

344TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

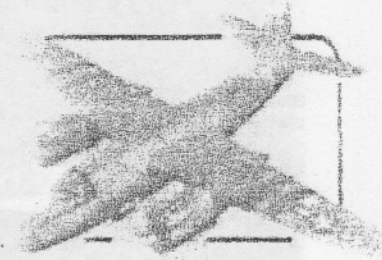
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MILK RUN

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER/344TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

Volume XXVII, No. 2

December 2016

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Merry Christmas / Happy Hanukkah / Happy New Year. Our next reunion will be in Dayton, Ohio, which is the Birthplace of Aviation. We hope to have as many members try to make this reunion as are physically able. Plan to arrive Sunday, October 1st, 2017, and depart on Thursday, October 5th. The reunion hotel will be the Hope Hotel, which is at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

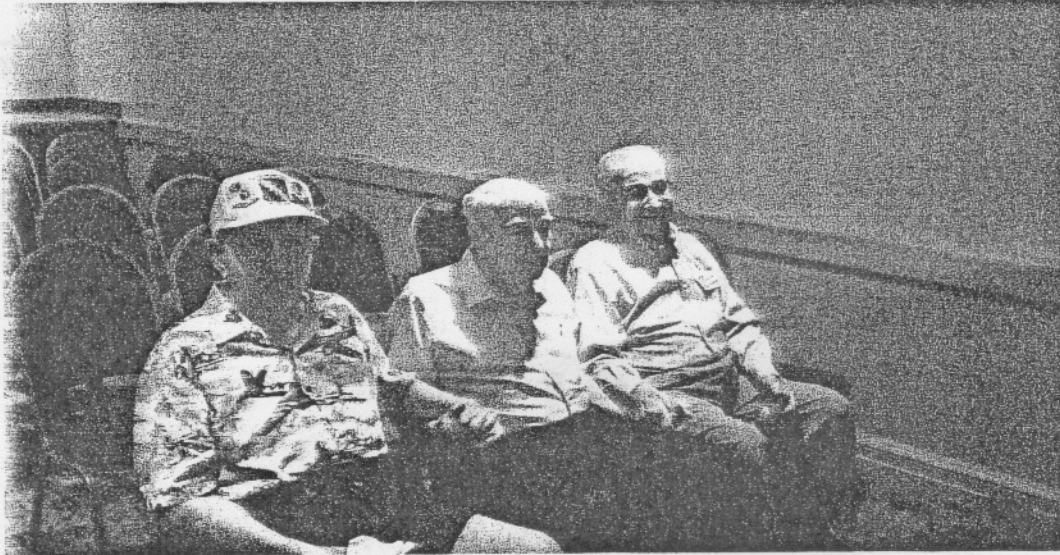
Monday will feature a trip to nearby Urbana, Ohio, where we will visit the Champaign Aviation Museum. The museum has several planes, including a C-47, a B-25, and a A-26. The real highlight, however, is that they are building their own B-17, which is available to all to see. There is also a quaint airport Café on site.

Tuesday's adventure will be a short trip to Dayton's Carillon Historical Park, with Dayton history from 1796 to the present. Among 39 points of viewing are: 1932 Shaker House, Bicycle Museum, Transportation Museum, 1796 Newcomb Tavern, and Erie Canal and Covered Bridge. This is the only trip which is not free (\$7 entry).

Finally, on Wednesday, a trip to the largest air museum in the world: The National Museum of the USAF at Wright Field. It is home to over 300 planes and missiles on display. The new fourth building opened in 2016, and houses the Presidential Planes, R&D planes, Global Reach, and Space. This includes the "Hanoi Taxi C-141" and the Space Shuttle Training Vehicle. Wednesday evening will feature the "Farewell Banquet" at the Hope (as in Bob) Hotel. Daily breakfast and parking is included in the price.

2016 REUNION REPORT

This past year's Reunion was in Tulsa. Once again we joined with the 454th Bomb Squadron of the 323rd Bomb Group. We are grateful to George and Mary Cornett for their work in the organization of the Reunion. The 344th attendees were: Santo Endrizzi (495) with his daughter Marion and her husband Hap, and Joan Woodbury; Carl Carrozza represented his father, Frank (495); Otto Kirkpatrick (PF) with Rosemary and Dale; Edward Horn (497) and his son Chris; representing Leonard Norris Pew (497) were Jack and Linda Shilt, Mary Lou Crawford, Tricia Wendt; and from England via Australia, Ollie and Kelly Kirby.



The three "Happy Warriors" from the Tulsa Reunion (L-R): Edward Horn, Otto Kirkpatrick, "Sam" Santo Endrizzi.

Anyone have the following MILKRUNS? We are missing the following MILKRUNS from the 344th Archives: Vol 1-3 1990; Vol 5-17 Sept 1993; Vol 6-3 Dec 1994; Vol 7-3 Mar 1996; Vol 7-4 Jun 1996; Vol 8-2 Dec 1996; Vol 13-3 2002; All issues from 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007. If you have any of these MILKRUNS, please contact Chris Horn (561-626-2497). Thanks!

ATTENTION - news from the Radio Shack: The old Website has been shut down, and Carl Carrozza has agreed to be the new Webmaster for the 344th Bomb Group. His already existing website, "The Shopworn Angel" (dedicated to his Father, Frank), is a large and successful website featuring the 344th Bomb Group. The web address used by the old 344th website will take you to this wonderful tribute to the Men of the 344th Bomb Group: www.344bg-b26.org. Letters, history, and photos will eventually be posted on this Website.

LAST FLIGHTS

RAYMOND M. SCHULTZ	494	AUSTIN, TX	2/10/2016	SGT; TAILGUNNER, STANSTED
CHARLES R. HOEFT, JR.	495	BOURNE, MA	6/23/2015	PILOT, 25 MISSIONS
LT. COL. RICHARD J. FOULK	497	BEAUMONT, TX	4/12/2016	BOMB/NAV
V. (JIM) LATRECHIANO	496	PHILADELPHIA	11/26/2015	GROUND CREW; ENG, FR, BEL
ELDRED L. CLUFF	497	MESA, AZ	5/8/2016	
DOROTHY SCHICKEDANZ	497	GAGE, OK	11/24/2016	WIFE OF RAY

UNABLE TO FORWARD

KEITH HARRISON	MSC	TEMPLE TERRACE, FL
CLARENCE E. FOWLER	495	PALO VERDES ESTATES, CA
MRS. JANET L. PATTERSON	494	CLEARWATER, FL
GERALD W. SHIRLEY	495	MINEOL, TX
ROBERT G. STONUM	497	HUGHSON, CA
JOHN SCHICKEDANZ	497	WILLISTON, ND

If you have any info on these members, please contact us.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

JEANNE M. PERKOSKY	494	PORT ST. LUCIE, FL
GORDON MILNE, JR.	496	EAST LANSING, MI
JAMES W. BRYANT	496	CORVALLIS, OR
JOHN A. WOTRING	494	PHOENIX, AZ
SALLY M. BONNELL	MSC	NORTH POINT, FL
ANSON F. GOODSON	496	ST. PAUL, MN

FINANCIAL REPORT – current checking account balance: \$8056.32 (12 DEC 2016)

Dues and Donations: Ray Sloan \$75; Jack Shilt \$50; Mary Lou Crawford \$50; David Stewart \$30; Henry Bird \$25; Patricia Wendt \$25.

The above members are very special people. Some contribute yearly. Others are first timers. But they are the force that allows the 344th to survive, via the MILKRUN, or the website. THANKS FOR ALLOWING US TO REMEMBER THE 344TH BOMB GROUP.

V-MAIL

Wilberta Schultz – Sent a note on the passing of her husband, Raymond. Said he never complained that his plane was often filled with holes from flak. One time, after returning from a bombing mission over France, they counted 180 holes. His pilot was named "Red" Wilson.

Ray Sloan – Now in Florida and trying to meet up with Paul Conkle. Mentioned that he flew training missions with Cletus Wray.

Cyndi Vaccaro – Sent a note on the passing of her father, Charles R. Hoeft, Jr. He was an 18 year old B-26 pilot. He also served 2 years of occupation duty, and spoke of the many "new tech" aircraft of his time that he flew throughout his long aviation career. Also included was a page of photos of Charles.

Richard D. Foulk – Also sent a note on the passing of his father, Richard J. Foulk. Also a photo of him in uniform as a Lt. Col. He was a bombardier/navigator in Europe, and then got his pilot's license after returning home. He remained in the Air Force Reserves until the late 70's. A few years ago he received the French Legion of Honor. His son got him a ride in a B-25 that his father thoroughly enjoyed.

Keith David Wentzel – Sent an obituary for David A. Phillips, of the 495th. Mr. Wentzel is with the Carolina Aviation Museum (kd4iti@hotmail.com).

Mark Keller – Has contacted us twice. First, asked for address of Emlen Martin. Also included a photo of his father, Lt. Keller, with Lt. McSwain in front of the "Queen of Hearts"; and a crew photo of the McSwain crew dated 10 Oct 1944. His second e-mail came with a 9 page article entitled: "Wartime Experiences of LTC. Wilmouth Lowell Keller, USAAF (ret.)."

An excerpt from the 9 page Wilmouth Keller article:

"On July 3, 1944, I was in Goose Bay, Labrador. I was on my way overseas to see combat duty as a Bombardier-Navigator on a B-26 aircraft.

At five o'clock on the morning of the 4th of July, I reported to briefing. During Briefing, the crews were shown moving pictures that were taken from the nose of an airplane approaching the airfield in Greenland the briefing Officer stressed the approach we would make to the field. We were told that we would have to navigate our planes to a certain fjord; that before entering this fjord, we should make certain that we had the right one. If we went up any other fjord, we would hit a dead end and crash. It was necessary to enter the fjord at 2,000 feet of altitude. The

mountains on each side were approximately 8,000 feet high. "The fjord was about two miles wide and a B-26 takes three miles to complete a 180 degree turn. Therefore, once in the fjord there was no going back, land or crash.

I got the maps necessary for the flight and computed the course I would fly. This was my first hop over the Atlantic Ocean. I was very uneasy as I realized my responsibility as a navigator.

Our crew took off about 7:00 am. I started my navigation log immediately. I found that I certainly had to work to keep up for we were traveling about 220 miles per hour.

When we arrived at the fjord, I was only two miles off course and one-half minute late on E.T.A. My pilot's confidence in my navigation was raised considerably for this was considered perfect navigation as the flight was over nine hundred miles of water. We had to fly up the fjord for thirty-one miles to B.W. -1 (the airfield). While flying up this fjord, we flew through snow. That was the first time I had seen snow falling on the 4th of July.

Greenland was very beautiful. The rugged mountains were capped with snow and ice. Down in the fjords, colorful flowers were growing along the water's edge. The water was a clear blue-green with large floating icebergs. One iceberg, fifty feet high was just off the west end of the runway. On the east end of the runway there was a five thousand foot glacier. Both the glacier and iceberg were a hazard to the planes landing or taking off.

The men stationed there said the fishing was excellent but unfortunately, I had to forego my favorite sport. The Flight Surgeon confined me to the hospital because I had a head cold. The next morning after some fast talking, I was finally permitted to leave and rejoin my crew.

We took off immediately for Meeks Field, Reykjavik, Iceland, which was 875 miles away. We landed at Meeks Field about 1400 hrs the fifth of July. We were grounded for three days because of the cold and misty weather. I was told that Iceland didn't get very cold in the winter; however, the wind velocity on some days, during the winter, will reach 120 miles per hour. I know that the houses had rock walls two feet thick. The Army huts were covered half way up with earth in order to keep the wind from blowing them down.

I was amazed when I was told about the heating system in Reykjavik (capital of Iceland). The homes in this city are heated by boiling springs in the mountains sixty miles away. "The water in the springs is 212 F. and when piped into the homes the temperature is 210 F. We left Iceland on July 8, 1944 bound for Prestwick, Scotland and the business of war.



Ed Horn and his remaining crew members: Mary Lou Crawford, Patricia Wendt, Linda & Jack Shilt (standing); all four are family members of Tailgunner Leonard Norris Pew, MIA 28 May, 1944.