Shima....then went home after the war was over. My only living buddy is **Gene Murari**. Hi and health and happiness to all"

Wow!, ..**Romeo**, ...can anyone claim to have served at more bases overseas than you? I counted eight! **Murari** is still on our roster. He lives in St. Charles, MO.

This note came to Bill Wilson from **Howard Rogers**, 64th Radioman in Indiana. "Hey, Bill, If we don't get this thing settled soon I'm going to forget I was in the 43rd and the South Pacific. Most everything seems to be wearing out but so far my mind is OK. Ha! You guys are doing a great job, keep the memories rolling. I remember some great times in Australia on R & R. Wow! Love and kisses from me and the missus!" Your editor is also a **Howard**, and was also a 64th Radioman. Some of your comments puzzle me but perhaps we can blame it on listening to too much Morse code!

Jesse Fulton, 64th Bombardier from Tennessee sent this note with his dues. "Sorry for not making the Vegas reunion. I will work on the next one. My wife, **Dorothy**, died May 3, 2002. I have been busy trying to pay the bills, learning how to cook and do the chores. Enclosed is my 2003 dues. Thanks." Jessie, our sincere sympathy to you on the loss of Dorothy.

With his dues **James Warren**, 65th Flight Engineer, sent a lengthy letter to Bill Wilson. I would like to quote much of it. He wrote, "I read with much interest the information about **Major P.I. William's** last mission. He was my pilot on my first mission, with **Lt. Joseph Hensler** as co-pilot in his last check out ride before he got his first crew. I volunteered to fly combat as an Engineer, with my first mission being on February 23, 1943, to Rabaul and my last mission on October 23, 1943 being on a B-24 on the first mission to eradicate Rabaul. My comments are taken from 'my memoirs' which I had written many years ago. We attacked Rabaul as a single plane and Capt. Williams had to throw the plane all-out power dive

to avoid intense anti-aircraft fire. The Bombardier salvoed eight five hundred bombs at mast height on a cruiser. A P-38 photo recon plane mapped the entire area at daylight, but there was no cruiser to be found. Our tail gunner, **Arthur Mirachi**, whose jackets on his tail guns had been hit, bailed out over the harbor. We later learned from **Ed Troccia**, who was in intelligence, that a coast watcher reported that Mirachi had been taken aboard a Jap destroyer, interrogated, taken up on deck and executed. A copy of the interrogation was found on a Jap Intelligence officer in New Guinea some time later. **Ed Troccia** furnished me with an English translation of the interrogation.

One night a short time after that, the enlisted men in our crew were sitting on their bunks at 7 mile strip, discussing whether they would bail out over Rabaul if our plane was shot down, or whether they would 'ride it down'. Someone mentioned that our intelligence had told us that the Japs had Korean torture experts at Rabaul, and 'if they ever got their hands on you, you would wish you were dead'.

The only person who had a firm opinion was our new tail gunner. He firmly stated that he would never bail out. We turned off the single light bulb for our tent, and in a very short time the tail gunner had fallen asleep. Then he shouted 'Bail out! Bail out!' and hurled himself off his cot and through the mosquito netting, turning the cot over and landing on his hands and knees on the soft dust of our tent floor. We turned on the light and he looked up at us with a very sheepish grin. From that time on he was known as 'Bail-out Charlie.' His actions convinced me that there are no fatalists when the chips are down, and that the instinct for survival will prevail.

When we heard that Captain Williams had been shot down our waist gunner, **Harry Ellis**, and I went to see our C.O. and asked whether he would recommend that Captain Williams should get a medal for his attack on Jap shipping on our first mission. The C.O., to our disappointment, said 'No- he was just doing his job.'

During the period we were flying frequent missions against Rabaul, one of the gunners on another crew flew a mission with his ears and sinus passages clogged. The pilot had to dive to avoid flack, and both eardrums of that gunner were ruptured, threatening the mission and rendering him unfit for further flying. Our Flight Surgeon, **Doc Gusack**, called a mandatory meeting of all flight personnel, and said that he would court martial any airman who flew with clogged ears. Soon afterwards, he grounded me temporarily because I had clogged ears. On the next mission, our crew with a temporary engineer was hit by the cannon fire of an Irving as they approached Rabaul. Both left engines were literally shot out, the third engine soon quit, and massive damage was done to the left wing and fuselage of the plane. They jettisoned everything they could and limped back on 1 ½ engines to a crash landing in New Guinea. **Joe Hensler** told me that they could not maintain altitude and that the only thing that saved them was that they were at about 8,000 feet when they were hit, so they gradually lost altitude until they landed. They were the only crew I ever heard of that survived an attack by the Irvings, with their four twenty millimeter cannons firing forward."

By **Andy Anderson**: James, this is what the 43rd reported on their casualty list about **Pfc. Arthur Mirarchi** of 1002 Avery Ave, NY City: "On the early morning of Feb. 23, 1943, Pfc Mirarchi was a member of a B-17 on a bombing mission over Rabaul Harbor, New Britain. The aircraft was caught in enemy searchlights and was put into a steep dive in an effort to evade them. **Pfc. Mararchi** evidently believed (from his position as tail gunner) that the plane was going to crash and bailed out with his parachute. He possibly maybe a prisoner of war. The aircraft returned safely."

Thanks for your letter, James.

I asked **Lyle Heineke**, 64th B-24 gunner, to tell me how he got the nickname "**Deadeye Heineke**" by shooting his own plane! I knew some of the story because I was present at Clark Field on Luzon when the incident happened. Part of this story is from "TS", a mimeographed newsletter that the 43rd issued while at Clark Field with added comments from Lyle. The date was May 6, 1945.

"**64th Plane Makes a Spectacular Landing**. The boys on the line were treated to a fine display of flying skill Sunday when **Ed Ross Jr.** brought B-24 #256 in on two flat tires. Sure others have brought them in

on two flats but they were seldom upright when they stopped rolling. The plane was on its bomb run over Toshien, Formosa when the plane shook and the crew saw a large hole in the leading edge of the right wing near the gas tank. The bombardier released his bombs on the target and Ross turned away and headed back to Clark Field. The 90mm shell had gone through the right tire without exploding and a chunk of the wheel was gone. The plane was at 10,000 feet and the fuse must have been set for a higher altitude. Ed called Lyle on the intercom and asked if Lyle could shoot out the left tire if the gear would come down. Lyle replied that he thought he could and with Clark Field in sight Ed released the landing gear and they came down. **Vincent Sarnicola** and **Joe Thomas**, two other gunners, helped Lyle lift the 50 caliber gun out of its mount wrapped in a flack jacket and helped hold it in the left waist window. Lyle removed one tracer shell, two armor piercing shells and one incendiary shell from the gun and fired two ball shells into the tire. That did the job and the tire was flat. Ed brought #256 in for such a smooth landing that the crew hardly knew when they touched down. The big plane lumbered to a stop and all the crew walked away from it. **Jim Burke**, crew chief, was a bit 'put out' as he had just finished a 100 hour inspection on the ship. Now Jim has plenty of time to catch up on his sack time until the plane returns from the service squadron. But he was mighty glad to see his boys make a safe landing."

Other crew members on the mission were **Ray Plank**, Copilot; **Roy Neimeyer**, Bombardier; **J. McNally**, Engineer; **George Tucholski**, Radioman; **Gordon Wickstrom**, Nose Gunner; **Vince Sarnicola**, Tail Gunner and **George Stark**, Navigator

Lyle also wrote that just five days later, May 11, over the same target, Toshien, the flack was extremely heavy and accurate and their plane was hit many times. Flack came through the nose turret and through **Wickstrom's** foot. Another piece grazed the photographer's arm. Roy, the bombardier, was busy on the way home taking care of "Wick" and giving him morphine. When they landed **Col. Pettus** was on the strip and said he had not seen that many flack holes in a plane that had returned from a mission. They counted over 100 holes in old B-24 # 122. Lyle commented that "the good Lord had really been with us" The **Ross**, **Tucholski**, and **Heineke** families have been so faithful in attending our reunions that your editor has gotten to know their wives on a first name basis.

Charles H. Stenglein 65th Squadron Aerial Photographer from Florida wrote an interesting letter to Bill about their trip to Australia in September. He told of viewing the "fairy penguins" near Melbourne. Your editor and his wife did the same thing in the spring of 2002. He also writes "Anyhow keep up the good work. I am waiting breathlessly for the notes to come out to get the latest info on **Larry Hickey's** book for his publishing date" Charles, you had better start breathing again. The news on that subject is not good.

One of our widows, **Louise Lonquist**, also wrote that she would have liked to see her deceased husband's sons read Hickey's book about the 43rd. Your secretary/editor is trying to insert as much history into the newsletter as possible. This may be the only history that our members will ever see.

Neil R. Fairbanks, 403rd Squadron, has some really nice lapel pins for sale. He underwrites part of the cost so that you can get one at a reasonable price. The metal pin is in color with an airplane propeller and the words "43rd Bomb Group" and the 5th Air Force emblem (a miniature patch) on top. The pin is about the width of a penny coin but is a little taller with one propeller blade sticking down. The colors are blue and gold. The price is \$5, which includes the mailing. I purchased one from him many years ago and I still have it. His address is **715 Monroe Street, Anoka, MN 55303**. It looks good on a man's lapel, cap or anywhere. Neil has been active in the 5th Air Force Association for many years.

Jim Cherkauer, 65th Pilot and past Secretary/Editor, has asked me to make this announcement: "Perhaps you may recall **David Balph**, the leader of the orchestra at our Banquet/Dance at Nashville in the year 2001. He has produced a new CD album and there were a number of us who purchased his album that he

was selling then. He did make a record of those who bought his album that he was selling at the 2001 reunion with the exception of me.

We had exchanged e-mail once or twice since then. Anyway, some of those, like me, told him that if he produced a new album, they would like to know about it and possibly purchase it. Well, he has a new album out entitled "20 Legendary American Songs". He has bundled this with a second disk of 10 Christmas Classics at no extra cost. If anyone is interested in this album, send a check for \$22.93 which includes shipping and handling to **David Balph at 678 Harding Place, Nashville, TN 37211-4445**. Included in the album are songs like: You Made Me Love You; Peg Of My Heart; Margie: Melancholy Baby; My Buddy; and After You're Gone"

This editor remembers that band. It was great! There was more dancing at that reunion than ever before! Nashville calls itself "The Music Capitol of the World" and I can understand why. There are more great musicians in Nashville than anywhere I know.

Near the end of the war the 43rd Bomb Group found time to issue some press releases and your editor believes that our members would like to read this one:

"As deputy Group Commander under **Col. Hawthorne, Lt. Col. James T. Pettus** has played no small part in the success of the 43rd. In that position he proved himself as a skilled pilot and an able administrator.

Pettus, a veteran pilot, has accumulated a wealth of flying experience, which is invaluable in his present position as Group Commander. He obtained his commercial license at the age of 19. For a year he flew, sold, and demonstrated planes around St. Louis and San Diego. Then he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1940 as a Flying Officer, which corresponds to the rank of 1st. Lt. He trained fliers for two years and before entering the US Air Corps as a Captain in May, 1942, he was promoted to the equivalent rank of Flight Lieutenant.

The first assignment Col. Pettus received in the US Air Corps was Director of Flying at a gunnery school in Florida. A few months later he was selected for training in four engine bombers where he learned to fly both the B-17 and the B-24. In March, 1943, he went to Africa as the CO of a provisional squadron which he delivered to the 9th Air Force, then in Egypt. For six weeks he bummed around Africa seeing the sights until they "chased him home."

Back in the US again, he resumed his duties with the 2nd. Air Force, where he trained both Fortress and Liberator crews. By the fall of 1943 he was again CO of a provisional outfit, this time in the desert at Blythe, California. When the training was finished, Pettus brought 14 of his crews to the Southwest Pacific where he was supposed to deliver them to the 5th Air Force, get information to be used in training new crews, and go back to the US. Instead he stayed overseas and joined the 43rd.

Since he has been with the 43rd, Pettus has had four jobs. The first was Assistant Group Operations Officer, an assignment he was given the day after he left for leave in Sydney and was changed the day before he returned to find himself Deputy Group Commander. In September, 1944, Pettus became CO of the 43rd.

Lt. Col. Pettus married a girl from his home town, St. Louis.. His wife, Jane, holds a private flying license, but right now she is spending most of her time taking care of their year-old daughter, **Lisa Pettus.**"

Your editor wants everyone to know that **Lisa Hamilton**, Jim's daughter, attended our Las Vegas reunion last September.

I had a letter from **Bill Solomon**, 403rd Radioman, notifying me of the death of **Charles Farha**, Hq. Intelligence. Bill attached a letter from **Ingrid**, Charles' wife, who stated that he was entombed at Florida Memorial Gardens in his golf clothes with one of his golf clubs because of his life-long love of the game. She stated that Charles thought the world of the **Solomons** and looked forward to being with them at the 43rd. Bomb Group reunions. In Bill's words, "We will miss him".

These two Florida couples have been friends for a very long time. I remember the **Solomons** from the Las Vegas reunion

Your editor received a lengthy e-mail from **M.L. "Shad" Shaddox**, 64th Pilot from Colorado. He asked that I print the following message entitled, **ABOUT APHASIA**:

"Hello everybody: I did not make the Las Vegas reunion, but I read, with some feeling, the speech of **Roland Fisher** in the October 2002 newsletter. I was touched by what reads like a great speech. I can especially relate to the first part of the speech where Roland talks about **Henry "Hank" Day**. Among a number of other ailments, Hank has aphasia. This is a very bad affliction and little understood by the average person. If you have a little time, I would like to talk about aphasia. The reason being that **I have been there**, and fortunately recovered. Therefore, I can talk about it, but a person who is currently afflicted **cannot talk about it!**

I cannot speak exactly for Hank Day, because I would have to be him to do so. I can speak for **Shad Shaddox** (that's me). My hope is that I can help all of you to understand a little of what goes on in the mind of one afflicted with aphasia, so if you are associated with somebody having that affliction you can better understand his or her situation.

First off, I am not medically trained, and I can relate only what I know about aphasia from having had the affliction and recovered from it.

I was struck with aphasia when I had a stroke in January, 1997. The stroke occurred without warning when I was on a camping trip with a group of other folks in RVs. I was getting into my RV to drive out of the campground when I collapsed at the driver's door. When I woke up I was in a hospital. Somebody asked me how I felt and **I could not answer!** I did not really feel too badly, but I could not say one lousy stinking word! The words were there but I could not vocalize them.

Have you ever seen an intelligent dog that you could talk to and say "Speak, dog" or something like that, and the dog would look at you and seemed like he knew what to say, but couldn't mouth the words? Well, that's the way I was that time. It is a terrible, terrible feeling.

A young doctor quickly diagnosed my condition, and it was confirmed by x-rays. There had been a blood clot formed in the part of the brain where the speech center is located, but not a real large one. The doctor told me I had a good chance for a recovery, and I could nod or shake my head in understanding. My dear wife was there, and she talked to me. I indicated with hand motions that I wanted to write something. When I had pen and paper, I still could not put down what I wanted to, even though I knew exactly what I wanted to write.

About four days later my speech began to come back. Today, I am able to talk normally though speaking formally to a group sometimes brings hesitations and even occasional stuttering.

The impressions I want to leave is that if you have occasion to meet with a person afflicted with aphasia, just remember that he or she can probably understand you, but cannot speak the words to reply to you. Look for nods or shaking of the head. Above all, be patient and remember the person you are talking to is intelligent.

Thanks for listening-----**Shad Shaddox.**"

Thank you, Shad. You have increased my understanding very much. Our members can send e-mail to Shad at mlshaddox@qwest.net

Andrew Stanko, 403rd Gunner, of La Grange, Illinois sent this note to Bill Wilson in November.

"I am hopeful that this short note shall find you in the best of health and prosperity. Enclosed please find my personal check for \$25 of which \$15 is for my 2003 dues and \$ 10 is a donation to our 43rd Bomb Group. I was a gunner on a B-24 Liberator towards the end of the war, the latter part of 1944...was stationed on Okinawa. Perhaps you be good enough to wish 'Good Health' to my crewmates that I know are still around after all the years gone by. There are not many left;

1. **Bob Burke**, Radioman
2. **Al Gongal**. Engineer

3. **Damon Coppess**. Gunner

Pilot: **Joe Casey**, Co-pilot; **John Gallahan**; Navigator; **Bob Lavesque**, Bombardier; **Ken Ahelmsmeyer**,
Gunners: **Laverne Green**, **Larry Twigg** ...I have no contact with, but perhaps if they read our newsletter
they may contact me or one of the above names.

Wishing you a very Merry Xmas and New Year. Good health and God Bless you and your families.
Andy Stanko ” (Andy can be contacted at 708- 354-0046 if any crewmen can be located.)

I regret to inform our members that **Daniel Ferguson**, Flight Engineer, 63rd Squadron passed on Sept.
11, 2002, Your editor was notified by phone by his daughter, **Wendy**. He lived in Whittier, California.

Bill Wilson, our treasurer, received a phone call from **Vera Ross** notifying him of the death of her
husband, **Gregory L. Ross**, 403rd Squadron Flight Engineer. The date of his passing was Oct. 28 ,2002.
He will be missed.

I failed to report a new associate member in the October Newsletter, so I will do so now. His name is
John Barone. His name, address, and phone number is in our 2002 roster. He would like to
communicate with anyone who knew his brother **T/Sgt. Louis Barone** from Glasco, New York, a flight
engineer in the 403rd Squadron. Louis was on a plane that ditched and was one of only two survivors after
spending 22 hours in a life raft. John would like to know more about that crew. Your editor studied the
casualty reports for that period and could not find any incident that matched the above description. There
was a 403rd B-24 that went down in the ocean on 25th of October, 1943 but two crewmen died and the
balance of the crew was rescued. If anyone in the 403rd can remember **Louis**, give John a call.

I received a letter in mid December from **Russ Burnett** 64th Engineer, who wrote, “**Jane** and I want to
thank **Roger** and **Audrey Kettleison** for their part in making the Las Vegas reunion such an enjoyable
event. These get-togethers are so important to all of us. The 43rd members are a great group of folks and
we all share so much in common.

Andy, I'd like to find out, and hear from any members in the association who are presently on flying
status, own their own craft, or rent, so we could exchange photos regarding our flying activity. Currently
there are just over 2600 licensed pilots over 80 on the FAA register. I feel privileged that the good Lord
has given me the good health to be a part of this group. The oldest pilot on current flying status is in
Longmont, CO, and is 100. John Miller in Poukeepsie, NY, is 97, Edna Lockwood , 94 is in Rochester,
Indiana. By the way, my bird is a '69 Cherokee 140, N95422. I have owned it since 1972. My longest
mission; Boulder CO.

Another something that might be interesting is to poll the blue grass music makers in the Group. There
was something in the October newsletter issue as to the possibility of some music at Corpus. Sounds
great! Bob Butler led the singing at my first reunion.

Hope your plumbing is articulating in a satisfactory manner. Our health is a precious commodity. Our
winter has been colder than normal with several snow storms (from 1 to 5 in). It's draining our woodpile,
you can bet. Andy, you and the Mrs. Have a Happy Holidays. Regards, **Russ Burnett**, 64th,

I must explain some of the comments that Russ made. We both had the same surgery on our “plumbing”
and we both recovered very nicely. As far as blue grass music at the Corpus Christi reunion, I was only
joking with our new enthusiastic member **G. Fred Bostick**, 403rd Squadron, who has a band that we all
would like to hear. I think to hear it, we would have to have a reunion in Georgia. I regret that I missed
the Springfield, MA reunion that Russ hosted, but have been getting better acquainted with him since
then. I might fly with a 85 year old pilot but when he gets to be 90, I will walk. And when he gets to be
100, I don't want him to fly over my house!

Here is a report from **Max Axelson** about the **2003 reunion**:

We will convene at **Corpus Christi, TX** 6 Oct. through brunch on Sunday the 12th. We will stay at the Omni Hotel, the most deluxe facility in the city...located on the bay.

The rate will be \$82.00/day and that will apply if you come early or stay over a day or so. The state tax will increase the price to just over \$87.00/day. Four air carriers serve the city; Southwest, Delta, Continental and American with some 80 flights per day. Transport from the close-in airport is free. Covered parking at the hotel is provided free of charge.

Corpus Cristi is the 2nd most visited city in the state. 2nd only to San Antonio. The attractions are many, and will be covered thoroughly in subsequent newsletters. Here is just a few that our folks will find most interesting. The USS Lexington aircraft carrier and museum; The Texas State Aquarium; the amazing King Ranch (at one time 15 million acres, now only 825,000) The Botanical Gardens; The Columbus Ships (replicas of the ships that brought Columbus to America); the Art Museum of South Texas; The Texas Treasure Casino Ship; a cruise of the Bay, etc.

This is one reunion that all members, families, and friends should attend. All attractions are most convenient, the costs are reasonable and the area is a fun place to visit. Just walking the beach, and indulging in the seafood is a most pleasant experience. Mark your calendars and plan to be with us.

As a special treat, **Fred Hagan**, our great compadre from Philadelphia will be with us to bring us up to date in his quest to recover a B-17E from Papua, New Guinea, and other aircraft recovery ventures that he is involved in.

A 43rd Bomb Group History Report—Also from Max Axelson:

As reported at our gathering in Las Vegas, the 22nd Bomb Group is still involved with Larry Hickey in the attempt to get their history in print. Although they won their law suit against Hickey, and were awarded \$100, 000 plus court costs and all the rights to their book, they have elected to remain with Hickey in hope of getting their book published. They have found another writer that is acceptable to Hickey and hopefully that arrangement will expedite getting their book to print. A date cannot be established at this time.

43rd Bomb group options: We could file a court case against Larry Hickey with an estimated \$20,000 in legal fees, eighteen months through the procedure, and hope for a judgement similar to that of the 22nd Bomb Group. It would then be necessary to retrieve all of our materials from Hickey, and find another author that would accept the challenge of writing the book, publishing, etc.

At this time, the most reasonable approach is to hang on a bit longer, follow the progress experienced by the 22nd Group, and hope for a favorable solution. Much of the work being done by Hickey on the 22nd's book, will be of significant assistance in getting the 43rd's history in print since many of our locations , missions etc, were in consonance with the 22nd Bomb Group. We will keep our members apprised of progress as this history book issue goes on. We all must keep the faith and hope for the best.

We are fortunate to have Max follow up on this issue and arrange a great reunion at the same time.

In the July 2002 newsletter your editor mentioned that there was a request for historical information about 65th missions to Wewak on April 16, 1943 when three Japanese ships were sunk. The request was made by **C. B. Parton** of Australia to **Jim Thomson** who forwarded it to our Historian, **Eldon Lawson** who sent it to me. **Rebecca Holguin**, Jose's widow asked her daughter, **Claudia**, to check into it. Claudia learned that Parton's interest was not in writing history but in monetary gain. It seems that one of the ships was transporting something valuable and Parton hoped to recover it after all of these years! We are

sorry, Claudia for wasting your time! Parton must have been seeking information about exactly where the ships went down!

On November 1, 2002, I received an e-mail from **Ernest Wells** which I will print here.

“ Andy, I received the last news letter wherein **Marjorie Benedette** was inquiring as to the whereabouts of **J.T. Britton** and I knew him as he worked for me as Ass't Base Ops. Officer at Biggs AFB in '48-'50 so he was a member of the 97th B.W. Roster. From the 10/7/99 roster J.T.s address was as follows 1976A HIGHWAY 314, BELEN, NEW MEXICO.

He hasn't attended the last three reunions for the 97th BW and I don't have a follow address for him. Possibly if Marjorie would contact the Belen P.O. they might have a forwarding address for him. J.T. is retired from the Air Force and he can be located through the Air Force Locator service wherein you write a letter to him and it will be forwarded by the service to him, and if he so desires he will contact the sender. Had a great time in Vegas, even with a mobility problem. Sorry that I didn't or couldn't make any of the trips other than the Folies but seeing old friends and combat troops was just great. Hope my health is good enough to attend the Houston reunion. I know it will be a great one.
Best wishes to you and Anne. *Ernie Wells*

P.S. In the roster make the following insertion. “Pilot 403rd. Squadron”

Ernie, if you go to Houston, you will be in the correct state, but the wrong city! I could not find J.T. in our year 2002 nor the 2000 rosters. But in the 1998 roster he was at P.O. Box 412, Midland, Texas, 79702. But your 1999 address is more recent. The **Bennedete** family was very close friends with **Britton**.

Your Editor had an e-mail message notifying me of the death of **John W. Lyle, Jr.** 63rd Squadron Navigator. He passed away January 22, 2002. The e-mail message was from his daughter, **Virginia Lyle** who stated that his widow, **Louise**, would like to continue receiving the newsletter. Since her name was not in our roster, I had to inquire. To **Bill Wilson** and the Elf. Did I notify you of this?

Another e-mail came from **Helen Green**, widow of **Franklyn T. Green**, 63rd Pilot. It reads, “Dear Andy, Kudos to **Roger** and **Audrey Kettleson** and all who made the 22nd reunion such a success. Wedding news; my second oldest daughter, **Charlotte Marie**, will marry **Jonathan Schultz**, son of **Bob Schultz**, Pilot 64th on Oct. 20th in Loveland, Ohio. This will make the 3rd family wedding in 5 months! My new phone number is (208) 883-2838.”

Your editor's thoughts are this: Members, if you want to marry off your daughters, send them to Loveland! And keep the romance going in the 43rd Bomb Group!

Thanks, Helen, we enjoyed being with you in Las Vegas and wedding notices are much nicer too receive than death notices! Helen can be reached at rexshirley@moscow.com through another daughter, **Shirley**.

Bill Wilson received the following letter:

To Treasurer, “After reading the newsletter, I found I was on the wanted list of the missing in action members. Enclosed is my 2002 dues. Will try to do better in 2003 seeing as how it is the only bill I am allowed to make! I must admit I am guilty and at 82, I must be slipping a bit—time to tie a knot in the end of the rope and hang on a few more years. I am alive at 82. 60 years ago I did not think I would make 82. Now all I can do is dodge mud holes and bill collectors. My brother, Ken, is alive and well at 1 ½ years ahead of me and catching more fish than I do. Keep up the good work that you are doing. My wife doesn't allow me to handle the green stuff!

Harley Hayden Ready, Able, and Willing”

If any of our members want go fishing with **Harley**, you will find him at Hannibal, MO.

Your Editor has received a notice that fund raising has begun by **B-24 Memorial- San Diego** to build a B-24 memorial in the birthplace of the Liberator, San Diego. The bronze statue with an 18 foot wingspan will be located in Balboa Park and will be identical to the one located at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO.

Also, the "**Planes of Fame Museum**" at Chino, California is raising funds to restore to flying condition the B-17 that they have had for many years on static display, **Piccadilly Lilly II**. Their brochure states that there were 12,731 B-17s produced and today there are only 14 in flying condition.

We have received very nice letters from **Victor Franco, Emanuel Dalpra, Robert L. Gordon,** and **Clive Eno** with their dues checks. **Clive** is now a "life member" and hopes to attend the next reunion.

We received the following letter containing a death notice:

"Enclosed please find my check #679 for \$25.00 as a donation in honor of our very dear friend, **Gregory L. Ross** of Iowa Park, Texas, now deceased. He was a long time member of the 43rd. Gregory and my deceased husband, **Ed Troccia**, met and served during WWII together. After returning stateside both were sent to Galveston, Texas. After our marriage, I made it a foursome—a bonding of friendship that has endured for over 58 years.

Please be kind enough to notify his widow, and family that a donation has been made. Send to Mrs. Gregory L. Ross and family, 405 W. Valley Park, Iowa Park, Texas, 76367. From **Johanna Troccia and sons**,

In case you haven't been advised the area code for their residence has been changed to (940) 592-5549. Your assistance is very much appreciated. **Mrs. Johanna Troccia** "

Our hope is that this newsletter will serve as a notice to **Vera Ross** and family of your donation in her husband's honor and a notice to her that he is missed.

Your Secretary/Editor is indebted to **M.L. Shaddox** for this " little known" information about **Lee Marvin** and **Captain Kangaroo**.

Captain Kangaroo turned 75 recently, which is odd, because he has never looked a day under 75.(born 6/27/27).

Some people have been a bit offended that the actor, **Lee Marvin** is buried in a grave alongside 3 and 4 star generals at Arlington National Cemetery. His marker gives his name, rank (Pvt.), and service (USMC).

Nothing else. Here's a guy who was only a famous movie star who served his time. Why the heck does he rate burial with these guys? Well, the following is the amazing answer:

I always liked Lee Marvin, but did not know the extent of his Corps experience. In a time when many Hollywood stars served their country in the armed forces, often in rear-echelon posts where they were carefully protected, only to be trotted out to perform for the cameras in war bond promotions. Lee Marvin was a genuine hero. He won the Navy Cross at Iwo Jima. There was only one higher award...the Medal of Honor.

If that is a surprising comment on the true character of the man, he credits his sergeant with an even greater show of bravery.

Dialog from the Tonight Show with Johnny Carson:

His guest was Lee Marvin. Johnny said, "Lee, I'll bet a lot of people are unaware that you were a Marine in the initial landing at Iwo Jima and that during the course of that action you earned the Navy Cross and were severely wounded."

Confederate. Out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him one musician. The Captain chose a bugler to play a series of musical notes he found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform. This wish was granted. This music was the haunting melody that we now know as "Taps" used at military funerals.

(Information provided by Lt. Colonel Lewis Kirkpatrick, AUS(Ret) ROA, Dept of Europe editor, contained in the Reserve Officers Association magazine.)

Lotus G. "Jack" Fultz also supplied me with a program bulletin from a Memorial Day program attended by 3000 persons in Madison, Indiana on Monday, Nov 11, 2002. In it he published the "Kensmen Credo" which is also in our web site, www.kensmen.com. It is an excerpt from *Ulysses* which reads like this:

Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in the old days
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are-
One equal temper of heroic heart ,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find and not to yield...

Since some of you do not have computers and have not viewed our web site, I decided to write the above words.

~~~~~

#### Quarterly Humor

**Subject: Education (?)** These are excerpts from America's finest high schools and colleges. Spelling has been preserved. If you can appreciate the humor, thank your teachers.

"Noah's wife was Joan of Ark."

"The airplane was invented and first flown by the Marx Brothers"

"The Soviets erected the Berlin Mall"

"The Boston Tea Party was held at Pearl Harbor"

"Americans wanted no involvement in the French and Indian War because they did not want to fight in India"

"In the Olympic games the Greeks ran races, jumped, hurled the biscuits, and threw the java."

"Eventually the Romans conquered the Greeks. History calls people Romans because they never stayed in one place very long."

"Delegates from the original 13 states formed the Contented Congress. Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin were two singers of the Declaration of Independence."

"Franklin discovered electricity by rubbing two cats backwards and declared 'a horse divided against itself cannot stand.' Franklin died in 1790 and is still dead."

"Another story was William Tell, who shot an arrow through an apple while standing on his son's head."

"Gravity was invented by Isaac Walton. It is chiefly noticeable in the fall when the apples are falling off trees."

"The sun never set on the British Empire because the British Empire is in the East and the sun sets in the West."

"History is nothing more than the behind of the present. This gives incites from he anal's of the past."

#### **Subject: My Three Sons**

Three sons left home, went out on their own and prospered. Getting back together, they discussed the gifts that they were able to give their elderly mother. The first said, "I built a big house for our mother". The second said, "I sent her a Mercedes with a driver." The third said, "I've got you both beat. You remember how Mom enjoyed reading the bible? And you know that she can't see very well? I sent her a remarkable parrot. It took elders in the church 12 years to teach him. He's one of a kind! Mom just has to name the chapter and verse and the parrot recites it."

Soon thereafter, Mom sent out her letters of thanks. "Milton," she wrote one son, the house you built is so huge. I live in only one room, but I have to clean the whole house."

"Gerald," she wrote to another, "I am too old to travel. I stay most of the time at home, so I rarely use the Mercedes. And the driver is so rude!"

"Dearest Donald," she wrote to her third son, "You have the good sense to know what your mother likes. The chicken was delicious!"

#### **Subject: The pond**

This old farmer has owned this large farm for many years. He had a large pond in the back forty, had it fixed up nice, picnic tables, horse shoe courts, basketball court, etc. The pond was fixed for swimming when it was built.

One afternoon, the old farmer decided to go down to the pond and look it over since he had not been there for a while. As he neared the pond, he heard voices shouting and laughing with glee. As he came closer he saw it was a bunch of young women "skinny dipping" in his pond. He made the women aware of his presence and they all went to the deep end of the pond. One of the women shouted to him, "We're not coming out until you leave!"

The old man replied, "I didn't come down here to watch you ladies swim or get out of the pond. I only came here to feed my alligators!"

#### **Subject: How can you live without knowing these things?**

The cost of raising a medium sized dog to the age of eleven: \$6,400.

Coco-Cola was originally green.

It is impossible to lick your elbow.

The average number of people airborne over the U.S. at any given hour: 61,000.

The youngest pope was 11 years old.



In Shakespeare's time, mattresses were secured on bed frames with ropes. When you pulled on the ropes, the mattress tightened, making the bed firmer to sleep on. Hence the phrase, "Good night, sleep tight."

Many years ago, in England, pub frequenters had a whistle baked onto the rim or handle of their ceramic cups. When they needed a refill, they used the whistle to get some service. "Wet your whistle" is the phrase inspired by this practice.

In Scotland, a new game was invented. It was entitled "Gentlemen Only, Ladies Forbidden."..and thus the word GOLF entered into the English language.

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The following letter came last fall from Sierra Vista, Arizona;

"To the officers of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group Association:

Thank you for all you have done to keep our organization alive and well. One of the most unappreciated and unrecognized things a person can do is to volunteer as an association officer such as you have done. I, for one, salute each and everyone of you and all prior serving officers for a job well done.

The articles in our newsletter with the most meaning to me are those that describe the various missions. Also those honorable stories of planes and crews lost during missions. They bring tears to my eyes. My time as a Radioman on pilot **Shad Shaddox's** B-24 crew in the 64<sup>th</sup> Squadron was in 1943/1944.

If each of us wrote a story about our most memorable combat mission for the Group's publication, our exploits would live long after we, as individuals are gone. Your comrade in arms,

*Wallace W. Munson*"

Wallace, your Secretary/ Editor is using your letter as an appeal for more dairies, mission lists, and stories that I can select from. Send your e-mails to [andyanne@attbi.com](mailto:andyanne@attbi.com) or the address on the first page of this newsletter. We need to leave more information about our wartime exploits to our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. So often I read on the internet, "Grampa has passed on and I never learned about his service in the war." Even the funny or routine things are interesting to those left behind.

#### A PRAYER FOR THE POST-RETIRED

Lord, thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older and some day will be old. Keep me from getting talkative, and particularly from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion.

Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details—give me wings to get to the point.

I ask for grace enough to listen to the tales of others' pains. Help me to endure them with patience. But seal my lips on my own aches and pains—they are increasing and my love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by.

Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally it is possible that I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet: I do not want to be a saint- some of them are hard to live with- but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil.

Make me thoughtful, but not moody; helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it all-- but thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.

~~~~~

Since we sent out "Assignment Sheets" with the last two newsletters, none are included with this mailing. If there are persons who need one, notify your Secretary/ Editor and one will be mailed to you. The forms will be useful if we file a court case against Larry Hickey.

Just before this newsletter "went to press" I received a lengthy e-mail from **Don Evans** of the 22nd Bomb Group. It contained both "good news and bad news". The good news is that they have a young writer to

help complete their book. He is **Allen Duffin**, an ex AF officer who is a Major in the reserves at March AFB and commander of an aerial tanker maintenance squadron. With Hickey's cooperation, Duffin is writing the B-24 portion of their book while Hickey continues to work on an earlier period. The bad news is that Duffin may be called to active duty because of the Iraq situation along with **Joe Schneller**, who was hired to assist Hickey at his home office in Colorado. Schneller is an Ex-Marine Captain who is also in the reserves. Don knows that if they are called to active duty this would impact the completion of their book and the beginning of our history book.

I no longer get computer viruses sent to me by someone in the 43rd Bomb Group Association. Several months ago I was getting them daily and it was impossible to determine who they were coming from. My Norton 2002 Anti-virus protection caught them all, but now I must purchase Norton 2003 which is available now.

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 15th of the month before publication. Avoid sending material at the last minute, if possible.

Dues are \$15 per year or \$100 for life, Make your check out to **43rd Bomb Group Association** and mail to **Bill Wilson, Treasurer**, or **Howard "Andy" Anderson, Secretary**. Check the your address on this issue to determine your dues status. The Association's fiscal year is the same as the calendar year. For example, if your label reads "Pd '02," your year 2003 dues are due and payable.

You may send e-mail to the Secretary/Editor to andyanne@attbi.com E-mail is the preferred method of communication, but please do not send "attachments" created by someone else. I will not open such attachments for fear of viruses. I have no objection to hand written letters.

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



64th Squadron
 B-24 J s
 49-40395
 "Bob's Hope"
 Left to right.
 Bob Hope,
 Patty Thomas,
 Frances Langford,
 Unknown,
 Jerry Colona,
 Standing L to R
 Tony Romera
 Walsh (Hills
 Bombardier)

Below 49-40428
 "Cocktail Hour"

