



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



**NEWSLETTER 88th EDITION
OCTOBER 2003**

PRESIDENT

ROGER G. KETTLESON
109 HUNTLEY ROAD
LAS VEGAS, NV
89145-5115
702-363-2824

VICE PRESIDENT

CHARLES RAUCH
2329 PALM TREE DRIVE
PUNTA GORDA, FL
33950-5009
941-639-6421

TREASURER

WILLIAM H. WILSON
P.O. DRAWER M-360
SNYDER, TX
79550-0360
915-573-6351

SECRETARY

HOWARD K. ANDERSON
6669 SHERBOURNE DR.
LOS ANGELES, CA
90056-2123
310-641-7770

Web site : www.kensmen.com

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

While the terrorist activity still continues to keep our military in harms way, our membership enjoyed the peaceful hospitality of our 23rd reunion hosted by **Max and Margaret Axelsen**, in Corpus Christi this October. As we recalled our days from 1942 through 1945, in our hearts we wished for a ready resolution for today's problems.

I would like to thank the widow ladies, and guests who took the time and made the effort to be with us in memory of their dearly beloved ones, and hope that you will continue to participate, and join us when you can. I also want to thank the 150 plus members who participated in the great program that Max sponsored.

I think it is worthy of note that two members of the 65th Squadron, **Jules Powell** and **Larry Main**, enjoyed the reunion with three generations of each of their families present. For those members who were unable to attend, for reasons known only to yourself, you were missed by your fellow members, and we hope to have you with us next year.

Eldon "Bud" Lawson, our Historian, brought a great display of memorabilia was enjoyed by the membership in our hospitality room. It brought back memories and many interesting "live it again" conversations.

Beverly Moran sent a note that her husband, **Ted**, passed on to the Everlasting Base on June 29, 2003. Ted was a gunner in the 65th Squadron. A card was sent to Beverly on behalf of the 43rd Bomb Group Association.

James R. Friel, 403rd Squadron co-pilot for **Howard Catlin**, wrote that Howard passed away about four years ago. He wished to get in contact with **George Stahl**, who was engineer on that crew. George's address in our roster is 1075-13 Lancaster Blvd, Mechanicsburg, PA 10755-4473. His phone number is listed as (717) 789-3377. I hope that this helps to find him.

By Andy Anderson, Editor

I am writing this portion of the Newsletter in September before attending the Corpus Christi reunion. After the reunion I will write the balance in order to report on the events of the reunion. My e-mail address is now **andyanne@comcast.net**. Formerly, it was **andyanne@attbi.com**. This change is the result of the purchase of AT&T's cable TV and internet cable by Comcast.

I will now publish the mission record of **Norm Seaman's 63rd Squadron B-24** crew as written by **Russell Bradley**, Radar Operator. Russell lives in Monroeville, PA. Single plane, long night missions were normal for these radar equipped planes.

May 13, 1945 Arrived at the 63rd at Clark Field on Luzon in the Philippines.

May 18 Flew a practice mission.

May 24 Flew a practice mission in the morning. I flew my first combat mission with **Lt. Phillip's** crew. We flew at 1000 ft. looking for boats near Shanghai in the Yangtze River. About 1 o'clock in the morning of the 25th we spotted a target (5500 tons) and made several bomb runs. We blew the boat out of the water. A piece of the target came flying into the plane near me. We landed back at Clark Field after flying 17 hours.

May 27 Flew another practice mission in the morning. We flew our first combat mission as a crew. We had another bombardier flying with us to get his time in to go home. We found no target and salvoed our bombs. Arrived back at Clark Field after flying 17 hours.

June 3 Briefed for another mission to Shanghai and took off at 6:00 pm. I could not get the radar to work. After a couple of hours we decided to bomb oil dumps on Mako Island west of Formosa. We couldn't determine the damage. On our return three Japanese fighters looked us over but due to bad weather we were able to elude them. We were directed home from the ground. 9 hours flying time.

June 6 Briefed at 5 and took off for Shanghai. We almost got off on the wrong foot. **Tom** pulled the wheels up a little soon and we almost hit the ground. Everything went well after that. The target area was obscured by low clouds. We flew on up the river and spotted 3 Fox Tare Charlies which weigh about 3500 tons. We made two runs on them and definitely saw one sink and saw lots of smoke from a second one. We were given credit for a sinking and one probable. Flying time 17+ hours.

June 10 Tried to take off with a ferret ship but got stuck in a ditch.

June 11 Took off for Shanghai at 6:00pm. Our targets for the mission were shipping in the Yangtze and secondary Woosong Docks. We carried a photographer to take pictures of an airfield in Shanghai. After flying through thunderstorms for six hours there were no shipping targets and our bombs hung up over the dock area. The airfield was lit up as we flew over, pictures were taken and bombs were dropped. We had head winds all the way home and nearly had to ditch at sea. We were able to land on a small fighter strip on northern Luzon. The engines quit as we were parking. We were given more gas to get back home. Flying time 19+ hours.

June 18 Flew a weather recon mission. **Frank** was sick so **George Rock** was our navigator. Sighted a typhoon 900 miles off the coast of Leyte. I also sighted waves on the radar that were 60 to 80 feet high. Flying time 10 hours.

June 24 Flew to Sanghai where we spent the evening strafing junks. **MacGregor** sank two and **Baker** one. Flying time 10 hours.

July 3 Our first mission to the Yangtze since mid June. Our main target was shipping with the Texaco oil as secondary. We had a bright moon so Norm decided we should try skip bombing. We attacked the first target at 50 feet. I lined up on the target with radar until **Charlie** could see visually. It was almost too late to pull up when we saw the target. Everyone was thrown to the floor. The Target, a Fox Tare Baker, was damaged. The remaining runs were made at 300 feet. Target was sunk on our fourth run (7500 tons). We were accompanied by a Jap fighter on our way home. Flying time 17:45.

July 5 -24 Squadron packed up to move to Ie Shima.

July 25 Flew to Ie Shima and briefed at the plane for a mission to the Inland Sea of Japan. We found our first target to be a destroyer with two escorts. We must have surprised them since we dropped our bombs with no return fire. The destroyer went to a watery grave on our next run but we received return fire from the target and shore batteries. I looked out the bomb bay and saw flak exploding. The plane had a few holes and a few dents. Flying time for the day 13:45.

July 28 Took off OK. Couldn't get the radar to function. Mission aborted. Maintenance found the radar antenna broken. Crew was grounded.

July 30 Norm and I got the radar repaired. I briefed to fly with squadron commander **Major Butts** for a mission for shipping north of Kyushu with a secondary target Sasebo Navy Base. We had poor results, missing the few boats we found. I flew as instructor for another radar operator. Flying time 12:00.

August 4 Flew to Korea and found no ships so we flew to Gusan, Korea, our secondary target. The city was lit up when we arrived. Dropped our bombs from 5000 feet, starting a small fire. The city lights were still on when we left the area. Flying time 13 hours.

August 8 Norm was upset that we were given another land target. We took off at 9 pm for Korea and found our target lit up like a Christmas tree. Bombs dropped right on target and gunners strafed the area. Landed at 08:20. Flying time 11+ hours.

August 12 The target area tonight was shipping in the Korean Straits. Figuring that this would be our last mission the crew stripped the parachute flares from all the aircraft on the flight line. We had no trouble finding targets. We spotted #1 and using our radar bombsights we dropped three bombs. As we turned to make our second run a green flare was shot up from the target. Two bombs were dropped on the second run and we dropped another flare. As we made the third run we spotted life boats and wreckage. That was 7, 750 tons sunk. We spotted a transport coming to pick up survivors and we dropped two bombs and a flare which damaged and probably sank it. On our final runs we dropped two bombs on a Fox Tare Dog and it appeared to sink as we left. We had a P-61 flying with us as we made our run and verified our results. We almost flew into another B-24 over the target area.

We had three bombs remaining when we spotted a Sugar Able Tanker which sent up heavy fire on our run. We dropped our bombs and turned away just as the target exploded. Our waist window was blown in and our navigator and radio operator were blown against the nose wheel. After we landed we found a shell hole in the hub of our number one engine. We were credited with 16,000 tons sunk. Our total tonnage set a new squadron record.

August 14 We had our picture taken with one of the planes. We were also written up for the Distinguished Flying Cross.

August 15 First day of peace.

August 19 After dinner we were at the flight line and watched the two Japanese Bettys painted white with Green crosses land. We watched the Japanese envoys as they transferred to C-54 for the trip to Manila.

August 20 Flew a weather recon mission.

August 26 Flew a weather recon mission over Japan. I saw the fleet anchored off Tokyo on the radar screen.

August 31 Flew to Atsugi Naval Base, landing at 3:30 as part of the occupation team.

September 1 Charlie and I went exploring on the base and found the entrance to tunnels dug by the Japanese under Atsugi airfield. The tunnels were well lit. We found huge assembly rooms for aircraft engines. There were classrooms, storerooms, living quarters, bomb shelters, and a complete system of offices and communications. There was as much underground as on the surface.

September 3 The crew went sight seeing on the base. We got off the base and strolled into the village of Atsugi. As we approached the village children were playing in the street. Once inside all became very quiet as they were afraid of us

September 4-7 Explored more of the base and moved into new quarters equipped with a Japanese bath house.

September 8-9 Went to the flight line to watch our transport planes take off for prisoner of war camps and bring back our troops. Planes were taking off and landing every thirty seconds. Some of our returnees looked bad.

September 10-11 Some of our crews started for home. Thought we might be going soon.

September 14 Took off on the electric train headed for Tokyo via Yokahoma. The only thing standing in Yokahoma were w few businesses and embassy buildings near the dock area. There were no homes or factories to be seen. We got off the train at Union Station in Tokyo. There was no roof, just a few walls were standing. We strolled down the Ginza to look into a few stores. We ate lunch The Imperial Hotel (Mac Arthur's HQ).

September 16 Started to fly back to Ie Shima but were turned back by a typhoon.

September 19 Left Atsugi by C-46. Arrived at 1:00 pm. Learned all the officers had been promoted 1 grade. I was now a 1st Lt. Charlie was sent to Okinawa to return to the states.

October 1 Checked out the ship to head for home. Painted our combat record on the ship. Before we received out orders to leave a typhoon hit and damaged our plane.

October 12 Salvaged parts from plane 1011 (the plane we flew over in) and repairs were made. Flew to Okinawa on the 24th for processing. Left again for home on the 29th.

~~~~~  
Your Editor has had the following report written by **Roland Fisher**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Squadron pilot, for some time. It is lengthy but I think it is worth reporting to our members and their families since it gives a good description of the scary life in the Southwest Pacific more than 60 years ago.

### Background

In 1941, the Southwest Pacific was one of the worst places in the world just to live. And fighting a war there added to the general misery. Life, especially in the tropics of New Guinea and north to the Philippines, involved a constant threat to health and hours of discomfort and boredom, punctuated by moments of choking fear with you heart in your throat and a band around your chest as you made an attack on the enemy.

Still, we were young, eternally optimistic about surviving it all and quite innovative at finding humor in the miserable environment.

1941 New Guinea was raw world hugging the equator. It was a huge island of contrasts; the worlds largest swamps ridden with disease; hundreds of miles of mountains rising to 16,000 some with active volcanoes; a blanket of rain forest of an incredible variety of old growth, giant trees on the higher lands; a mass of jungle so thick you could not see it over the swamps, and on the drier flatlands hundreds of acres of kunai grass, taller than a man and made of tough blades sharper than a razor. It would rain for weeks on end and then quit we would cook in heat and humidity that was like steam. Scores of our planes with their crews disappeared in that savage world. Sixty years later loggers, miners, and native hunters are still finding their remains and reporting them to U S Graves Registration forensic specialists who identify them and bring them home

In all of that savage environment, if one looked, there were beautiful and wondrous things to see. The structure of a giant rainforest tree fascinated me. The ten-foot wide trunk grew hundreds of feet upward before leafing in a top joined its neighbors, forming a canopy that shut the light to a twilight on the floor. The soil was very thin so a tree stood on a base of wide spreading roots each with a high ridge. Every guy in the group had been issued a machete and some, being just kids with new knives, had a habit of hacking on the tops of the roots. Enough cutting weakened the roots and, after some giants toppled and wiped out a few tents, Command issued orders for no more root hacking.

Kingston, (63<sup>rd</sup>. Met. Off. ) and I shared a curious nature and we often went exploring. In our hikes around Dobadura we found striking flowers hanging from trees, orchids I think, and on the edges of the swamp toward Buna, wild limes, odd fruits I did not know and little bananas. One of my most valuable possessions was a bunch of bananas I brought back to our tent and shared with Kingston for several days. Somewhere I have a picture of John holding them.

One problem exploring around Buna was finding, and smelling, rotting bodies from the bitter infantry battles that took place. I don't think any were our men as they were picked up after the fighting and buried, but there were dead Japs scattered all around. We were drawn to them because we hoped we could find souvenirs like battle flags but all we ever found were bones and slimy flesh. Months later **Red Waters** and I got some good souvenirs but we had to go out and find some live Japs to do so.

Around Dobadura, especially toward Buna, the wild life was fantastic: brilliantly colored birds, wallabies, huge insects, snakes of every size and color and wild hogs. We were told the hogs were really not wild; that they belonged to the natives and we were told not to shoot them. But we had boiled pork a couple of times when one mess sergeant took his .45 and broke the rules. He claimed one came into his tent and "attacked" him.

Aside from the risks we took on combat missions there were dozens of ways to die. Every now and then, some one would be missing from the daily activity and we would learn that he had come down with a "fever." It was seldom malaria; that was understood, because quinine was very scarce. It was suppressed with atabrine. That kept us free from malaria but we all looked like we were dipped in yellow dye and we lived with rumors that we would all go nuts or some other gruesome end because no one knew the long term effects of atabrine.

But there were other insect transmitted diseases for which our medics had no cure or prevention. There was a little known disease named "Tsutsugamushi" fever, commonly called scrub typhus. It was not common but was invariably fatal. A Fifth Air Force Flight Surgeon of another group died of it and that shook our Docs to the core.

At Owi, we had many cases of it but for the first time it was only about ten percent fatal but it made a mess of those who got it.

But there was Dengue, sometimes called "break bone fever". I, personally, can explain the name. When I came down with it at Nadzab, for three days I had severe muscle convulsions that made me feel as though my bones were breaking. For the rest of the week I could only lie in the heat of the tent hospital, so weak I could barely move. While there, the medics brought in an airman who had been hit between the eyes with a piece of shrapnel and put him right beside me. The piece was still there as they were afraid to operate to remove it. Every day the docs would come in and review the x-rays and discuss what they should do, then decide to do nothing. He was semiconscious and would talk to me but had a really rough time. He was still there when I was discharged but when I went back to see him I was told they had flown him to Australia for brain surgery. I think of him often.

Then, there was the every present "jungle rot", fungi that loved to gobble all the skin from anywhere on our bodies. When some of our guys in the 63<sup>rd</sup> got bad cases of it on their feet and **Doc Mott** could not do much to help them, I decided that I just did not want the stuff. So I improvised my own preventative. We all had been olive drab cans of foot powder and we could buy ankle socks from the quartermaster made of soft white Aussie wool. They cost 25 cents a pair. Everyday after my shower, I would dump foot powder in a new pair of socks and then put in those ugly but well fitting G I shoes. Each new day, I threw away the socks and put on a new pair of socks. It cost me two bits a day and some effort but I came home from the war with perfect feet. I did get a little fungus on my scalp and still have itchy spots there. But some guys came home with feet that looked like they had been badly burned.

There were other odd things that happened that came within inches of putting us on the KIA list. One day, Kingston and I were sitting on our bunks facing each other. He had something he wanted to show me more closely so we stood up and moved toward each other. As our heads were a foot apart, a loud

“THWAK” sounded in the tent wall beside us. The air between us went “PSST” and there was another “WHAK” in the tent wall on the other side of the tent. In each wall of the tent where the “WHACK” had sounded was a ½ inch hole. A single .50 cal slug had passed between us. We never learned where it came from.

On one mission I was briefed to fly north toward Leyte, arrive at dawn 12,000 feet over Leyte Gulf and loiter for a short time to see what reaction we might get. It was a clear but very black night on the way up. As we approached land, in the blackness I kept seeing a faint light dead ahead and asked **Murray** what the radar showed. He said it showed land off to the port. But the faint light dead ahead became more visible and seemed closer. The radar still showed land off to the left but much closer. Finally I felt so uncomfortable I banked to the right and, in the darkness I barely saw a large mountain top move under my left wing. We finally figured out that the radar had somehow rotated 90 degrees and everything dead ahead showed 90 degrees off to the left on the scope. We finished the mission OK after that. But my old color-blind superior night vision sure kept us from splattering onto a lonely mountain top that night. One morning, as I was returning to Owi from a mission, I called BAYLEAF tower for approach consent, put my engines in landing readiness and turned onto the base leg at about 500 feet altitude. Just as I was about to turn onto final, in my side vision (my WONDERFUL peripheral vision) I saw a prop spinner coming right at me. In a time span less than I take to describe it here, I pushed my nose *down* hard and looked left. In that split second a P-47 pulled *up* hard, banked left and his prop tips just missed my windscreen by inches. Then I had to pull up hard to keep from diving into the water. Both of my waist gunners nearly went out the side windows from the abrupt motion. Had I not *pushed down as the P-47 pulled up* there would have been a giant fireball over Owi that morning.

There were funny things also. At Owi we were right on the beach and learned how to supplement our lousy GI food with fresh fish we stunned with explosives. **John Flis**, our ordinance officer, rigged up bombs by tying a couple of sticks of dynamite to a rock with a measured fuse. When the tide was out we would light the fuse, toss them over the edge of the reef and as they sank there would be a “WHUMP” and fish of all sizes would float to the surface. . They were just stunned and would soon recover and dive under the water. At first we would rake in just a few before they would dive back down. A Malenese native, hired on a work crew, watched and came over. His name was Cos. He showed us that if we dived in after a bomb went off, we could pick up far more fish because most were just floating under the surface. We got so many that way, we let him take all he wanted when he left for the day. One day we “fishing” and Cos was helping. We had just exploded a bomb and dived in. Cos was a terrific swimmer and was way down ahead of me when suddenly he streaked past me for the surface and behind him I glimpsed a huge white body and what looked like the worlds largest jaws. I was not very far behind Cos as we went for the safety of the reef top. Cos took his fish and shook his head like “no-no” and left. That pretty much crimped our fresh fish diet.

But we were always on the make for better food. At Owi, **John Landt** and I discovered the hospital on the other side of the island. We discovered the patients there, who walked around in hospital robes, were fed canned turkey and chicken instead of the yukky Aussie shredded beef we always got in our chow line. So one day John and I and our mess kits went over to the hospital, borrowed hospital robes from the day clinic, and got in the hospital chow line. The first time we were served canned turkey patties. We sat down with them but they looked so much like the yukky shredded beef patties we got at the 63<sup>rd</sup>, we could not eat them. Later we went over there again and watched a show put on by Bob Hope, Jerry Colona, Francis Langford, Les Brown and other entertainers. It was a great show and we felt so good we

even ate our turkey patties. A Red Alert sounded during the show as most of the entertainers were herded to shelters. Bob Hope ran out into the open by the AA battery and hollered, "GET THE SUNS-A-BITCHES-GET 'EM." He was truly a great American.

Of all the things I missed from home, at the top was fresh milk, cold milk from my Mom's old Frigidare. I dreamed about it. We had canned and powdered milk available, both unpalatable. I figured out a substitute that, with a little imagination, helped. I mixed powdered milk in the chlorinated from a Lister bag, broke the seal from a CO2 cartridge from a Mae West and bubbled it through the milk. That cooled the liquid some and killed the chlorine taste. Then I would picture my Mom's refrigerator and gulp it down. It almost worked.

Booze was always in short supply and great demand. When we got some we usually killed it in a rare party. At one, **Brewster**, our radar officer was there. He was a rather snobbish intellectual, an MIT graduate and usually set himself above us plebian combat types. I decided to penetrate his shell of snobbery and poured him stiff drinks. He gulped them down in a short time and was completely snoggered. The next thing we were discussing the law of gravity and the law of inverse squares and Brewster decided that he could prove it by getting above the earth's gravitational hold. He started to climb a tree and when he got so high, figured he was free of gravity. He wasn't. He crashed to the sand face down and lay there sobbing that the laws of physics did not work any more. He was very quiet for a few weeks after that.

I went on leave to Australia from Owi with **Pettus** and **Art Mulligan**. We flew down in a worn out B-25 to bring back liquor and other goodies. We crossed Geelvink Bay south over the narrow part of Western New Guinea that is like the neck of a bird and down its breast to refuel at Merauke. The scenery was spectacular. Huge waterfalls cascading down 15,000 ft. high mountains into the Fly River swamp. As we landed, a young 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. ran out to receive us shouting, "Welcome to Merauke! He epitomized the ennui of war by being stuck in a backwater where nothing happened except people passing through. I heard he was assigned there for over two years.

While in Australia, it was rainy and I bought a beautiful soft fabric raincoat. I liked it so much I intended to keep it for civilian use after the war. It was truly beautiful. Just before I returned to Owi, I ran into one of my night fighter buddies with whom I had flown in England. He liked my raincoat so much he borrowed it so he could get one like it. Time came for me to leave. He had not returned my raincoat and I called him at the dormitory. He said he had not had a chance to go to the clothiers but promised to bring it back to Owi in a couple of days. This was Ok by me as his squadron was also based at Owi, so I caught my plane. A week later I learned that the plane he was returning on had crashed landed in a dense swamp land on the Geelvink Peninsula. After a horrendous struggle through the swamp and jungle for six weeks he and his comrades were flown back in a Catalina. Upon his return he walked up and handed me what looked like a pile of shredded rags: my lovely raincoat. He said it had kept him alive.

When we got to Leyte, after months of living in primitive New Guinea, it was back to civilization! The villages looked like cities and the girls looked great. And wonder of wonders—out in the rice paddies there were flocks of wild ducks just like those back home where I loved to hunt them. When we, who had grown up hunting saw them, nothing held us back. We got out the squadron shot guns, put on some old GI shoes and shorts and waded into the rice paddies. The fact that the water was bobbing with rotting Jap corpses did not hold us back. The ducks were plentiful and the hunting was good. After we had each strung up a bunch of ducks we headed back to camp to clean them and feast on roast duck. As we walked in, **Doc Carp** and the other medics came unglued. "Don't you know what you catch in those swamps?" Liver flukes! Shistosomiasis." We all had to disrobe while the docs went over us with magnifying glasses



and tweezers. From all the hollering I learned that a deadly parasite lurks in the swamps and waits to pounce on you. It penetrates your skin, invades your blood stream and ends up in your liver where it proceeds to devour it. I also learned that if the flukes have penetrated you skin you are well on your way to liverwurst. So far, 60 years later, the only damage I have had to my liver is the bad booze I imbibe.

**The End. Smokie One Roland Fisher.**

~~~~~  
St. Elmo's Fire Mission
by Roland Fisher

In August 1944, on Owi Isle, Scrub Typhus devastated the 63rd Squadron. My engineer, co-pilot, radio operator and a gunner came down with it. From then on I used fill in replacements: some of them brand new pilots.

On the evening of August with **Patton**, a new guy as co-pilot, we departed Owi to search south of Davao. We had orders not to bomb a vessel unless we could visually identify it. (Apparently, an American sub had complained that it had been attacked when some of our planes were in the area.)

We went to Davao Gulf at 500 ft. and got a blip. No IFF so we dropped a flare to see it. We got horrendous flak and on two passes we could not see the target. It might have been making smoke. It did not respond to IFF but we never could get a visual so we went on to secondary target.

In the mouth of the gulf we climbed to about 8000 ft. and ran into some mild turbulence. The radar showed dense clouds about 40 miles ahead, over the target. Just then my nose gunner, **Bowling** called over the intercom, "Hey, Lieutenant—my guns are on fire." His gun barrels were glowing with a blue fluorescent light. Then the prop tips began to glow, then turned into four solid blue-light discs. Every projection from the plane, antennae posts, pitot tube, was glowing with a brilliant blue light. The blue light came into the cockpit. The throttle knobs, pitch control handles, all glowing with a blue aura. My skin felt prickly and everything in the plane looked like a blue neon light fantasy.

Then we hit very rough turbulence and there began an unbelievable display of lightning. The flashes came closer together until they were almost continuous. The engines began cutting out, then catching and the props would surge, run away for a few seconds, then an engine would cut out again. The wings were flapping, the ship was jerking about in every way, the bombs were banging against the stanchions, and outside a solid, brilliant light.

My instruments spilled. With the constant wracking of the plane, the surging engines and the lightning, I lost orientation completely. My airspeed built up and I knew we were diving. I finally gained control at quite some lower altitude and the turbulence decreased. The airplane was handling very poorly but we took up a heading through the storm and dropped our bombs D.R. then turned out and headed home. I could barely maintain trim going home. The engines ran OK but the plane felt like it was trying to do everything but fly. But it did. After inspecting the plane at base, Engineering told me the insulation on the magnetos was literally fried and that it was a miracle the engines had gotten us back. The plane was badly wrinkled and bent up and I don't think it continued in service.

~~~~~  
By Andy Anderson:

In August **Dick Hill** 64<sup>th</sup> pilot of Tacoma, Washington phoned me to inform me that the B-24 "Stormy Weather" was a 64<sup>th</sup> plane. I had published a photo of it in the July newsletter and had asked which squadron claimed it. The plane was numbered 44-40184. Dick also informed me that he took # 395 Bob's Hope from California to the SW Pacific. Of course the plane was not named at that time. When I

asked if the plane survived the war, he stated that he twice was sent from Clark Field to Lingayen Gulf to bring the plane back to Clark Field and both times he found the plane not in flying condition. When he last saw the plane it was still at Lingayen Gulf and may have been scrapped there. Dick also commented about **Richard Russell's** account of a mission to Puerto Princesa where Russell mentioned that they caught the Japs flat-footed with about 50 planes on the ground. Dick believed that no planes were flying because they were out of fuel. His own gunners could not set any on fire after riddling them with .50 cal shells because the fuel tanks were empty.

**Roy Baker**, 64<sup>th</sup> sent a letter to state that he remembered very well the enemy air raid at Milne Bay that was mentioned in the July Newsletter. Roy and many others took refuge in a newly dug latrine pit because the slit trenches were filled with water. About 100 feet beyond their hole was a fuel dump. When the bombs hit many planes were destroyed and the bombs straddled their hole and hit the fuel dump. Roy described the men as being "really shook". His crew, **Capt. Adams** crew, left soon for Iron Range.

**Charles Stenglein**, 65<sup>th</sup> Aerial Photographer, who rode the Queen Mary wants others to know of a book about the ship called "Gray Ghost" which is available from Barnes and Noble Book Stores for the reasonable price of \$9.95. He described the book as a great piece of pictorial history of WWII. Chuck lives in Nokomis, Floprida. He sends greetings to **Harley Hayden** and others.

In August, a letter came from **Joe Strong**, 64<sup>th</sup> Squadron of Mission Hills, California to notify us of the passing of **Samuel Welborn** who was on **Capt. Harry Stevenson's** crew with Joe. Welborn was a teacher and coach in South Carolina and Alabama until he retired and moved to Florida. An athletic field is named for Sam in Auburn, Alabama. Joe describes him as "one of a kind, a good friend until the last."

**Orion Rogers**, 63<sup>rd</sup>, sent in a new address. It is now 20554 N. 101<sup>st</sup> Ave, Apt. 1039, Peoria, AZ 85382-2599. The phone is (623)-974-3070.

I received a death notice from **Lyle Goldner**, 64<sup>th</sup> of San Antonio by e-mail. He wanted me to know of the death of **Arthur H. Gard**, 64th. The date of death was July 28, 2003. Lyle also sent in an interesting story of two B-17 who crashed together and remained stuck "like two mating dragon flies" while flying combat over Germany. The two planes remained stuck until they crashed to the ground.

**Bernie Greenberg**, of Dan Diego sent in a letter to tell us of the delightful sport that he has discovered called Lawn Bowling. He states that is a great way to meet people, get exercise and be outdoors. Bernie, you are lucky to live in such a great place where outdoor sports can be enjoyed year around. Many communities would not have the weather to make such a sport possible. Bernie was co-pilot to **Major Carl Kramer**, 64<sup>th</sup> CO near the end of the war and flew in the B-24, "Million Dollar Baby."

**Marguerite "Peggy" Drab** wife of **Francis Drab**, of Venice, Florida wrote that her husband has been Taking computer lessons and "learning how to be blind" at the VA medical center in West Palm Beach. It is nice to know that this service is available at the VA. We never know when we will need this help. She signed her letter, "Peggy Drab, Franks eyes".

**Clarence "Ray" Harper**, 64<sup>th</sup> Pilot sent in dues with this comment, "The Balakpapien article by **Col. Pettus** brought back memories of my participation in that mission. Although I was concentrating on

flying second element lead aircraft, I did see a couple of those phosphorous bombs dropped on us. Shortly after leaving the target area we experienced fuel and engine problems so I diverted to Moratai.”

By watching the web site [www.cilhi.army/mil](http://www.cilhi.army/mil), your editor has learned that the Central Identification Laboratory from Hawaii is in the process of recovering remains from a 63<sup>rd</sup> Squadron B-24 which was piloted by 1<sup>st</sup>. **Lt. William Hafner**. The plane went down on November 5, 1943 while returning from a night mission to the Kaveing, New Ireland area. The last message from the plane spoke of bombing an enemy ship and asked to have the radio range turned on for the return to Dobadura. The plane carried nine crewmen and was very, very far off course when it crashed on a mountain at the 10,800 ft. level **north** of Lae. The first attempt of CILHI to go to the crash site was spoiled when their chartered helicopter crashed killing the pilot and injuring one CILHI employee. The present team consists of a team leader, team sergeant, two medics, two forensic anthropologists, an explosive ordinance disposal technician, a photographer, and several mortuary affairs specialists. Using a toll free number, I questioned a CILHI man about the name of the pilot. He refused to confirm or deny that it was the **Hafner** crew but the date of the crash and the number of men aboard the plane leaves no doubt as to the identity of the men. I have a list of the crew if anyone needs it. Strangely, the **Robert Coleman** crash site which I reported many months ago has still not been visited by CILHI although many natives have been to the site and have taken photos of the site. I have two different sets of color photos of that site and will bring them to the reunion if I don't forget. I am told that natives like to cart away engine cylinders from B-24 crash sites and use them as cooking pots! I cannot quite visualize this, but I was a radioman and am not that familiar with the shape of the cylinders. In another Press Release dated Jan 3, 2003 the CILHI describes another B-24 that they are sending a team to that departed from Nadzab in 1944 and belonged to the 360<sup>th</sup> Service Group. So the jungle is slowly revealing our missing planes and the work to recover human remains is a huge task

Your editor received a letter postmarked June 30 from **Abraham “Shorty” Hellman** 403<sup>rd</sup> Navigator of Miami Beach relating an experience he recently had while visiting in New Jersey. Abe's grandson had contacted the 43rds website while working on a school project and this effort resulted in Abe being contacted by **John Barone**, an associate member of the 43rd whose brother, **Louis**, who was also in the 403rd. Louis had passed away 20 years ago and John had found a photo of him in the family home that was being sold. The photo was labeled 403<sup>rd</sup> Sq. This was the first knowledge of what outfit his brother was in. The two men met before Abe went back to Florida and it was learned that Louis flew with a **Captain Carlson** whose plane was shot down over Rabaul on Oct 25, 1943 after a water landing, Louis was one of 8 men rescued when the top turret fell down in the plane enabling the crew to swim out the hole that remained and get into life rafts. PT boats rescued the men. Captain Carlson and his co-pilot were killed in the crash. Abe left the Barone family a copy of his log recording the event. I am sure the Barone family appreciated knowing the history of the event. Abe thinks this story belongs in the “Truth Is Stranger Than Fiction” category.

I received another great letter from **Charles Cole** 403<sup>rd</sup> who commented about the Japanese raid on Milne Bay and lamented that the blasted Japs destroyed his new B-17, the PX tent and motor pool as well as other tents and that the stench of dead Japs was terrible until the Aussies gathered them up and buried them. Here is the funny part. It seems that Charles took refuge in the same newly dug latrine hole that **Roy Baker** mentioned earlier in this newsletter! Luckily, the hole had not been put to use as a latrine! Sadly, Charles wrote of the death of his wife, **Clara** on April 9, 2003. Charles said that it is a lonely time but he keeps busy with volunteer work and is in good health at 86 years of age.

I received a letter from **Mrs. Donald Wilbur**, a widow of Hilton Head Island, SC to notify us of her new phone number, which is (843) 342-5066. Her husband was in the HQ Photography Unit. Her whole family appreciates getting the newsletter.

I received an e-mail from **Jim Cherkauer** commenting about the story of **Col. Edward B. Joseph** who spent many days in a life raft after a B-25 ditched off Kyushu, Japan in September, 1945. The story was in the July, 2003 newsletter. Jim related that the B-25 was a 43<sup>rd</sup> plane flown by **Capt. Leland H. "Herb" Agard II** Assistant Operations Officer in Group Headquarters. Jim was scheduled to fly as Herb's co-pilot that day but was grounded By **Doc Gusack** a day or two before the flight. The plane went down while returning from Atsugi, Japan to Ie Shima after a visit to Tokyo. The cause of the ditching apparently was water in the gasoline which came from 55 gal drums at Atsugi. The survivors had only one pint of water and no food to share for 7 days on the life raft before it drifted ashore on Kyushu Island where they were helped by Japanese civilians. I believe three men died and Jim's former navigator, **Fred Williams**, had a badly fractured ankle and never came back to Ie Shima. Thanks, Jim, I am sure **Mrs. Joseph** will enjoy reading these details of her husband's ordeal

**Bill Craig**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Pilot, still lives in Whispering Pines, NC 28327 but his street address is now 43 Shadow Drive instead of 8A Shadow Drive. He notified me of this by e-mail.

We have a new address for **Kenneth Beckstrom**, 63<sup>rd</sup> Navigator. He now lives at 10440 Stoneflower Dr., Parker, CO 80134. His phone is (303) 840-3859.

We also have a new address for **Rodger and Norma Little**, It is 1200 S. Courtenay Pkwy., Apt. 309, Merritt Island, FL 342965. Rodger was a 63<sup>rd</sup> Squadron pilot.

Around the 1<sup>st</sup> on September your editor received a lengthy letter from **G. Fred Bostick** 403rd Flight Engineer who lives in Thomasville, Georgia a small city near the border of Florida. Fred rode the Queen Mary to Australia and assembled Brewster Buffalos at Ranwick RAAF base until the summer of 1942. Fred sent me a copy of a CD of his music group, consisting of 5 men singing and playing guitars, a banjo, bass, and a harmonica. They call the group "Joyful Country Boys" and they entertain at some function nearly every week. I keep the CD in my car and play it often. Fred calls the type of music they play gospel, country, and blue grass. Fred also remembers the Jap bombing raids at Milne Bay where he had a little dog called Tojo which ran up and down the squadron road barking until he got a shredded ear from a "daisy cutter" bomb. Thereafter the dog jumped in a slit trench with the men during a raid. Also, Fred witnessed an officer being buried up to his chin in a slit trench by the near miss of a 1000 lb. bomb. When dug out, the man experienced shock, deafness and bad nerves. The man then shaved off the large, well cared for "handle-bar" mustache that he wore.

After returning to the US in May, 1943, Fred did a tour of duty flying over Germany as a B-17 engineer. Fred also remembers eating at a Greek restaurant at Mareeba. The shack served meat pies, hash and stews until the Mayor found out "where all the bloody cats were going". Fred called the proprietor "an enterprising Greek."

I can now recommend **Steven Perrone's** new book "*World War II B-24 Snoopers*". It is available from the author at 225 Woods Lane, Somerdale, NJ 08083. For \$22.50 including shipping and handling. The book covers the exploits of our 63<sup>rd</sup> Squadron and the 868<sup>th</sup> Squadron of the 13<sup>th</sup> Air Force. These two

squadrons flew radar equipped B-24s and sank an amazing total of Japanese shipping from very low altitude. The book contains 289 pages and features many photographs. Among the photographs are the crew photos of the **William Hafner** and **Robert Coleman** crews that your editor mentioned earlier in this newsletter.

~~~~~  
 The balance of this newsletter is being written after your Editor returned from the Corpus Christi reunion.
Treasurer's Report 01-01-03 to 09-30-03

Income	
Dues	\$2,350.00
Life Member	400.00
Donations	65.50
Interest	1,199.94
PX	15.00
Total	\$ 4,030. 44
Expenses	
Printing	\$1,848.75
Postage	739.06
Internet expense	1,734.83
Hunt for new members	59.70
Total	\$4,382.34
Loss	(351.90)
Net	
01-01-03 Starting balance	\$ 24,130.65
09-30-2003 Ending balance	23,778.75
CD Canyon Investment Co.	30,000.00
Net Worth	\$53.778.75

~~~~~  
 Your Board of Directors approved the plans made by **Charles Rauch** to hold the next reunion in **Tampa, Florida in 2004. The date is expected to be Monday, Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, September 19.** The location will be the Wyndham Harbor Island Hotel. **Chuck** checked out several cities in the Southeast before settling on Tampa. The cost and availability of air transportation was a major factor. More information about the 2004 reunion will follow in the next three newsletters.

Your newly elected officers for the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group Association are;

|                               |                |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Charles Rauch</b>          | President      |
| <b>Jim Cherkauer</b>          | Vice President |
| <b>Bill Wilson</b>            | Treasurer      |
| <b>Howard "Andy" Anderson</b> | Secretary      |

Their service begins on January 1. 2004

At the Saturday night dinner dance **Roger Kattleson**, Retiring President, was presented with one of those fantastic hand carved walking canes made by **Joe Snyder**. Joe makes them from cherry wood and each one is individually designed featuring the events in the life of the person being honored.

At the annual golf tournament **Mike Mitchell** who was a guest of **Garrett Minnick** was recognized as the best player. 1<sup>st</sup> Place prize money and our perpetual trophy went to **Jesse Fulton** 64<sup>th</sup> Squadron, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place prize money went to **Bud Lawson** 65<sup>th</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Place prize money went to **Ed Ross** 64<sup>th</sup>.

**Max Axelsen** reported on the Commemorative Air Force event that he and **Bill Wilson** attended in Midland, Texas where the 43<sup>rd</sup> was inducted into their "Combat Hall Of Fame". We are only the second bomb group to be so honored.

**Jim Cherkauer** reported that there is no progress on our book by **Larry Hickey**. Jim gets constant updates from **Don Evans** of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Group who speaks on the phone to Hickey almost daily. Hickey has had several health problems including a fall, a malignant growth in his mouth and serious blood clots. **Joe Schneller**, the former marine who was called up to active duty, is now back helping Hickey, but he does not help with writing books. Hickey has two graduate students helping to complete the 22<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Group book. It appears that there is some progress being made on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Group's book. It is believed that Hickey has spent at least \$80,000 doing research for our book. It is the goal of the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 43<sup>rd</sup> officers to get Hickey to sign a legal document to return all materials to us in the event he becomes incapacitated or passes on. Future newsletters will keep you informed.

**Fred Hagen** attended our reunion in Corpus Christi and showed the film "B-25 Down-Hunt for a Hero." The plane was flown by Fred's great uncle, Major Bill Benn. Your Editor missed the showing on the History Channel this spring because I was out of the country. The film was wonderful. He also spoke to us about other missing planes that he has found in New Guinea ....nine in all! Fred also told us about his efforts to recover a B-17 from a swamp in New Guinea. He now owns the rights to the plane and believes that he will soon get the right to export the plane. He is also trying to raise a B-29 from a depth of 180 feet in Lake Mead, Nevada and two Corsairs from a lake in Maine. The Corsairs were owned by the British and one still contains the remains of the British pilot who flew it last. Those planes are at a depth of 320 feet.

My wife and I enjoyed the Corpus Christi reunion very much. I lost eleven dollars on the gambling ship but Annie won \$60 so she brought home a small amount of Texas money! We loved the bus tour of the King Ranch, which is now a mere 825,000 acres after once growing to more than 1.2 million acres in Texas and over 11 million acres worldwide. We found good food everywhere and dined in 6 different restaurants. We enjoyed the dolphin show at the aquarium and the carrier Lexington. I was impressed with the tour company and their bus drivers. One of the passengers on my bus had his Swiss Army knife taken away from him for security reasons before boarding the gambling ship and they did not give it back. When our bus driver learned of this he walked a long way back up the ramp to the ship and came back with the knife!

**Max and Margaret Axelsen** deserve a lot of praise for their efforts and wisdom in planning the reunion.

Our speaker for the Saturday night meeting was **General McCartney**, once Commander of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Wing, who did a great job of informing us of the 43<sup>rd</sup> role in the Vietnam War. At that time they flew B-52s with an enormous bomb load and were based at Anderson Air Force Base on Guam.

Their efforts to avoid Surface to Air Missiles was too complicated for me to understand but was successful. The General is now retired and lives at Air Force Village at San Antonio.

Our memorial service Sunday, October 12 was outstanding. Nancy Solomon, wife of Bill Solomon 403<sup>rd</sup> sang "How Great Thou Art" and led us in singing "God Bless America". This year, for the first time she sang the words to "Taps". Roland Fisher, our chaplain, gave an eloquent address, as usual, and he gave me a copy of his talk so that I might print it here. These are his words:

### **Memorial Day**

In may of each year, the nation observes Memorial Day, a holiday with many special activities which began in honor of our armed services members killed in wartime and now extends to al loved ones lost.

Originally, it was called Decoration Day and began in May 30, 1868 on the on the order of General John Alexander Logan to decorate the graves of our Civil War dead. In order General Logan had these words---"We are organized, comrades, for the purpose among other things, of preserving and strengthening those kind and fraternal feelings which have bound together the soldiers, sailors and marines who suppress tyranny. What can aid more to assure this result tenderly cherishing the memory of our heroic dead, who made their breasts a barricade between our country and its foes? Their lives were the reveille of freedom—their deaths the tattoo of tyranny. We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance. Let no vandalism of avarice or neglect, no ravages of time testify to the present or coming generations that we have forgotten as a people the cost of a free and undivided republic."

Since Bob Butler began our reunions 22 years ago, the 43<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group has observed its own memorial day. At each reunion, on the last day, we gather to honor those we lost during the war and to pay homage to those we have lost since it ended.

For about he first six years, our chaplain, Father Thomas Shea led this ceremony. While officially he was our spiritual mentor, he also was most humane with a tender way of treating us and a deep concern our feelings and welfare. At each service, as he addressed us, he had a way of bringing back those we had lost—back into the room as if they were still alive. With all of his kindness, he was an active, energetic person and was very much "one of the boys." He would join us for a drink, jump into a party and tell stories with the best. He was s sharp poker player. He was really one of us and we fondly called him "The Coach." He aided Bob Butler immensely in forming the 43<sup>rd</sup> Association. Then age curtailed his attending the reunions and, seven years ago, after a long illness death took him away.

For a couple of years, each service was handed to a different person, actually one of our officers. Then, a very able guy, Dick Wood, stepped up to the plate as our in-house lay minister. Dick was younger that most of us and he brought a more eclectic kind of program into being. He dwelt more on times and events of the past and tended to relate them to the people who were here rather than those who had gone on. He was a personable, very capable guy, and he had great plans so document The affairs of the group, past and present, onto computerized files. He was an ex-Oregonian, a good friend, and he kept me closely posted on his work. He had made good progress when tragedy struck! He died, unexpectedly, in August, 1997, just before our reunion in Albuquerque. His distraught widow promptly disposed of all his files and equipment just hours before I arrived at his home in an attempt to salvage his work. All she gave me was his registration for the reunion. I carried that with the news to the group Board meeting.

Jim Murphy, Sam Commons and the rest of the board, upon hearing of losing Dick, promptly voted me the Lay Chaplain and asked that I carry the mantle for the memorial service, duty that I consider a great honor. But it is duty that is not easy to conduct. How do I follow the footsteps of "The Coach", the great Father Shea? How do I meet the standards of the gentle, sensitive Dick Woods who had ambitions to place the 43<sup>rd</sup> in an appropriate place in written history?

Memories were no problem. I have plenty. In my mind I have a memorial day maybe once a week when something jogs my memory. For example, I own a Savage Rifle. When I see it in my gun cabinet my mind goes back to Tom Savage who, in late 1944 brought a new plane and crew to the 763<sup>rd</sup>. Tom was the scion of the Savage Arms Company family. He was a handsome, tall blonde kid, well educated and deadly serious about fighting the war. I took him out on his "break-in" mission as my co-pilot and from then on he was raring to go with his own crew. I wanted him to go out more with other experienced crews but he kept begging me and showed such confidence that I scheduled him on a mission to Mindanao from Owi. His nose gunner was ill so George Bowling, my gunner, who had one mission to go to complete his points for rotation, was asked to fill in. George was a small, 19 year old, kid from the hills of West Virginia with a wisp of a beard like corn silk. Tom took off from Owi that evening and never returned. Troops found the remains of his plane and crew on a mountain in central Mindanao. Had he made it, today he would be an aging executive of an historic firearms company. And George would be back growing crops and maybe moonshine on his beloved Appalachian mountain farm. And I am sure they would be here with us in body, as they are now in spirit.

So many memories like that. But they are very personal and by no means do they include all, or very many, of the 700 lives from the 43<sup>rd</sup> that were sacrificed on the alter of freedom. And my duty is to them, to those we have lost since the war, and to you. Without Father Shea's theological training, I tend to deal with the emotional rather than the spiritual aspects of a "Memorial Day." And following the board's designating me Lay Chaplain that is what I have done.

Permit me to reminisce: Just before the reunion in Springfield, I saw the stirring movie, "Saving Private Ryan." And I saw what our 700 men left upon their loss. They left a magnificent ; legacy, and I wrote about it, "THE LEGACY OF SACRIFICE."

Some time later, Tom Brokaw came out with his "Greatest Generation." And I saw that he was talking about you. So at Tuscon, I told you to "know" that you were the "Greatest Generation." In retrospect, I would like to add, of that generation, "*You were the best!*"

The next year we visited Lackland Air Force Base and watched all those Air Force kids zipping all over the place. That placed us in our years, but as I looked at you, at your wrinkles and gray hair, I saw the twinkle of youth and from those eyes I saw peering forth young eagles. And I told you, those kids in you never die.

Then religious maniacs hijacked some jetliners and shocked our entire nation with an act so brutal, we never will be as we were before. I set down my deep feelings in "Memories" that you heard in Nashville.

During the week I was writing this we had a stretch of beautiful weather in Oregon. The nights were cool but the crisp morning air ushered in hours of warm sun. And every day, when I looked up into the clear blue sky, I could no help but remember that this was exactly the same kind of wonderful, late-summer weather we were enjoying all over the East coast on the morning of September 11, 2001.

Two long years have gone by quickly. The painful emotions of that morning are more than 700 days in our past. Yet they still feel raw when I look up and see something as simple as a jetliner crossing a blue September sky.



Last year, in Las Vegas, I reflected on, that as a group, we are but an echo of what we were. But even echoes can be heard. And we will continue to be heard. We need to be heard.

So now I'm here, trying to put forth words that adequately honor those 700 brave souls of the 43<sup>rd</sup> who, to use General Logan's words, "...made their breasts a barricade between our country and its foes." And I think,--how would Father Shea have done this?

Well—I think he would have offered a prayer. And then, I think, he would have said the beautiful Words in General Logan's order of 1868, say it for us. Those words:

*Let us, then, at the time appointed, gather their sacred remains and garland the mounds above them with the choicest flowers--; let us in this solemn presence renew our pledge to our nation.*

*If eyes grow dull, other hands slack, and other hearts cold in this solemn trust, ours shall keep it well as long as the light and warmth of life remain to us.*

ROLAND FISHER , 63<sup>RD</sup> Sqdn, 43<sup>rd</sup> Grp. Fifth Air Force

\*\*\*\*\*

At the memorial service the following names were read. These persons passed on since the Las Vegas reunion in 2002;

403<sup>rd</sup> Squadron: Edward B. Joseph   Nathaniel Phillpot   Christopher B. Stone   George Munselle  
Rita Adams   Gregory L. Ross   Walter Kirchua   Clara D. Cole   Alton "Doug" Leaman

63<sup>rd</sup> Squadron : Edward "Paul" Welcome   George B. Holstead   Michael Bachi   Jo Arruzo  
Mary Edith Rogers   Vernon Phillips   Edward Harris   Daniel Ferguson   Tyson Barnes  
John W. Lyle   Charles Larrick

64<sup>th</sup> Squadron : Cletus Angermeir   Clare Hoglum   Dorothy Fulton   Samuel E. Welborn  
Arthur H. Gard   Lon H. Weyland   Ted Moran   Pamela Cooke   Walter Terry

65<sup>th</sup> Squadron : Max Osborn   Joseph Hensler   Betty Tucher

HQ Squadron : Charles Farha   Hugh H. Himes

May they rest in peace.

~~~~~

After returning from the reunion you editor received an e-mail from **Jim Cherkauer** informing me of a letter he had received from the son of a member. I will quote from the letter:

"...I would like to inform the 43rd Bomb Group Association that **Charles Sullivan** (my father) passed away at the age of 86. He always enjoyed getting the newsletter and going to the reunions. Many times he would tell me about his experiences and the wonderful members and memories.

Sincerely, **Tom Sullivan** PO Box 642 Central Valley, NY 10917"

Jim was uncertain of the phone number so I will not list it. Your editor found in an old roster that Charles was a member of the 64th Squadron . His squadron was not listed in the latest roster. At least if anyone remembers Charles, they can send a card to his son.

I also received an e-mail notifying me of a death from Ed Gammill which reads, "**Beaulah Parker**, wife of **Charles Parker**, 63rd Squadron, passed away May 1, 2003. She is now CLOGGING for all those guys in GOD'S HANGER"

I had a nice chat with **Charlie Parker** at the reunion but he did not mention his wife's passing. He lives in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, which explains Ed's comment about clogging. I always smile when I think of Charlie because he once told me he is a "stump jumper" from the mountains. I asked him to demonstrate "stump jumping" but he said he was too old!

Another death notice came by e-mail after my plane had departed for Corpus Christi. **Bob White** informed me of the death of **Doris Gaston**, wife of **Vern Gaston**, 65th Squadron Pilot. Bob also stated that Vern has Parkinson's disease and is in a rest home. His address is Palomar Vista Healthcare Center, 201 N. Fig St. , Escondido, CA 92025. That address is in North San Diego County. Thanks, Bob, for the notice.

No doubt, this newsletter will be received late because we wanted to report on the reunion.

The newsletter is published four times each year: **January, April, July and October**. It is written in the previous month. Avoid sending in material at the last minute if possible.

Dues are \$15 per year or \$100 for life. Make your check out to the 43rd Bomb Group Association and mail to **Bill Wilson**, Treasurer or **Howard "Andy" Anderson**, Secretary at the address on the first page of this newsletter. Check your address label on the envelope in which you receive this newsletter. If the label reads "Paid '03", your dues are due and payable.

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.

You may send e-mail to the Secretary/Editor to **andyanne@comcast.net**. I have no objection to hand written letters but some have been difficult to read when written in very small letters.