



344TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

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MILK RUN

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER/344TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

Volume XXIII, No. 1

July 2012

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A warm welcome to all members and friends of the 344th Bomb Group. It is time to get ready for our 24th reunion. George Cornett and the 454th Bomb Squadron Association have arranged for another outstanding reunion in Tucson, AZ on October 25-27, 2012. The details are included in this MILK Run.

My responsibility in getting the MILK RUN mailed is to attach a mailing label to 379 envelopes. In doing so, I realize that there are many people I do not know or their relationship to the bomb group. Please drop me a line by letter or by the internet. In particular, we would appreciate stories of group members and their war experience that we can include in the Milk Run. All members have a story to tell. Family members who have lost loved ones: if you have any diaries, notes, or photographs please send us copies for our historical file. If you desire, we can send them to the archives of The B26 Marauder Historical Society in Tucson, AZ. Although we send out many Milk Runs, we hear back from only a few members. We would like to hear from you, and if possible, a small donation, so that we may continue to remember the 344th for future generations.

I have spent a major portion of my time reading books written by several prolific writers from our group who have written about their WW 2 experiences. RAY SLOAN wrote two books, RAY'S STORY: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY, and a fictional novel titled AMERICAN VOLUNTEER JOINS RAF-BATTLE of BRITAIN, both excellent reading. Our Pathfinder members GEORGE ELDRIDGE and his autobiography I REMEMBER, and OTTO KIRKPATRICK'S JOURNAL OF A WORLD WAR II ARMY AIR FORCE PATHFINDER NAVIGATOR both were very interesting and informative. I just received a copy of CASEY HASEY'S book entitled MY BOMBSIGHT VIEW OF WWII which is about his experience as a pathfinder bombardier navigator. Finally, my son purchased a book entitled WALKOUT by HENRY C WOODRUM, which tells of his escape from the Germans after being shot down over Paris just prior to D-Day. He avoided capture for three months with the help of the French Underground and returned to England.

I am so proud of my son Chris. He has taken care of me and my wife Ginny for many years and continues to take care of me now that she has passed. This year he honored me in April at a concert of the Symphonic Band of the Palm Beaches, of which he is a member. He arranged and conducted a musical tribute to POW's and MIA's entitled The POW/MIA March, to honor the POW's in attendance. It was an outstanding success.

Hope to see many of you at Tucson.

Major Ed Horn

President 344th Bomb Group Association

V-MAIL

- **CHARLES F. ACKERMAN** – Sent photos of the “SOLLY MILL” and asked for info on Lt. Tom J. Carney.
- **RICHARD L. WILLIAMS** – Sent journal of Tech Sgt. Harry Williams, crew of Ralph Leone.
- **EDNA CHRIST** – Reported that Donald Chaney still kicking in Chester, WV.
- **CHUCK CARLLEY** - Sent note in memory of his father, Lt. Col. Porter Carley.
- **EDWARD HILLIS** – Sent note about address for Elizabeth J. Hillis; maybe related to Asa Hillis. He and Asa were in the same group and instructors at Central Instructor School at Barksfield Field in 1946.
- **MARK WARNER** – Remembrance of his late father, Woodrow Warner, 495th, who passed in 2001.

REMEMBRANCES OF TECH SGT. RAY SHULTZ

I was a radio operator and tail gunner. I flew 65 missions, including three on D-Day, with the 494th Sqd. My Pilot was “Red” Wilson from South Carolina, Co-Pilot Dick Seavy from New York, Navigator Mike Sopronyi from Ohio, Engineer Al Hart from New York, Armorer Walter Wassman from North Chicago, and myself.

We flew our B-26 from Lake Charles, LA, to Ireland with stops in Brazil, Ascension Island, and Africa. Went to school in Ireland to learn French and had pictures taken in French civilian clothing for identification, in case we were shot down and were captured. We then flew on to Bishop Stortford and started flying combat missions in April 1944.

Mike Sopronyi was our Navigator / Bombardier. He was so good as a navigator that after about 35 missions, he was taken from our crew and was made Lead Navigator of the squadron. He then flew with the Colonel’s crew. I don’t remember what mission, but they crashed in England on return, but Mike was badly burned. I was him in the hospital with a burned and scarred face and body.

I do remember that I married a girl from Lake Charles on 29 September, 1945. Her name is Wilberta “Doodle” White, and we are still married – 66 years. **BEST THING THAT HAPPENED TO ME BECAUSE OF WWII!**

FINANCIAL REPORT – current checking account balance: \$5482.73

Dues and Donations: \$100 Dorothy Schickedanz, \$90 Edward Horn, \$45 Mark Warner, \$30 John C. Eckert, \$30 Chuck Carley, \$25 Don Korkowski, \$25 Ed Hillis, \$20 Pearl Wentz, \$20 Charles Hoefft, Jr., \$5 Julian J. Tencza

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT – we send out over 400 mailing twice a year, but hear back from only a few. We would like to hear from you, and if possible, a small donation, so that we may continue to remember the 344th for future generations.

OFFICIAL 344TH BASEBALL CAPS FOR SALE

Due to a complete sellout of the first order, we now have a new order of caps available for purchase. 12 caps were purchased in the last six months. The main color is Tan, with Black High-lites. Front design: B-26 Marauder W.W. II, 344th Bomb Group, Silver B-26 w/ White Triangle and 7I-F. Right side: 494th BS 495th BS 496th BS 497th BS. Left side: 1ST Group to Bomb on D-Day. Photo available on the 344th Website.

Price, including shipping & handling (48 States): \$ 15.00

Send orders and checks to: 344 BGA, 46 Balfour Rd East, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33418

LAST FLIGHTS

HARRY WILLIAMS 12/31/2010 Chipley, FL 497
BARBARA HOEFT 11/29/2011 Bourne, MA 494 Wife of Charles Hoeft
ROBERT K. SCHOONMAKER 6/10/2011 Green Valley, AZ MSC
ROBERT MAHLING 3/29/2011 Randall, MN 495 Code Descriptor, Translator
TURNER B. PATTERSON 12/6/2011 Dayton, OH 494 Staff Sgt., Tail-Gunner
WOODROW WARNER 6/23/2001 West Lafayette, OH 495
OTTO LEMKE 10/14/2011 Richmond Hill, NY 495 Tail-Gunner
AUGUST NOLTE 1/7/2012 Golden Eagle, IL 2nd Lt., 33 Missions
HELEN SLOAN 6/3/2012 Lincolnwood, IL 496 Wife of Raymond Sloan
FRANK A. MILLIGAN 1/12/2011 Hobe Sound, FL 494
HARVEY B. PIPER 1/15/2011 Helotes, TX 495
DONALD E. MEVES 1/16/2011 Palatine, IL 496
DONALD E. DEFFKE 6/26/2011 Monterey, CA 495
HERBERT H. LOGAN 6/27/2011 Middlesex, NJ 496
STEPHEN W. NAAS 10/25/2011 Presque Isle, ME 496

PHOTO SENT IN OF
LT. LEE EMBREY'S
CREW, 11 AUG. 1944,
494TH SQDRN.

2012 Reunion - Schedule of Events

You should plan to arrive on Oct 24, and depart on Oct. 28

Tucson, AZ Reunion - Tours, Events
(Register for tours in advance – Tour Reservation Form)

Tucson City Highlites Tour - Thurs, Oct 25 11:30a – 4:00p \$38

This tour includes a great sampling of the Tucson area; we will start with a scenic view point of the city, next you will visit one of the historic Missions in the area, then on to El Presido Neighborhood, and Barrio District. After our lunch stop (on own) we will visit Arizona University to do a special tour of their Mirro Laboratory (mirrors are made here for many of earth's large observatories). There will be an ice cream stop prior to returning to our hotel. We have an excellent guide who will give us a brief history of Tucson and share many interesting stories along the way. It is a driving, narrated tour with a few stops. (Includes: Coach, Driver, Guide, Fees, Some Walking)

Pima Air Museum, Bone Yard Tour - Fri, Oct 26 11:30-4:00p \$45

On this tour we go to the renowned Bone Yard, where many planes of passed eras rest, we have a fully narrated tour with step on guide from the Museum. Then, we go to one of the most interesting air museum in the United Sates, seven hangers and hundreds of exhibits. There is an on site Grill for lunch (at your leisure) and a gift shop for those who are interested. (Includes: The Coach, Driver, Tour Leader, Fees, Some Walking)

Special Dinner/Entertainment Evening - Fri, Oct 26 6:00 – 9:00p \$39

Tonight we will be attending a special dinner and entertainment event right in our hotel. You will enjoy a nice 3 course dinner and then some special musical entertainment. It's convenient, and it is sure to be a good time for all, a casual dress event (Dinner, Entertainment).

Saturday Oct 27th

10:00am	Business Meeting
5:00pm	Cocktail Hour / Cash Bar
6:00pm	Farewell

Dinner/Entertainment

Farewell Dinner Evening - Saturday, Oct 27 5:00 – 9:00pm \$39

9:00pm – 12:00a.m. Hospitality Room Open

**The tours require minimum of 30 participants, fully refundable if minimum number not achieved; within 30 days only refundable if medical emergency; operators not responsible for delay, injury and/or cancel due to mechanical problems and/or "Acts of God" incidents and conditions.*

Reunion Registration 2012 – Tucson, Arizona

Mail to: 454th BSA Attn: George Cornett 8250 E. Obispo Avenue
Mesa, AZ 85212

Any inquires call, George Cornett at (480) 984-3676

Name _____ Group 344th Squadron _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Additional Guests _____ / _____

_____ / _____

Arrival Date _____

Departure Date _____

	\$38	City Highlights Tour*	Thu Oct 25 th	
	Number _____	x \$38 = _____		
\$45	Pima Air & Bone Yard*	Fri Oct 26 th	Number _____	x \$45 = _____
\$39	Special Group Dinner	Fri Oct 26 th	Number _____	x \$39 = _____
\$39	Farwell Dinner Event	Sat Oct 27 th	Number _____	x \$39 = _____
\$10	Unit Registration (Complimentary Hospitality Room)		Number _____	x \$10 = _____
				Total Payment

OR

All tours/dinners and Registration \$161 each Total Enclosed # _____ x \$ _____ = _____

Unit Registration is for snacks and beverages in Hospitality Room.

Also there is no Registration Fee if you are only attending the Banquet.

Please make Checks to 454th BSA

Person Contact, Emergency

Name _____ Relationship _____ Phone # _____

(Full Refunds, if cancel prior reunion)

* See Tour Description for Details

Please complete and return Registration by September 24, 2012

If anyone needs assistance in making reservations, please call Chris Horn at 561-626-2497

HOTEL RESERVATION AND AIRPORT SHUTTLE INFORMATION

Airport Shuttle, Arizona Stage Coach 1-877-782-4355, #1 (Our Code AFAR: per person \$18 one way, \$36 round trip. Shuttle charge put on hotel bill (do not pay when call in), cut off date to book this discounted Hilton rate is Monday, 10/8/12. After this date the rate is higher, pay for shuttle directly.

Daily full buffet breakfast included in the hotel rate

**** Hotel Reservation Cut-Off Date (to secure \$85 Rate) is Oct 8, 2012***

To book by phone, call hotel reservations at (520) 721-5600 or 1-800-445-8667 (Be sure to mention Code AF454 – 454th/344th Air Force Association – Available Dates of Oct 22nd to Oct 30th)

The Martin B-26 Glider, as flown by Col. Delwin D. Bentley, by James E. Mecum

Delwin D. Bentley was a born leader. One pilot described him as a “Hell-for-Leather” University of Wyoming graduate who wore cowboy boots constantly. Bentley had completely familiarized himself with the B-26 Martin Marauder, and therefore, he was able to instill confidence in the pilots and crews at a time when training accidents prompted the slogan, “A plane a day in Tampa Bay,” while others called it “The Widow Maker” (because the plane had the reputation of having the gliding angle of a brick).

Col. Bentley knew exactly what his plane was capable of performing. At one point in flight, Col. Bentley shut down both engines, feathering both props, and he flew for a short time this way before resuming power, to prove the capabilities of the Marauder. For proof of this, there is a photo that was taken at the exact moment when both engines were shut down and the propellers were in full-feather position.

In August, 1944, Col. Bentley was transferred to the 322nd Bomb Group as Deputy Commander. Bentley’s career extended into the Vietnam conflict, during which he flew jet aircraft. Eventually, he ended up in California where he worked with the space program. Thus, during the span of his military career, Bentley witnessed the evolution of aircraft from propeller-powered to jet-powered, as well as rocket-powered spacecraft. Col. Bentley died Sept. 3, 1992, in Casper, Wyoming.

