

306th Ech

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'O.K. -- Bail' Leads to New Adventures for Consolmagno

By Joe Consolmagno

There were only sporadic bursts of flak from the emplacements at Ghent as our B-17 passed that city on our way in to Antwerp, harmless black puffs at first. By then our escort of Spitfires had been replaced by FW-190s. Just beyond Ghent we took a direct hit from flak in one of our engines and dropped out of the formation into the vacuum between the 306th Bomb Group and the 91st, which was next in line behind us.

We were immediately attacked by waves of FWs, coming at us in twos and threes. We took hits on each assault amid a shattering din of flailing engines, explosions, plane-shuddering impacts and our own clattering guns. In our violent evasive action, the belt of .50 caliber bullets feeding into my weapon kept buckling, jamming the gun, always it seemed just when an attacker was flying straight into my sights, his wings ablaze with his own gunfire.

In a momentary respite between attacks, I decided it was time to attach my chestpack parachute to the harness I was wearing. After a third—or fourth or fifth—attack, a voice on intercom called that engine fires were out of control.

Acknowledging this last in a series of disastrous reports, pilot Clarence Fischer replied calmly, "OK—bail out." The bailout alarm jangled.

I ripped out the intercom wires and oxygen tube that had made me an organic part of the dying aircraft, and quickly scrambled back to the crawlspace between the nose and the cockpit. I pulled the emergency release lever on the forward escape hatch. Nothing happened.

As if he were talking to me, I could hear Bill Gise telling his there-I-was story upon returning to base weeks after being shot down at Lille (ed.note: 9 Oct 42 on Group's first mission). "I was surprised that the hatch didn't drop off," he said. "It was stuck in place by the slipstream."

"So I reared back and kicked it out," he said.

I followed suit, even as his words flashed through my mind.

Looking down through the opening at the earth some four miles below, I fought back a sudden spin of vertigo.

Gise's words continued flashing. "My first impulse was to ease out and hang there before dropping. But I knew that would only splat me up against the belly. So I grabbed the rip cord and dove out head first."

I hooked the thumb of my left hand through the rip cord ring, not being able to reach it with my right hand across the bulky chestpack. On the periphery of my vision I caught sight of the flight engineer dropping down from the cockpit into the crawlspace, as I tumbled out through the hatch. I pulled the ripcord as soon as I hit the slipstream; I wanted time to feed the chute out manually if something didn't work. A giant hand seemed to yank me back by the scruff of the neck as the chute streamed open. The jolt snapped off one of my flight boots. Scrounged from the RAF, my flight boots were an envied possession because they were insulated and

wired for heat, the only boots of that kind in the squadron.

"On 5 April 43, a 17 year old girl, Gisella Vercauteren, heard the drone of the coming air armada and left her work in the wooden shoe factory of her parents to see what was coming. When the aircraft were overhead someone pointed to one of them which showed a flash and started smoking. A little later parachutes opened.

"While they were still following the chutes, a neighbor came running with a boot. He saw it coming down in a field close to the one he was working on. It was a strange boot by local standards. It was brown (or grey) and there was sheepskin inside which made the finder go looking for the other one. He sure could use them!

"One puzzling point was a wire attached to the boot. (Electric heating?)

However, the boot was the attraction in a local pub where it was shown in secrecy, as the people feared the Germans would confiscate their booty. In the early seventies the owner died. The boot was now in the attic and every time the hatch was opened, one was confronted with the boot, which stood right before it as a memento."

—Letter from Jean Dillen Belgian aviation researcher 23 Nov 86

Freed of the thunderous death throes of the B-17, I was suddenly engulfed in an eerie silence, broken only by the hissing of air escaping through the vent at the top of the parachute and my own labored breathing in the rarefied air. I watched our plane descending steeply below me and about a mile off, trailing smoke and fire from both wings, but still flying level as it dropped off its line of parachutes. I tried to count them, but lost track.

"My information tells me that your aircraft was under attack by Hauptmann Galland, brother of General Inspector of the Luftwaffe, Adolph Galland. First there came a series of 4 or 5 parachutes from the burning aircraft which was still going toward the target. Galland made another pass and then the rest of the crew came out. The aircraft made a few loopings and hit the ground."

—Letter from Jean Dillen, 21 Jul 86

Other bomb groups droned by overhead in a stretched-out parade, until finally I was alone again, miles high and gasping for air. I ripped off my useless oxygen mask, dropped it between my legs and watched it slowly spin into the nothingness below me.

The sound of a single engined aircraft came into range before I saw it—an FW-190. I braced to feel the shock of gunfire. But the enemy didn't fire. He circled me so closely that I could see his oxygen-masked face, and he waved. I waved back. It didn't seem appropriate to be impolite.

"Major Wilhelm-Ferdinand Galland was killed in action on 17 August 1943 during an attack on US bombers over the St. Trond/Liege area, Belgium. He was shot down by escorting Thunderbolts."

—Letter from Achille Rely Belgian historian, 4 Apr 93

The German left me and went on to the other chutes in a line spread out far ahead of and below me, circling each one as he came to it. I was still miles above



Joe in Stalag Luft III

Through the Eye of the Needle #2 of 10

Joe Consolmagno, 367th navigator and POW, who put together the book whose title is above, is the author of the second in this series of stories concerning his last mission and capture. The authors to be featured in future issues of Echoes include: James Crouch, Leland Dowden, Don Eldredge, Robert Hermann, John Ryan, Robert Seelos, Myron Sorden and James Vaughtner. Used by permission of the Stalag Luft III organization, per Gen. Albert P. Clark.

Combat Crews in Pictures Still Wanted

From A to Y we have covered combat crews in pictures, mainly on the basis of the contributions made by many of you. Occasionally we have found pictures of crews that just seemed to appear or were in collections of pictures we have been able to look at.

One might believe that this is about half of the combat crews, but it is more likely about 40 per cent of them.

Some crews evidently had no pictures taken, ever. But some of the crews we have shown have been crews put together at Thurlough from the remnants of other crews, and a number came about when copilots were checked out as first pilots. They may have been given fragments of their old crew when the pilot was lost on a mission flying with someone else, or the pilot was elevated to a lead pilot and did not take his crew with him, and one or two crews seem to have just been a spur of the moment creation that may have only flown one mission together.

Crews came and went for all kinds of reasons. Some went down on their first mission, and a few may have flown most of their missions together, although at

Plan for Fall Trip to Minneapolis

For a pretty good number of us on the mailing list of Echoes, the road to Minneapolis next September will be shorter than was the road, airways, train tracks or whatever to San Diego last September.

It was a good reunion last year on the shores of the Pacific, and it is something that many of us have been able to say each time we departed a reunion in the past 25 years. Some harken back easily to that first 306th reunion in Omaha. These men say it was the best and they bring joy to Don Ross' heart when they tell him how they feel.

But we have had a dedicated series of reunion chairmen and committee members who have given generously of their time and talents to make our reunions a unique experience. And we hope to continue them that way, although there will have to be some serious changes made as we begin to wind down this effort in the next ten years!

Certainly a reunion that was hard to top was the 1992 effort when 400 of us went to Thurlough to mark the 50th anniversary of the 306th's venture into combat with its original 33 planes which reached the runways in England. It was indeed a great week, and one for which a number of people gave great effort, and especially Ralph Franklin and his British committee.

Now we are a year into a new century, or just starting the first year of a new century, depending on whom you listen to or how you calculate such events.

So, it will be our good fortune to be in Minneapolis 5-9 September 2001 for yet another gathering of the 306th. Whatever you did then, and whatever you are doing today, it behooves you to make an effort to be there in spirit, and if the spirit is willing, to be there in body.

There were 300 last year in San Diego, and it is hoped that there will be at least 200 this year on the shores of the Mississippi River, and across the parking lots from the Mall of America. We will be at the Thunderbird Hotel, which will become something of a haven for we veterans for a few days, as well as being a center of mid-American Indian artifacts, which fill much of the first floor of the place.

In this issue there is a form for you to use in making your hotel reservations, and in the April issue of Echoes there will be a second form for you to indicate those events in which you and members of your family will want to make your reservations so that you do not get left behind.

As has been our practice for 25 years, we are shifting the reunion back and forth across these United States to make it available more easily to more people. Minneapolis is easily reachable by plane and automobile. And we will try to be in and out of Minneapolis before the winter descends with a vengeance on the place.

Because of a paucity of 306th men in the area who have had any experience with our reunions, your editor and secretary will handle that function as chairman for the week, and is working to fashion some sessions that will be interesting and fun. Your concern is to be there and to meet some 306'ers you've never met before and contribute your tales to the growing list of stories that have graced all of our get-togethers.

We look forward to seeing many of you in the heart of mid America.

turn to page 2

turn to page 3

Consolmagno Tracks Impact of Raid on Belgians

from page 1

the open country, being borne by the winds toward Antwerp, which I could identify by the forts described to us that morning at the navigators' briefing. I watched our flights of bombers, from

the lead group to the last, drop their bombs and make the turn back toward the fingers of the North Sea that reach through the bordering islands of Belgium and The Netherlands.

The-parachute drop from 20,000 feet

seemed interminable, but eventually I was breathing more easily in the richer atmosphere nearing ground level. At length I realized that I was not going to land in open country, as I had hoped. I was drifting rapidly toward the stricken city and the black palls of smoke now rising from it.

As I approached the Schelde River on the city's outskirts, I had a momentary hope of hitting the parachute quick-release and dropping into the water to attempt evading capture. But, to my good fortune, I was baffled for a moment by the turn direction of the release button of the British-made chute. As I fumbled with the contraption, I noticed that I was passing over a ship berthed on the near shore, perhaps 200 feet below me. I was too far for a free fall.

Nearing the ground my forward motion seemed to be at an incredible speed. A factory building loomed up ahead of me, and I tried to anticipate what I would do if I were swept into its towering walls. I had a quick flash of a newspaper photo I had seen of a German parachutist dangling from a tall factory chimney.

As I dropped I raced by clusters of people, white faces peering up at me. Several raised their hands in what I took to be the V-for-Victory salute. I saluted back with the V.

"On April 5 no alarm was sounded at all and the first sign of trouble was a tremendous explosion across the river. As we started to run towards the sand pits, small items started to rain down on us and later we found large quantities of empty shells and pieces of the bandoleers that held them.

"Obviously the plane had started to break up as it came screaming toward us. After it passed over our heads at about 1,000 feet pieces started coming off. I saw what could have been a tail piece and wing piece or wing section. It pulled up due to excessive speed, stalled and turned on its back. I believe it went all the way around when it finally went in.

"As we stood there, a plane suddenly came across at no more than 200 feet. I recognized it as a FockeWulf 190, probably checking the kill. While still shaking from the last scare, we saw some friends pointing at a chutist, who turned out to be you.

"I have told Jean Dillen that when you came close enough for me to see you rather well, I noticed you were missing a boot. But I also noticed that you seemed to be pulling on the other one and I naturally thought you expected a water landing in the Schelde River, had managed to get rid of one boot and were now trying to drop the other one."

- Letter from Henry Slegers, Belgian Shipyard worker in 1943 12 July 86

I struck the ground, hard, landing on my one boot and collapsing in a heap against a pile of rails, my chute draping over it. In the instant it took me to recover and attempt to release my chute, there was a German soldier standing over me, holding a pistol at my head. I thought it funny for an instant that the man holding the gun should be the one who was shaking. But I raised my hands, slowly. I didn't want him to get any more nervous than he already was.

"All witnesses remember you wearing one boot, your face flushing red while the German arresting you looked very pale. He was a fireman of the Wehrmacht, not used to waging war."

- Letter from Achille Rely, 7 Nov 85

Almost immediately we were joined by the plant manager, a Belgian. "Ete-vous blese?" he asked. "No, I'm all right," I answered. "Englander?" he asked.

"American," I replied. He seemed surprised.

I removed my chute, he helped me to my feet, and a German soldier frisked me for weapons. I had none.

The manager walked with me toward the office, a German with a rifle at the ready behind us. As we passed groups of civilians—men and women—a furtive hand would frequently shoot up from among them in the V-salute. There were scattered calls of "Vive l'Amerique!" all along our way. Each time I responded with the V-salute, the guard nudged me with his rifle.

As we walked, the manager spoke to me quietly and rapidly, informing me in English that except for the plant guards there were few Germans in this section of the city.

"According to witnesses, you dropped into the middle of the Cockerill Shipbuilding Yards situated at Hoboken nearby the Schelde River, southwest of Antwerp. He was very much involved with the Belgian underground resistance. In fact, he helped me on my way through Belgium after my escape from Stalag Luft III."

-Letter from Bob Vanderstok, RAF escapee in the "Great Escape" 24 April 91

A short time after landing, I found myself sitting in a reception office looking out the window at the Nazi flag and feeling that I was really on a stage set back home, trying to remember my lines. A distraught young woman was speaking tearfully to a blond uniformed girl at the desk. The girl said something I couldn't hear and directed the woman's attention to me with sheer hatred. The woman turned a piteous glance toward me. I knew it had something to do with the bombing, and I stared at the floor.

And there is one memory that refuses to dim with passing years. I was squeezed into the back seat of a little car. There was a German guard beside the driver in the front seat, and another next to me in the back. We were in another section of town and we came to an area where fire hoses were stretched across the street. There was debris and rubble all around. Out of a smoldering building, obviously a school, a man emerged carrying the limp form of a child in his arms.

"What do you say to that?" asked the guard up front. "These are your friends, your allies."

There was no possible answer, and yet even appalled silence was inadequate.

"My mother's boss lost his 5 year old daughter in the school you passed with the German escort. In all 35 kids were killed. Yet this fellow knew that the bombing of the school was one of the unavoidable horrors that make war the stupid thing it is. Never, at least not while my mother heard it, did he blame the U S Air Force for his misfortune."

- Letter from Henry Slegers, 12 July 86

St. Giles Prison in Brussels was my last stop in Belgium. From the truck to the railroad station en route to Dulag Luft, I caught a fleeting glimpse of a one-word headline, framed in a black border, at a kiosk along the way—"MORTSEL."

"The raid on the Erla Works was a disaster! The fighters not only downed four 306th planes, but they also diverted the attack so that most of the 8th AF bombs fell on the tiny Belgian town of Mortsel where 943 people were killed and 1300 injured. Only five bombs hit the Erla works; they did, nevertheless, cause extensive damage."

"First Over Germany", Russell Strong 1982

Among the dead were 209 children in three schools that were hit by bombs.



A funeral scene for victims of the 5 Apr 43 raid on Mortsel, Belgium, provided through the courtesy of Jean Dillen.

Noack Heads SSMA Vets

John P. Noack, 369th copilot and pilot, has been elected president of the Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association, the group that commemorates the disaster of 14 Oct 43 on a mission.

He is one of a number of those who survived our 10-plane debacle that day to have served the association in the 55 years since.

Noack also announces that the Black Thursday group will be sponsoring another trip to Schweinfurt for memorial services in October 2001.

If you flew on that mission, the Second Schweinfurt Association would gladly welcome you into its membership. You can contact Second Schweinfurt about membership and travel by writing Noack at 19 Prairie Dunes Dr., Rogers, AR 72758.

Mission Reports Guide 1947 Business Task

Bill Rooney, who was with the 40th Bomb Group, XX Bomber Command (B-29s), has long been on our mailing list. In a recent letter to the editor of *306th Echoes* he relates the following story:

"...one job I had was writing combat mission reports. You know, because of the interest in B-29 operations, those things were extensive. All the maps and diagrams, details of where each bomb landed, position of the AA installations, fighter opposition, pre-strike and post-strike photography and all the rest.

"Well, about a year after I got home from the service I went to work for Monsanto. In 1947 a gigantic explosion of two ships in the harbor at Texas City blew up the Monsanto plant that just happened to be on the docks there. The president of Monsanto directed that a complete insurance claim be prepared with everything laid out. The job filtered down to another guy and me.

"When we got to working on it the decision had to be made as to what the format of the insurance claim would be. You guessed it! It looked exactly like one of those XX Bomber Command combat mission reports. What was the result? The claim was for \$22 million.

"I heard many years later that the Monsanto heavy breathers figured anything over \$13 million would be great. Because of the claim report they collected \$19.6 million. Who would have believed that something so arcane as B-29 combat mission reports could turn out to be so productive in civilian life as happened in this case?"

306th Memorial Fund

Recent gifts to the 306th Memorial Fund are in memory of:

John W. Olson 367th, by Bruce MacLellan, nephew; Waverly Ormond 368th, by Kathy A. Ormond, daughter; Howard LeCompte 367th, by Kim Sumeck, granddaughter; Edgar R. Smith 369th, and Irene Smith, by Mrs. Ray Schieb; Robert M. Bayless 367th, by Christine M. Bayless, wife; Elvin W. Courtright 423rd, by E. Grant Courtright, brother; Harry L. Gile 367th, by Shirley Gile Street, widow

Gifts may be made in memory of 306th personnel or family by sending your check, so designated, to the 306th Memorial Fund, and posting it to the treasurer whose address appears in the column to the left. Gifts will be acknowledged in *306th Echoes*.



Paul Reiox, president; Lowell Burgess, vice president; Russell A. Strong, secretary; Robert N. Houser, treasurer; Frederick Hudson, Leland Kessler, Donald R. Ross, Frederick P. Sherman, directors; Wallace Boring, past president.

Ralph Franklin, British representative, National School Cottage, Keysoe, Beds., MK44 2HP, England; Telephone from U.S. 011-441234-708715.

306th Echoes is published four times annually: January, April, July and October, and is mailed free of charge to all known addresses of 306th personnel, 1942-45. Contributions in support of this effort may be remitted to the treasurer.

SECRETARY/EDITOR:

Handles all changes of address, editorial comments and records.

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TREASURER

Send money to Robert N. Houser, P.O. Box 13362, Des Moines, IA 50310. 515/279/4498.

The 306th Bomb Group Historical Association is a Federally tax-exempt organization and as a veteran's group is classified as 501 (c) (19).

Combat Crews from page 1

Thurleigh this seems to have been something of a rare event. President Paul Reieux's crew bailed out when almost home on its 35th mission when the plane caught fire over England and everyone bailed out.

Some crews were created out of the best the squadron could put together to then function for perhaps ten missions or more as a lead crew.

And, sad to report, a few crews reported in at Thurleigh and never flew a mission as a crew. Evidently "cracks" had appeared in the crew's cohesiveness in crew training in the States, and by the time a group of men were to perform here there had been a "divorce" declared, and in some cases a veteran pilot looking for a crew got everyone except the "old" pilot.

Fate had many twists and turns for the combat fliers, and as one studies the records closely you see all kinds of strange things happening.

Many of the pictures we have used were made in crew training in the States, and some were taken at Thurleigh. By the time some of the former groups got to Thurleigh they may have lost one or more men to illness or other events along the way. Crews had a way of changing.

In a few cases crew pictures have been created for us out of several pictures. The best example of this is the Dale Briscoe crew appearing in this issue. All of the men's pictures were individual shots in effect. They were picked up from several sources, and Briscoe had a photo studio put them together in the manner shown.

We wish we could easily have shown all of the crew pictures. But there was no way the photo lab was geared up to handle pictures of all the crews reporting in, just as there was no plan for photographing all of the aircraft assigned to the 306th. We often wish that both types of pictures had been taken. But we are grateful today that we have what we have. Remember, some years back we ran a two-or-three-year feature on all of the named aircraft for which we could find pictures. Five more crews are pictured in this issue and the editor still has a collection of crew photos for which we have never been able to find any keys as to whom the men were.



JOAN OF ARC



DALE BRISCOE
Pilot



FRED SHERMAN
Co-Pilot



JOHN HICKEY
Bombardier



DAVID MACGHEE
Navigator



ERLAND WENTWORTH
Engineer



VICTOR ROSE
Ball Turret



EDWARD TRAYNOR
Radio Operator



STEPHEN ROSEK
Gunner

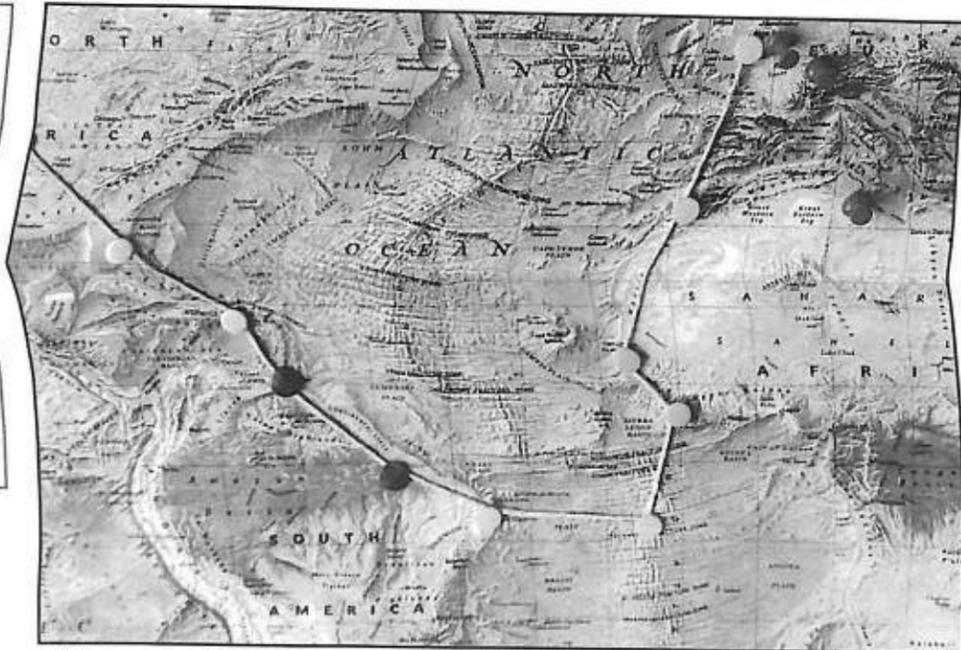


JOHN ROLLER
Tail Gunner

Letter to the Editor:

Dear Russ:
What superb photos on the back page of the last issue. I reckon that Echoes is consistently the best of all the bomber newsletters. Excellent historical cover and something really new in each issue. The best of good health and happiness for 2001.

Roger Freeman
British Historian &
8th Air Force Authority



This annotated chart shows the route that three early crews took in bringing their planes to Thurleigh. The Dale Briscoe, Dick O'Hara and John Magoffin crews left Salina, KS, 11 Dec 42 for West Palm Beach, FL, flying 7:45 hours; 20 Dec to Borinquen Field, Puerto Rico, 6:15; 20 Dec to Waller Field, Trinidad, 6:00; 21 Dec to Belem, Brazil, 8:00; 27 Dec to Natal, Brazil, 7:05; 30 Dec, to Ascension Island, 8:45; 31 Dec, to Roberts Field, Freetown, Sierra Leone, 4:50; 2 Jan 43, to Lumdum Field, Bathurst, Gambia, 4:35; 2 Jan, to Marrakech, French Morocco, 9:45; 12 Jan, to St. Eval, England, 10:00, and 13 Jan 43, to AKF Station 111, Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England, 1:50. This was a total flying time of 75 hours and 50 minutes over 31 days.

Picture of Briscoe Crew Only Took 58 Years to Appear

By C. Dale Briscoe

After 58 years we finally have a picture of our original crew members who departed from Salina, KS, 11 Dec 42 and arrived at Thurleigh 13 Jan 43, along with the Dick O'Hara and John Magoffin crews.

At West Palm Beach we got our new aircraft equipped with bomb bay tanks, over-water equipment and navigation charts for the Southern hemisphere. We were told to send our winter clothes home as we would be operating out of a hot, dry climate, possibly the CBI.

We were given sealed orders, not to be opened until we were airborne. Needless to say, we were quite nose heavy immediately after takeoff as all crew members came to the cockpit to learn where we were going.

Our orders directed us to Accra, Gold Coast, where we would receive further orders. Along the way we granted ourselves a few days' leave for Christmas in Belem, Brazil, where we spent the day listening to two records: Bing Crosby's White Christmas and the Andrews Sisters' Beer Barrel Polka. After Christmas, we left for Ascension Island, a fly speck in the middle of the South Atlantic Ocean. This was an exciting trip considering the limited navigation aids we had available to us and the size of the island.

At Ascension we received new orders to go to Marrakech, French Morocco instead of Accra. This was a few weeks after the Allies' invasion of North Africa, and I assume this occasioned the change. After 10 days at Marrakech we were ordered to England and subsequently to

Thurleigh.

I would guess the 306th had experienced some heavy losses and we men and our planes were needed there. It was great arriving at Thurleigh in January with nothing but khakis to wear. We were given a pass to London to visit the Quartermaster's Warehouse and to buy new uniforms.

I think we three crews were the only 306th men to take this particular route to combat.

12 Worst Missions of 8th Miss...306th

Hell in the Heavens, Ill-fated 8th Air Force Bomb Group Missions, by William N. Hess. Specialty Press, North Branch, MN, 2000. Paperbound. 140pp.

Twelve ill-fated missions, indeed! Fortunately, for those of you reading this issue of Echoes, the 306th does not have a mission devoted solely to us, nor did we ever lead one of these bad ones in casualties. Our worst days were 17 Apr 43 at Bremen, 14 Oct 43 at Schweinfurt, and 24 Apr 44 at Oberpfaffenhofen, and on these occasions we lost 10 a/c each time.

Each of these 12 missions is dealt with in some detail, and some of the noteworthy planes are pictured.

Condensing the details in the chart below seems the best way to convey some of the salient information, and the number appearing after the Bomb Group number is that of the bomb/air division it was a part of.

Date	Group	Target	Loss	306th Loss	8th AF Loss
6 Sep 43	388th-3	Stuttgart	11	2	45
14 Oct 43	305th-1	Schweinfurt	13	10	60
6 Mar 44	100th-3	Berlin	15	1	69
18 Mar 44	392nd-2	Friedrichshafen	14	0	43
8 Apr 44	44th-2	Brunswick	11	0	34
11 Apr 44	96th-3	Rostock	11	2	64
12 May 44	452nd-3	Brux	14	0	46
20 Jun 44	492nd-2	Politz	14	1	50
27 Sep 44	445th-2	Kassel	28	0	26
28 Sep 44	303rd-1	Magdeburg	11	0	34
2 Nov 44	91st-1	Merseberg	13	0	40
26 Nov 44	491st-2	Misberg	15	0	34

N.B. 1 Division-B-17s, 2 Division-B-24s, 3 Division-B-17s.

The vagaries of planning, weather and actual operations sometimes took the 306th to other targets: 18 Mar-Lechfeld, 8 Apr-not flying, 11 Apr-Stettin, 12 May-Merseberg, 20 Jun-Hamburg, 27 Sep-Cologne.

Movie Basis for Classes at West Point

By Russ Strong

When a call came about two weeks before Thanksgiving, I was asked if I would be interested in and able to come to the U. S. Military Academy at West Point, NY, to talk to cadets and faculty about the movie, "12 O'Clock High."

After the briefest of discussions with Maj. Mark Tribus, I agreed to come, and within a week we had planned the itinerary, flight reservations were made and after church on Sunday, 19 Nov, I was at the Charlotte, NC, airport for my trip north. It was snowing heavily in Charlotte at the time and had been since early morning.

Although weather was clear and storm-free in Newark, NJ, we were off a bit late and didn't land until an hour past our original arrival time. Maj. Tribus and a friend met me there and we motored north to the Academy. The evening gave us time to get me up to speed on the program there.

Cadets at the Academy are all shown "our" movie because of its lessons on command and leadership. I hadn't watched the film in some years, but on the Saturday before my departure I slipped my video tape into the TV and spent my morning once again living the life of the 306th. Once on the plane I had my copy of the book in hand and began reading it, finishing most of it by lights out that evening.

I came away feeling that the story in the film did not drift far away from events as they happened at Thurlough and the three other original Groups of the Eighth. The book's authors, who were also the film script writers, kept it very close to reality.

West Point faculty were particularly interested that I had interviewed Col. Chip Overacker and Gen. Ira Eaker about their roles in the opening scenes of the film when the change of command comes. The details are slightly different, but the result was the same.

Cadets asked questions, and were interested in the fact that I had completed my combat tour before I was 21, as did many of you reading this. I talked about the men and planes of the Group and how they had responded to combat throughout the years from 1942 and into April of 1945.

In the introductions made for me to about eight classes of cadets and a group of about 50 faculty, my age during WWII was constantly kept before them, and I discussed the ages generally of the combat crews. We talked about many aspects of the entire combat experience and about the interrelationships of crew members in their planes and on the ground.

"12 O'Clock High" is also used in a similar format at the Harvard School of Business for its graduate students, as well as other institutions. In some sense the early men of the 306th find themselves playing roles for eternity.



Russ Strong talks to a class of West Point cadets about combat flying.

No Medals for Normandy

A onetime RCAF mechanic, now living in Nova Scotia, has been a sometime correspondent with the editor, and several years ago contributed a bit of 306th history, as he had observed the crash of one of our planes while trying to make an emergency landing on a British field on return from a mission. He has written, once again, to comment on our earlier piece about "Medals", but does not wish to have his name attached to this piece.

"An item in your latest Echoes, re: medals for combat duty brought to mind the situation for Canadians and the British concerning Normandy.

"History professors at a nearby university assure me that Normandy is considered as one of the great battles of all history, yet we get no credit whatever for being there.

"There is, sold by Bomber Command (about \$25 U.S.) a medal with a bar "Normandy". There is now for the 50th anniversary of D-Day, a French medal, which was originally only available by it being presented.

"Otherwise, there is NO credit whatsoever for the Battle of Normandy for Canadians or British.

"We had several Americans in our squadron, which was one of the first complete air units to serve in Normandy. I don't know if the Americans have an Advance Party (D+6) Normandy medal or not. I hope they do.

"All the Canadian and British governments would have to do, is buy a few thousand of the bars from the Bomber Command medal, to wear on the France-Germany medal. This would be better than nothing.

"I'd appreciate it, if you print something on this subject, that you did not print my name, as your British representative might get stirred up and the Department of Veterans Affairs might come after me."

Sincerely, An RCAF Friend

The Gulf War a Turning Point in Modern Military History

"Desert Storm introduced 'parallel warfare', in which the enemy is hit everywhere at once, making it virtually impossible for him to adjust, adapt, or mount a counteroffensive. In the Gulf War, the coalition struck 150 individual targets the first day. By contrast, Eighth Air Force in World War II hit only 50 target sets in all of 1943...Properly supported and intelligently employed, the armed forces won the (Gulf) war in a spectacular fashion."

- John T. Correll
Air Force magazine

306th MAIL ORDER MEMORABILIA

Send this form and check to 306th Bomb Group Association to: Jack Frost, PO Box 13362, Des Moines, IA 50310

Squadron Golf Shirts

Embroidered with B-17, squadron # and group #
Circle size in listing below:

367th red	M, L, XL	\$20.00
368th white	M, L, XL	\$20.00
369th green	M, L, XL	\$20.00
423rd blue	M, L, XL	\$20.00

Group Golf Shirts

Embroidered with 306th logo on left pocket

Putty color	S, M, L, XL 2X, 3X	\$20.00 add \$5.00
Natural color	S, M, L, XL 2X, 3X	\$20.00 add \$5.00
Birch color	S, M, L, XL 2X, 3X add	\$20.00 \$5.00

306th Hat

Royal Blue, w/scrambled eggs on brim and 306th logo \$15.00

369th Hat

Grey summer, embroidered w/369th BS, B-17, First Over Germany \$10.00

306th Patch 3 inch, w/First Over Germany	\$5.00
306th Patch 2 in. without First Over Germany	5.00
306th Patch, w.Group logo, 5 in.	5.00
367th Patch, 5 in. in full color	5.00
368th Patch, 5 in. in full color	5.00
369th Patch, 5 in. in full color	5.00
423rd Patch, 5 in. in full color	5.00
B-17 Gold pin for lapel or hat	5.00
306th decal w/First over Germany	.50
306th Coasters, metal, black & silver, set of 4 in container	4.00

Total _____

Up to 2 lbs. 3.00

Priority Mail 3.95

Grand Total _____

Ship to:

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____



368th. Front: Stanley M. Mathes wg, Charles O. Holt B, Robert S. Tomlinson N, Richard T. Gregg CP, William T. McCaulie P. Back: Harry L. Kabrieh wg, Lloyd G. Breeden bt, Raymond W. Roy eng, J.R. Winborn ro, Clement R. White tg.



368th. Front: Henry Kelling eng, Allen R. Berglund ro, William R. Humphreys g, George P. Hicks tg and Marvin W. Zahn g. Back: Duane R. Clocksin P, Paul W. Smith CP, Joseph V. Casino N and Robert I. McCutchan B.



369th. Front: Rudolph Marti eng, Carl F. Barnes g, Ambrose McCann togg. Back: Robert E. Lawlor ro, Fred H. White tg, Carl A. Snider bt, not 306th, John F. Deterding CP, J. Clair Sowers N and Howard T. Few P.



369th. Front: Benjamin Gordon eng, James P. Brown N. Center: Harold Lightbown ro, Harvey Cox tg, Cecil Smith wg, Peter Pappas bt. Back: Michael Zinkovich B, George Bettinger CP, Alphonse Maresh P and Ray May wg.

Report from Detachment A, 876th Chemical Company

From 1 Apr to 30 Apr 1944, a series of personnel changes brought detachment enlisted strength from 60 to 62 men during the month. Pvt. Robert T. Thornton, attached to the organization in March, was assigned on 8 April. On the same order, Pvt. Marsloff, attached to the unit for several months and erroneously carried as assigned on the original historical roster, was also assigned.

T/3 Alvin Kott was transferred to the 876th Chemical Company at AAF Station 105 on 20 April, but on the same date Pvt. Gene L. Goodwin was transferred to the detachment from the same organization.

On April 30 Pvt Stephen Racz was assigned and joined from the 876th Chemical Company at AAF Station 105.

Incendiary loadings for April were not as high as during the previous month but were still large. For the first time since January, Fortresses from this station carried M-17 50-lb aimable incendiary clusters, dropping 120 during the month. In addition, 2170 M-47 100-lb incendiaries found their targets in Europe. This figure is approximately two-thirds the number loaded in March.

Reduction in the number of incendiaries loaded, however, meant little reduction in the amount of work to be done by detachment personnel. Our personnel were called on almost nightly in the loading of all types of bombs as bombing activity increased throughout Northern France.

The increase in work to be done brought about a cancellation of furloughs, but the policy of periodic 24-hour and 48-hour passes was continued.

Editor Errs on Noack Obit

The editor offers his sincere apologies to John Paul Noack for erroneously reporting his demise in the October issue of Echoes. Information received in writing to the editor, appeared to be legitimate and he carried through on the report. No one was more surprised than Noack, and reported the misinformation to the editor, followed by a significant stream of notes from others who had either seen him or heard from Noack in the intervening period.

We won't repeat the item, but would report that Noack has been elected president of the Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association, a small but active group of men who survived the infamous 14 Oct 43 raid. Noack's was one of 10 planes lost that day by the 306th, with the total downed for the 8th being 60 a/c. Five of our ships made it to the target and home again.

The latest directory of the 306th Association is still available at \$10. Mail your check to the Secretary to obtain it. Also still available is the Casey Jones Project book by Robert Boyd of SAC, at \$10. Send checks to 5323 Cheval Place, Charlotte, NC 28205.

Order Directory Now!



423rd. Front: Douglas Panchot eng, John Tinklenberg tg, Bill Jung ro, Harold Demorest bt. Back: Kenneth Jacobson CP, John Endicott P, Douglas Kirkalde togg, and Paul Zahniser N.

Roster Additions

Here are some new names who have come to our roster, and a couple of people who disappeared, were found and are back on the mailing list with new addresses.

- Mrs Robert B. Armstrong, 369W, 112 Granada Ln, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL, 32082
- Richard B. Bale, 423rd, 6586 112nd Ave, Fennville, MI 49408
- Robert W. Davenport, 423rd, 25 Bedington Ct, Toms River, NJ 08757
- Tunis Dykstra, 367, 4025 Darien Hwy, Brunswick, GA 31525
- Carmen J. C. Jackson, 368, 119 N Adolpha Cir., Enid, OK 93703
- Roland A. Lissner, 367, 220 W Avenida Cordoba, San Clemente, CA 92672
- L. Leroy Sibley, 423, 7220 Piric Dr, Denham Springs, LA 70726
- Kenneth D. Simpson, 369, 567 Dartmouth St, South Dartmouth, MA 02875

Deaths

Lionel D. Alford, 367th copilot (Richard Jenkins crew), died of cancer 24 Oct 00 in Wichita, KS. He had arrived 4 Apr 45 and his only mission was flown on the final day of combat for the Group. But, as a B-47 pilot during Korea he flew 100 missions. Alford left USAF in 1954 and became a test pilot for Boeing Airplane Co., and then followed seven years as a vice president of its Missiles and Space Div., promotion to senior vice president, and finally president of the Boeing Military Airplane Co., from 1977 until retirement in 1984. He earned a degree in engineering at Louisiana Technical U. His first wife died in 1992, and he is survived by his second wife, Jane, 2s, 5gc. He was widely praised in Wichita for his civic leadership.

Duane Brunner, 423rd ball turret gunner (Kenneth Blackshaw crew), died 20 Oct 00 in Bettendorf, IA, where he spent his entire life except for WWII service. He leaves his wife, Glea.

Ralph P. Cain, 4th Station Complement Squadron, died in 1998 in Canton, GA. He also served on the furnace stoking detail in cold weather at Thurleigh.

Russell E. Dow, 369th engineer (David Weed crew), died 14 Oct 00 in Lake City, MI. Arriving 27 Mar 45, he flew at least six missions by the end of combat. Returning home, he joined the Michigan State Police, retiring as a sergeant 24 Feb 77, and later retired as police chief at the Kent County, MI, airport. He leaves his wife, Marjorie, 4c, 6gc, 1ggd.

Lawrence Edlund, 368th radio operator (William Ruffin crew), died 4 May 88 in St. Paul, MN. He came in Jun 44 and finished his combat tour in Jan 45. Edlund leaves his wife, 1c, 3gc, 2ggc.

Howard T. Few, 369th pilot, died in Mar 2000 in Big Canoe, GA. He had joined the Group 9 Apr 45.

Robert D. Folk, 423rd engineer and POW (Vernon Cole crew), died 23 Oct 99 in Homer, MI. He ended up in Stalag-Luft XVIIIB after their plane went down 14 Oct 43 on Black Thursday, the second Schweinfurt raid. He leaves his wife, Doris, 2c, 5gc.

Wesley W. Gunkel, 423rd navigator (Kenneth Blackshaw crew), died 12 May 00 in Ithaca, NY, where he was a retired professor of agronomy from Cornell U. His particular expertise was in the cultivation of pineapples. He had become squadron navigator for the 423rd in Apr 45. He left the Group 19 May 45.

Aylett E. Jacobson, 368th gunner (Robert Chrisjohn crew), died 30 Oct 00 in Cottonwood, AZ. He arrived with the Group 17 Jul 44, flew 35 missions and left in late December. He leaves his wife, Fay.

Virgil H. Jeffries, 423rd copilot (Thomas Logan crew) and pilot, died 7 Dec 00 in Vienna, VA, where he had lived many years. He was also a POW, MIA 26 Nov 43 on a mission to Bremen. After returning home he completed law school and was a practicing attorney for many years for the Federal government. He leaves his wife, Andella, 1d, 6gc.

Saul M. Kupferman, 423rd gunner and the power behind the Atlanta chapter of the 8th AF Historical Society, died 28 Dec 00 in Atlanta after a long battle with cancer. He came to the Group 16 Oct 43 with Elmer Heap's crew and completed his 30 mission combat tour 23 Jul 44. After service he had a long career with AAA Georgia Motor Club, retiring in 1987. For years he was secretary of the 8th's Atlanta chapter, 16 years spent as editor of its quarterly, "Tall Tales", and one year as

president. He leaves his wife, Dorothy.

Constantine J. (Gus) Lamb, 367th waist gunner (Walter Boite crew) and POW 14 Oct 43 (William Bisson crew), died 1 Jun 2000 in Carle Place, NY. He arrived with the Group 15 Jul 43 and flew more than a dozen missions. He was long active in the Second Schweinfurt Association. His wife died some years earlier.

William H. Lillywhite, 1208th QM Company, died in 1998 in Canton, GA, his daughter has informed us.

Charles F. Miller, 367th gunner and POW (w. Gaylord Ritland), died 27 Jun 2000 in La Jolla, CA. He was shot down 15 May 43 at Wilhelmshaven. He spent his post-prison days working for other WWII veterans through the American Ex-Prisoners of War. His efforts were recognized in his election as national commander in 1982-83, and was later liaison between the association and the Veterans Administration. He and his wife, Kay, were married for 57 years and had no children.

Ernest T. Moriarty, a 368th engineer and evadec, died 31 Mar 00 in Orange, MA. He actually joined the Group in Jun 42 as a private, went to combat with the original group and then switched to combat crew status in Jan 43. He flew nine missions before being MIA 8 Mar 43 on a raid to Rennes, France (w. Otto Buddenbaum). He was the 24th evadec from the 8th and was back in England 1 Apr 43. On 30 May 43 he transferred to the 96BG and completed his 25-mission tour including trips to Russia and Italy. Much later Moriarty wrote of his experiences and published a book, "One Mission Into 23". His civilian occupation was as a long haul trucker with Specter Freight. He leaves his wife, Margaretta.

James G. Parks, 367th pilot, died in Sep 97 in Tallahassee, FL. He arrived with the Group 30 Jun 43 and departed 7 Sep 44. He had two degrees from Florida State U and retired in Jun 82 as a utility rate supervisor for the Florida Public Service Commission. He leaves his wife Juanita, 3c, 2gc.

Joseph Rawza, 423rd medic, died in late 00 in Roseville, MI.

Fred J. Reinke, 369th engineer, died 7 Mar 94 of cancer. He joined the Group 7 Jul 44 without a crew and completed his combat tour in Nov 44.

Andrew Stefano, 367th bombardier (Paul Martin crew), died 14 Sep 00 in Brooklyn, NY, where he had lived his entire life. He leaves his wife, 1s.

Chauncey T. Taft, a 369th intelligence clerk, died 2 Mar 00 in Stone Mountain, GA. He leaves his wife, Doris, an English war bride, 1c, 1gc.

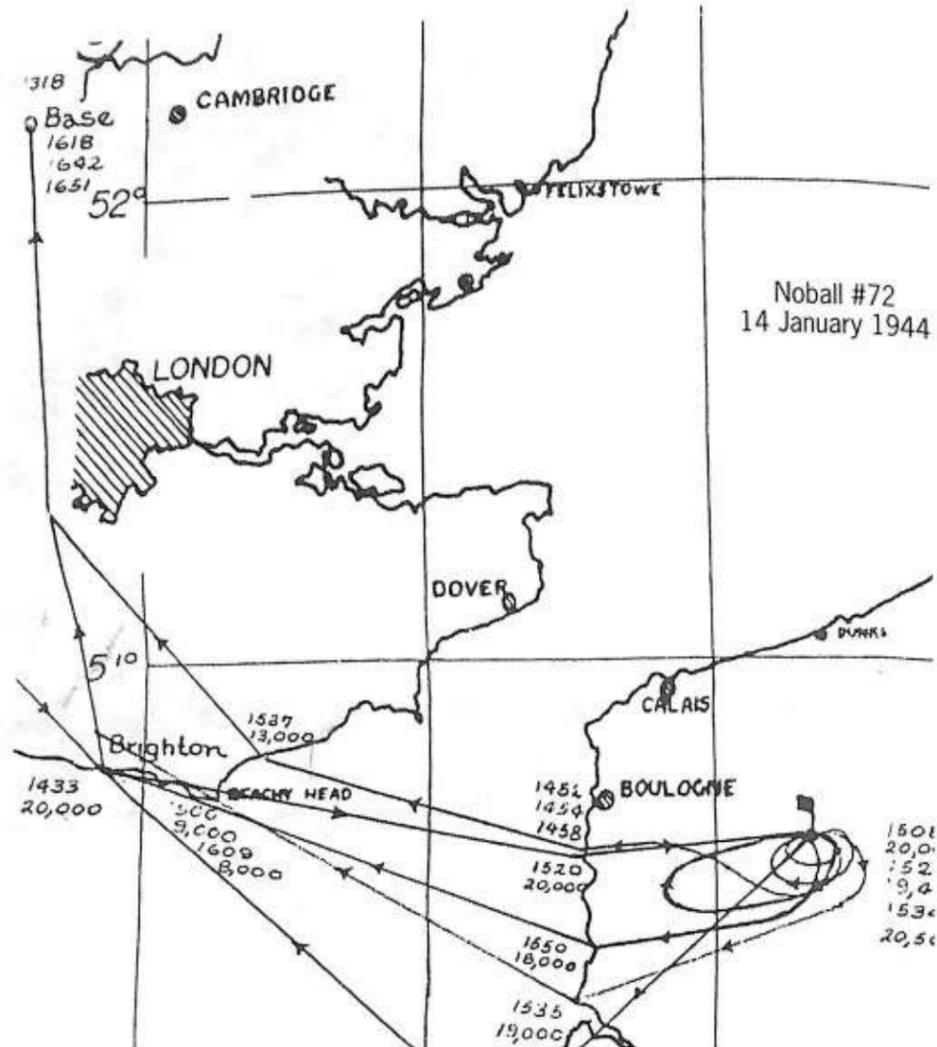
John A. Val, a 367th waist gunner (Wilford Bergener crew), died 31 Aug 00 in Brookfield, CT. He joined the Group 16 Feb 45 and flew about 10 missions. For years he owned the John Val Tire Co, and was also a bank director. He leaves his wife, Aida, 2c, 4gc, 4ggc.

Patrick A. Walsh, 367th waist gunner (James Winter crew), died 23 Apr 00 in Southbur CT. He joined the Group 8 Aug 43, and was MIA 8 Oct 43 (w. Thomas Ledgerwood), on a mission to Bremen. He leaves his wife, Gilda, and several daughters.

Forrest W. Yorgason, 423rd engineer (Kenneth Blackshaw crew), died 16 Oct 00 in Provo, UT, where he had lived since returning from service. He had joined the Group 28 Oct 44 and completed his tour 12 Apr 45.

Family

Jeannette Chaddick, wife of Nathan Chaddick (formerly Chadakoff), 369th gunner, died 17 Nov 00 in Las Vegas, NV. She leaves also 4c, 4gc.



Col. Robinson Praises Group

To: All Personnel, AAF Station 111

1. On 14 January 1944 this Group was called upon, on very short notice, to participate in a bombing mission against targets in Northern France. The Ordnance and Armament Sections were called upon to do six (6) hours' work in three (3) hours. The combat crews were called upon to fly without proper time to ready their equipment, get into their gear, or even have a proper meal. The mess halls were called upon for sandwiches, then meals, and then sandwiches again. The mechanics were called upon to change their plans at a very late date. The Intelligence Section was called upon to brief lead teams almost without preparation.

2. In spite of these difficulties, a large number of airplanes were put into the air at the appointed time, perfectly performed their bombing mission, and returned safely to base. The success of this mission was made possible by, and is directly attributable, to the complete co-operation of all members concerned at this station.

3. I wish to congratulate each of you directly concerned with the successful completion of this mission, and to thank you for expending the extra effort to make it possible. It is only because you evidenced this splendid spirit of co-operation under adverse circumstances that your Group was complimented by higher headquarters for work on this mission. It is this same spirit of co-operation that has enabled the 306th Bombardment Group (H) and AAF Station 111 to remain on the top of the 8th Air Force heap.

4. Again, congratulations, and keep up the good work!

George L. Robinson,
Colonel, AC Commanding

Target: Noball 72 (see chart above), 1506 hours, 20,000 feet, 85°, bomb run 90 seconds.
Air Commander: LTC William S. Raper
Pilot: Lt. Howard C. Sharkey
Navigator: Capt. James S. Cheney
Bombardier: Lt. Malcolm A. Phillips
Enlisted crew (all from Craig Powell's 369th crew): T/Sgt. Orville C. Hill ro, T/Sgt. George A. Vogt eng, S/Sgt. Earl E. Wynn bt, Sgt. Everett L. Minto lw, S/Sgt. Walter W. Lastinger tg. (no rw gunner aboard).

Late Arrival, Quick Trip to Stalag Luft III

After midnight, 13 Oct 43, the door to our barracks opened, lights were turned on. A voice informed us that a new arrival had been assigned to our barracks, a bombardier named Francis Banda, a lieutenant. Good night!

I was near the door and I told him that the bunk next to mine was empty. We all assured him that we would get him up when we got up. He hit the sack.

Next morning we all went to breakfast, then to the mission briefing. I was very surprised to find out that Lt. Banda had been assigned to my crew for the mission to Schweinfurt. Our B-17 went down on the bomb run, all bailed out.

More than a week later, I had an opportunity to talk with Lt. Banda at Stalag Luft III. I asked what he thought about events of 14 October. He said that since it was his only mission he had nothing to compare it with and he assumed it was just a typical mission!

- Richard Butler

Editor's note: Butler's was one of three crews of the 10 lost that day by the 306th to not lose a man to enemy action. Banda died 10 May 58. He was one of seven officers arriving with the 306th on 5 Oct 43, none of whom is now living, and the records show no trace of these men between 6 Oct and 13 Oct. Perhaps they were sent to Bovingdon for orientation. Anyone have any other clues?

Latest Addition

Kenneth D. Simpson, 369th waist gunner (Robert Schoch crew) is a new addition to our mailing list. He flew more than 18 missions and was MIA 26 Mar 44 on a mission to the Pas de Calais, France, with William Price. Now he is a resident of the Brandon Woods Retirement Center in South Dartmouth, MA, due to the total paralysis of his left side after suffering a stroke. His complete address is in the New Members list of this issue.

We are still finding them! Ken's name showed up on e-mail, as his daughter, Vicki Bentley, was seeking information as to whether he had actually served with the 306th, or some other Group. The editor responded and quickly came back more information about Ken, so we welcome both Ken and Vicki to our mailing list.



Thurleigh School

On behalf of all the children and staff at Thurleigh Lower School, I am writing to express our appreciation for the very generous cheque (\$500) presented recently to us by Mr. Ralph Franklin on behalf of the 306th Bomb Group Association. As we are currently reviewing and restocking our library this is especially welcome and will be used to purchase non-fiction books. Ralph Franklin makes the check presentation to Ingrid Bell, headteacher.



It wasn't all flying!

306th PUBLICATIONS

Published materials now available from the Group will help you follow the 306th through the combat period, 1942-5:

- Combat Diaries of the 306th Squadrons**
Day-by-day diaries kept by intelligence officers, of the Squadrons' combat activities. More than 150 pages, also including plane and personnel rosters. Plastic bound.
- 306th Echoes, on microfiche**
Now available from 1976-1994, with a 41-page index covering those years. Can be viewed at any library.
- Men of the 306th, on microfilm**
A role of 16mm film duplicates the 306th card file of nearly 9,000 men, including data extracted from various 306th records, and personal data on some of the men. 1995 edition.
- Mission Reports**
Copies of official reports on each mission you flew, including intelligence summaries, track charts, formations and crew interrogation reports. Data for some missions may be missing from the files. Three missions for \$5.

ORDER FORM	367th Combat Diary	\$17.00
	368th Combat Diary	\$17.00
	369th Combat Diary	\$17.00
	423rd Combat Diary	\$17.00
	306th ECHOES' Microfiche: 1975-1994	\$15.00
	1992-1994	\$ 5.00
	Men of The 306th	\$20.00
	Casey Jones Project	\$10.00

Make check payable to 306th Bomb Group Association (prices quoted include postage and packaging charge)

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Send to: Secretary, 306th BGA, 5323 Cheval Pl., Charlotte, NC 28205



Sweating out the mail line on the way to the showers.



The way an enlisted barracks should look.



A quiet evening at home.



The Dingleberry Hall crowd.

The editor would appreciate identifications for any of these pictures.

**REGISTRATION FORM
306th BOMBARDMENT GROUP REUNION
SEPTEMBER 5-9, 2001**

Mail to: Reservations
Thunderbird Hotel
2201 East 78th Street
Bloomington, MN 55425

Name _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Names of Additional Person(s) Sharing the Room

Please check the type of accommodations desired:

Number of Guestrooms:	Type of Accommodation
_____	(1) Guest \$88.00/Room
_____	(2) Guest \$88.00/Room

For all reservations, please list each guest's name above. Suite rates are available upon request. Please call the hotel direct at 952-854-3411, extension 3383. Guestrooms need to be reserved by Friday, August 24, 2001. After Friday, August 24, 2001 reservations will be confirmed on a space available basis.

Special requests: _____ Non-smoking _____ Smoking _____

Check in Time: 3:00pm Check out Time: 11:00am

The hotel will accommodate early arrivals on a space availability basis.

Arrival Date: _____

The Thunderbird Hotel and Convention Center requires an advanced deposit equal to the first night's room rate or a major credit card number in order to guarantee reservations.

Card Type: _____

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Signature: _____

Advanced Deposit: Include one night's room rate plus 12.5% tax. Deposits are refundable if cancelled (24) hours in advance of arrival date.