

# The Ragged Irregular

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
**ATTENTION!**

THIS FIRST CLASS MAILING OF THE R/I IS AN ALERT. FINAL 91st BGMA 1988 CONVENTION REGISTRATION AND HOTEL FORMS ARE INCLUDED ON INSIDE PAGES.

DON'T WAIT! OLD AND NEW FRIENDS AWAIT YOU IN CHICAGO.

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322nd SQDN



323rd SQDN



SUPPORTING UNITS



324th SQDN



401st SQDN

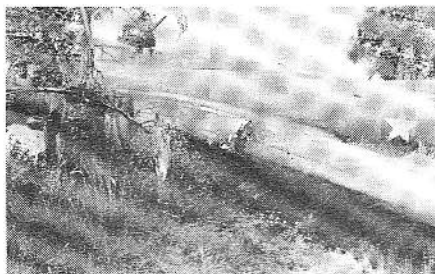
Vol. 21, No. 3

91st Bombardment Group (H) Newsletter

July 1988

The Stars and Stripes, Dec. 3, 1943:

## "RAIDS HINGE ON PERFECT PATCHWORK"



Brittle paper envelopes from the past contain these photos of 91st BG(H) Fortress crashes. Brief notes on the envelopes provide the following information. Left: STORMY WEATHER, ORS 25225, 323rd Sq, Mar. 4, 1943 - "No hydraulic pressure, motor on fire, etc." Center: HELLES BELLES, ORP 230157, 323rd Sq, July 28, 1943 - "Returning from Kassel, Germany, hydraulic

system shot-up, no brakes, bombardier hurt." Right: Believed to be a portion of the crash site of the 322nd Sq's "PADDY GREMLIN JR" which is detailed further on an inside page photo. Groundcrews, when unable to repair a Fort, salvaged "bits and pieces" to keep others flying.

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE IS REPRINTED FROM THE Dec. 3, 1943 edition of *The Stars and Stripes* as a partial tribute to the members of the Supporting Units and all Ground Crewmen of the 91st BG(H) whose dedication and devotion to their assigned duties was the foundation upon which our Proud Past was built. Future editorial contributions to the R/I pertaining to them will insure that proper recognition of their too often unrecognized, but desperately necessary work, will continue as long as a memory of the Flight Crews they kept aloft remains.

AMERICAN HEAVY BOMBERS ARE SETTING OUT THESE days for Germany in perfect condition. Some of them are coming back "a helluva mess," in the words of the boys who are fighting the war with pliers and wrenches.

And a good many planes are winging over the Reich as literal junkheaps, patched together into aerial perfection from salvaged parts of hopelessly wrecked ships.

Hamburg, Berlin, Schweinfurt - these are headlines to ground crewmen. Keeping their planes in operation, that's the war to them.

Their great sleek ships go out flawlessly tuned, four motors swinging great balanced props, wings true and smooth. Some come back torn with flak, battered by cannon shells, ripped by rockets and punctured by machine-gun bullets. As one ground crewman put it:

"It's just like letting your wife take the car on a shopping trip downtown - you don't know in what condition she's going to bring the buggy back."

### 'Bad Egg' Made Good

But Forts and Libs dish it out-and they can take it.

The Fortress Bad Egg has been flying over Europe for a year now. She has had 15 new engines. Every wing gas tank has been punctured and replaced. Oxygen bottles have exploded in her "wine cellar." A 20 mm. cannon shell practically broke her back. Shell fire destroyed the rear control cables.

Today, all that is left of the original ship is the left wing, the vertical stabilizer and parts of the main fuselage. Everything else is a replacement or an alteration. The Bad Egg now has "Tokio tanks" in the wing tips to lengthen her operational range, and nose guns-unheard of a year ago-to complete her protective ring of fire.

When the Egg landed in England a year ago, 69 flying hours out of Seattle, she was known as 41-24484, and was assigned to M/Sgt. Clifford Pierce, of Knoxville, Tenn., and his ground crew.

After the Lorient raid of Dec. 30, the ground crew affectionately

Continued on page 4

## CONVENTION INTEREST PORTENDS "GOOD ONE"

ATTENDANCE AT MOST 91st BGMA NATIONAL conventions has been rising steadily. It is hoped the 1988 National Reunion at Chicago, IL will continue the trend. There are indications it will.

The indicators are the enthusiasm apparent in communications from 91st BGMAers. It is impossible to list them all but former 324th Crew-chief MSGT Otto E. Meikus (Ret), who now resides in Cambridge, England, took time to write he and his wife, Gladys, plan to attend the Chicago Convention.

And Edward Ahyte, of Capt Phil Collins' "WILD HARE" 324th crew, writes diligent efforts have located all but two of the surviving members of that crew. The five located so far will meet at the Chicago Convention for their first reunion since the war. He seeks assistance in locating the two missing members whose names and partial addresses are: Edward Robjohns, Orange, NJ and Neil Smith, Oklahoma City, OK. Anyone having information on them can increase the "WILDHARE" crew attendance by writing: Ed Ahyte, 2211 Fernvale, Stockton, CA 95207.

Continued on page 2

## FLASH!

"STORMY WEATHER, A B-17 TRILOGY, A BOOK dealing primarily with the 91st's first year of combat operations and the 323rd's "THE DELTA REBEL NO. 2," will be available at the 91st BGMA Reunion in Chicago, IL, Aug. 31 - Sept. 5, 1988.

Author Col. George P. Birdsong (Ret), former DELTA REBEL pilot, announced publication is set for Aug. 15, 1988 and only "something drastic" can change his publisher's plans for a sales desk at the Chicago-Marriott Hotel. Birdsong will autograph purchased copies upon request.

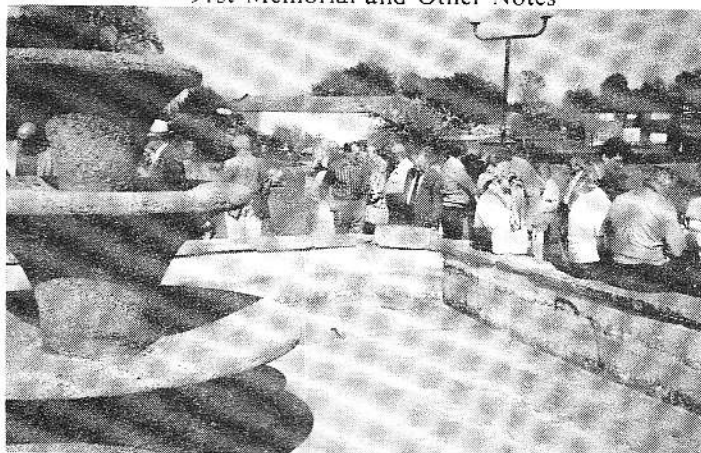
The 285 page hard cover book also includes some 50 photos of 91st history. It will sell for about \$17.95. In addition to quality printing by the Hambleton Publishing Co. of California the book is unique inasmuch as no professional ghost-writing was utilized.

Replete with vivid imagery and accurate detail of early 91st data, it is the sole product of the author who relied heavily upon information supplied by other survivors of that time. Those building a 91st BG history library should not miss this one. Details on the book's availability after the Convention will be published later.

## POTPOURRI

## ENGLAND

## 91st Memorial and Other Notes



The ravages of time upon the Royston Memorial Fountain are apparent in this photo taken during the 1987 "Back to Bassingbourn" 91st BGMA tour. A red granite Memorial is being considered as a replacement.

• **SILVER ALTAR BOWL - REPLACEMENT PLANS FOR THE** Silver Bowl which was stolen from the altar in the Chapel of the American Military Cemetery in Madingley progress. Designed by Gen. Stanley T. Wray and paid for by donations from 91st BGMAers, the original bowl was dedicated in June 1963.

The suggestion of the Superintendent of the US Cemetery that an engraved, highly polished brass bowl to match the current brass candlesticks is part of the restoration plans. The dedication date will be announced as soon as possible.

• **ROYSTON MEMORIAL FOUNDATION - THE RAVAGES OF** time upon the Royston Memorial Fountain have resulted in a recommendation for its removal by local authorities. The recirculating water fountain, whose cornerstone bears Gen. Wray's initials, will be replaced by another suitable memorial to the 91st BG's war-time presence and the friendship between its personnel and the townspeople of Royston.

A red granite Memorial is being considered as the fountain's replacement. Mrs. Pat Rule, a former Mayor of Royston, describes the proposed replacement as, "An upright column in polished Imperial Granite, five feet tall and 18 inches square in section on a plinth of similar material set on a concrete base." A rose garden, occupying the area formerly comprising the basin of the fountain, would complete the new memorial which could be erected by the summer of 1989.

The cost would be shared - as the cost of the fountain was shared by both parties in 1963. The project deserves our full support - collectively and individually.

A 24 pound bronze plaque, originally intended to be mounted on the Royston Memorial Fountain in 1969, will become a part of the new, proposed granite Memorial Column. The plaque, depicting a B-17 in relief and a tribute to those "... who did not return...", presently hangs in the Royston Town Hall's Council Chambers for security reasons.

• **BASSINGBOURN PROP MEMORIAL - THE** Bassingbourn Prop Memorial was dedicated in May 1978. Situated inside the Main Gate, its major construction costs were shared by the Friends of the 91st, headed by David Crow, and 91st BGMAers who made generous donations. Every Commander of Her Majesty's Divisions, Bassingbourn Barracks since has provided reverent maintenance for it in addition to having his Command participate in the periodic Rededication Services held by visiting 91st BGMA groups.

• **CONTROL TOWER MUSEUM - THIS UNIQUE MUSEUM** features 91st BG(H) historical items mostly donated by 91st BGMAers. Use of the Control Tower, still part of the physical inventory of the Bassingbourn Barracks, as a museum has been approved by numerous official British agencies. Operating and maintenance funds are raised by volunteers of the Control Tower Museum Committee, headed by Vince Hemmings. Not open to the public, the Tower Museum is opened by Hemmings' Committee for touring groups and individuals upon adequate, pre-arranged notice.

The fund raising efforts of Hemmings' Committee (including sale of donated items and photos during local air shows) can be augmented by 91st BGMAers' donations in bank drafts drawn in US currency.

• **THE TEXT OF A BOOK ON THE CRASH OF THE 401st's "OLD FAITHFUL" (42-37958)** in Southern England in June 1944 is almost complete, according to English writer Rex Poulton. Poulton's meticulous research of the crash, which claimed the lives of all its crew, is evidenced by the fact that he continues extensive correspondence in hopes of identifying one individual on a photo he wishes to include in the book.

Poulton wants to use the original or a reproduceable copy of the photo that appeared in the Jan. 1985 edition of *The Ragged Irregular* which depicts "someone standing in the damaged astrodome of the aircraft on April 25, 1944." He also desperately seeks to identify the man in the astrodome.

Searches in the R/I files have failed to unearth the data he seeks. Anyone who can assist in supplying this possibly last detail to another chapter of 91st BG history is urged to write: Rex Poulton, 42 Sunnyhill Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP13QJ, England.

## GERMANY

• **THE SEVEN 8TH AF JULY 1944 RAIDS ON MUNICH WERE** the "Most destructive phase" on that city during WWII, according to Doctorate Thesis writer Mrs. Irma Permoser of West Germany.

Her research has determined that flying conditions were difficult due to clouds and "H2X had to be used and mostly PFF attacks had to be carried out."

Mrs. Permoser is interested in obtaining first-hand accounts of 8th AF personnel who participated in the July 44 and other 8th AF Munich raids for inclusion in her thesis. Of particular interest to her is information regarding a 24 April 44 8th AF Munich raid of which she was unaware until recently.

She wishes to tell both sides of the Munich raids in her thesis. Anyone who can contribute data is urged to write: Mrs. Irma Permoser, Friedenssch 37, 8030 Grobenzell, West Germany. (Copies of such "Munich Memories" will also be welcomed by the R/I.)

## CONVENTION INTEREST

*Continued from page 1*

And there is a good chance that the new 91st book on the 323rd's "DELTA REBEL" by its pilot, George P. Birdsong, Col (Ret), will be off the presses and available at the convention.

It goes without saying that only memories of a past momentous time draws those who attend 91st BGMA Conventions. Only the knowledge that we all contributed, in varying and equally important ways, to an undeniable worthy cause can account for the enthusiasm Reunions engender.

And yet, because of the real, still sincerely felt losses sustained it is quite possible most would repress war memories if it weren't for the camaraderie and friendship that emerged and sustained everyone during that terrible time long ago. Renewing that camaraderie and those friendships - as well as making and nurturing new ones - is what makes Reunions fun. Over the years the inclusion of wives and family members has increased the enjoyment.

Congenial Convention gatherings probably approach a celebration of the long lives the whims of war permitted us - the survivors. While so gathered, in various ways, those who lost their lives are remembered and honored and those now too ill to attend are respectfully recalled.

Obviously, the 91st BGMA differs from larger groups which engage in broad national affairs. Our Association exists mainly to preserve and cultivate cherished memories. Those attending the Aug. 31-Sept. 5 Convention will contribute to that basic fraternal purpose of preserving the 91st BG(H)'s proud past.

Quite a number of those planning attendance have hit upon an as yet under-utilized means of preserving the memories which emerge at conventions. They plan to bring small cassette recorders to record memories that generally remain silent, fleeting thoughts until old friends get together and talk them out. With proper recording technique such tapes from Chicago Conventioneers could add considerable 91st historical data.

It is hoped the old and new camaraderie and friendships within our Association will put the formalities required during Business Meetings into proper perspective. Hopefully, the 1988 91st BGMA Reunion will close with the consensus being, "We had a good one!"

## "BETTER BREAKFAST BATTLE" RECALLED BY 324th's LEVINE



TS JACK LEVINE, 324TH, LT JAMES Smith's top turret gunner, successfully completed 25 missions early in 1943. Compiling missions during that difficult time did not deter him from embarking upon a relentlessly pursued personal campaign - a better breakfast for Enlisted Flight Crew members. Once aroused, he never failed to respond to the usual concluding question of every pre-mission briefing, "Any questions or anything to say?" Inevitably Levine complained to the Briefing Officer about the breakfast the crews were getting.

"Powdered eggs very poorly done. Pre- and re-dried bread - toasted! And really very lousy coffee. This is supposed to keep us until noon?! I can hardly eat it," was the tenor of his indignant complaints.

He recalls the usual official reply. It was, "I'll report your complaint and see if we can get you a better breakfast."

Breakfasts didn't improve.

Levine kept complaining - like a frustrated, filibustering Senator.

According to Levine the situation worsened before it got better. (Not the breakfasts - they couldn't have gotten worse, he still maintains.) It was the situation which worsened. Levine's ritualistic bitching at briefings rankled other crew members. They growled he was wasting time and should "cut it out."

Once he facetiously snapped back at his detractors, "Even condemned men get a good, last meal!" His remorse for that bit of "wit" was immediate. He sensed then, and still recalls, the depression that immediately pervaded the briefing hut.

"For a lot of those guys," he says, "those lousy breakfasts were their last meal."

One afternoon after a mission Levine joined a group of Enlisted men talking to a full Colonel. The Colonel asked, "How are they treating you men?"

Levine seized the opportunity. He said, "Sir, at 4:30 this morning we had a rotten breakfast of powdered eggs most of us couldn't eat. Now its close to three. For 'lunch' we expect leftovers - just before their garbaged."

A friend of Levine's, Sgt. Coe (later shot down on his 24th mission), supported Levine's lament. Coe said, "The food's so bad people think I'm only 21!"

The Colonel led the group to the Enlisted Men's Mess to check the late afternoon lunch offering. What was either left over sodden pork, mutton or "something" mired in grease incensed him. He bellowed for the Mess Sgt.

"Is this what you're giving these men to eat? This whole field depends on them and you feed them this?!"

The Mess Sgt. explained he cooked for the entire field and, when crews returned, he was already preparing supper. He didn't have facilities to prepare wholesome late-lunches and wholesome suppers at the same time. The Mess Sgt. suggested Flight Crews needed their own Mess Hall.

Levine's oratorical spadework for a "Better Breakfast" was done. The Colonel's impromptu inspection and the Mess Sgt.'s suggestion were the cornerstone of a separate Mess Hall and cook for 91st Flight Crews. Breakfast soon after featured eggs done as requested and freshly cooked meals after missions. By the time Levine completed over 20 missions the new Mess Hall had been provided and, he recalls with satisfaction, he got better meals in it.

The success of Levine's 1943 "Better Breakfast Crusade" is historically recorded. A book, ONE LAST LOOK, an Abbeville publication, contains a few Basingbourn photos. One, on page 67, shows 91st Flight Crews being served pancakes in the new, large Mess Hall. A much better breakfast. Who would deny Levine's persistent activism left that legacy for the Flight Crews that followed?

Levine's predilection for taking visible stands on issues remains with him. Recently it resulted in a surprise reunion with a former crewmate, Carl A. Gunderson of Manchester, CT. Gunderson, who transferred from the RCAF, flew numerous times as a Waist Gunner with Levine.

A letter to the Editor of THE HARTFORD JOURNAL by Levine who resides in nearby Haddam, caught Gunderson's attention. He wrote Levine and asked if he was his old war-time friend who had "a little dog." The two had known each other for about four months at Basingbourn and Gunderson never forgot Levine's kindness. As an old veteran, Levine had shown Gunderson "the ropes."

Unknown to one another, they had lived only a few miles apart for over 35 years. During the long, intervening years Levine's last name was recalled erroneously as "Devine." (Levine believes his name sounded like "Devine" over the intercom.) Also, adding to the confusion, states other than Connecticut have towns called, "Haddam." Consequently, old friends, despite efforts, were unable to locate him.

After receiving Gunderson's letter the two met again for a small, grand reunion. Among the memories recalled were flying off MEMPHIS BELLE's left wing when Capt. Robert K. Morgan completed his final mission and discussing another photo in the book, ONE LAST LOOK. The page 148 photo depicts part of Levine's crew checking in at a Red Cross facility. Immediately behind Levine (holding a bag in the photo) is a civilian who, Levine recalls, was picked up for being a German spy a week or two after the photo was taken. Other memories included receiving DFC's from General LeMay and direct hits upon their plane by flak which failed to explode.

## NEAR "BUTT OF GOAT" NOW BUT A WAR JOKE

WHILE GOING TO WORK ONE MORNING FELLOW ground crewmen Tony Ryan, Al Szymanowski and I from the 323rd Electrical/Instrument Shop had an unusual experience. No "Butts" about it! Ryan was on his bike, Szymanowski and I walked on our way to the "line."

It was just behind the Photo Lab that we heard "it" - over the droning of distant engines being checked prior to another mission by the 91st.

"It" was a strange "clip clopping" drumming, getting louder as it neared us. We soon identified the sound's source. In the early morning's damp gloom, behind us, was the biggest damn Billy Goat I ever saw. And, that big, galloping goat had his horns positioned for action as he rapidly closed the gap between us - his targets. It was clear he wasn't interested in "ifs-ors-and's" - just "butts." Ours. We reacted quickly.

Ryan, on his bike, burned rubber leaving the area. Szymanowski made a fantastic leap up onto a parked Cle-track (a tractor like vehicle used for pulling B17s from place to place). The seat of the Cle-track was so high that jumping up to it really required pole vaulting equipment - but Al didn't take time to look for any.

I resorted to running. I ran pretty good until I crashed into a roll of barbed wire behind the Photo Lab. Fortunately the goat's primary "target" for the day was Szymanowski who had enough altitude in the sanctuary of the Cle-track seat to be safe. While I floundered in the barbed wire the goat studied Szymanowski, trying to figure out how to get up and at him.

Then sounds down the road caught the goat's attention. Apparently content, at last, with having scattered our little group he went charging, at an increasing pace, down the road after other unsuspecting 91st personnel, I suppose.

I finally extricated myself unscratched from the barbed wire but my leather jacket and trousers were shredded and torn into conversation pieces. Afterward, when I wore them, guys asked, "What happened?"

Later we laughed over the incident and are still glad we escaped being the "butt of that goat!"

I still wonder where that goat came from, who owned him, how did he get on the base and what happened to him? I also wonder if we couldn't have shortened the war by dropping that big, belligerent "Billy" behind the German lines.

CHARLES "CHUCK" GALIAN

PRESERVE OUR PROUD PAST

## PERFECT PATCHWORK

*Continued from page 1*

christened her Bad Egg. The battle damage sheet for Lorient showed: Holes in No. 1 gas tank, oil tank and super-charger oil tank; No. 1 super-charger damaged.; No. 2 intercooler punctured by 20mm. cannon shell; left main wing spar spattered with 20mm. holes; .30-caliber holes in fuselage and wings and radio wiring shot out.

Sgt. Pierce, a former Knoxville drug clerk, worked with his crew night and day until the damage was repaired. Those were the days when the young Eighth Air Force was working in the European theater with few resources. Ground crews often worked all night so airmen could fly all day.

Jack the Ripper went 26 consecutive missions over Europe without turning back, then on the 26th was so badly shot up she barely limped back to England. The Black Swan pushed her shiny nose over the Continent 20 times, and is still leaving cards every visiting day without a turn-back.

That makes 46 daylight raids and not a turn-back. It is a good record. A good enough record that M/Sgt. Marvin E. Nichols, 23, of Athens, Ga., a ground crew chief servicing the Ripper and Swan, was awarded the Legion of Merit, fourth highest award presented by the Army.

Sgt. Nichols recalls those hectic days of the fall and winter of '42 when parts, tools and Fortresses were back-ordered.

Jack the Ripper was the only Fort to go on the group's first three missions.

"It was shot up on the second raid. We had to work all night changing a five-foot wing tip and a 19-foot stabilizer, besides regular

routine inspection," Sgt. Nichols recalls.

"In those days, that type of repair was all new to us. We had never made major repairs before. But we learned quick-damn quick," Nichols says.

Then there is the sad story of the Sad Sack.

On the ship's first two raids over Europe, one crew member was killed and three wounded. The ship was so badly damaged that she was converted into a "hangar queen"-a supply depot for more fortunate ships.

She was robbed of four engines, oil coolers, nose glass, guns, both stabilizers and elevators. When inventoried, this Fort was also short walk-around oxygen bottles, radio equipment, life rafts, oxygen lines and regulators, bomb bay retracting motor, windshields, brake meters and navigator table. She stood in the hangar on a second-hand set of tires.

"The instrument panel looked like a used punchboard," said Sad Sack's crew chief, M/Sgt. Herbert Roberts, of Rosebud, Tex. His crew was assigned to rebuilding her in its spare time.

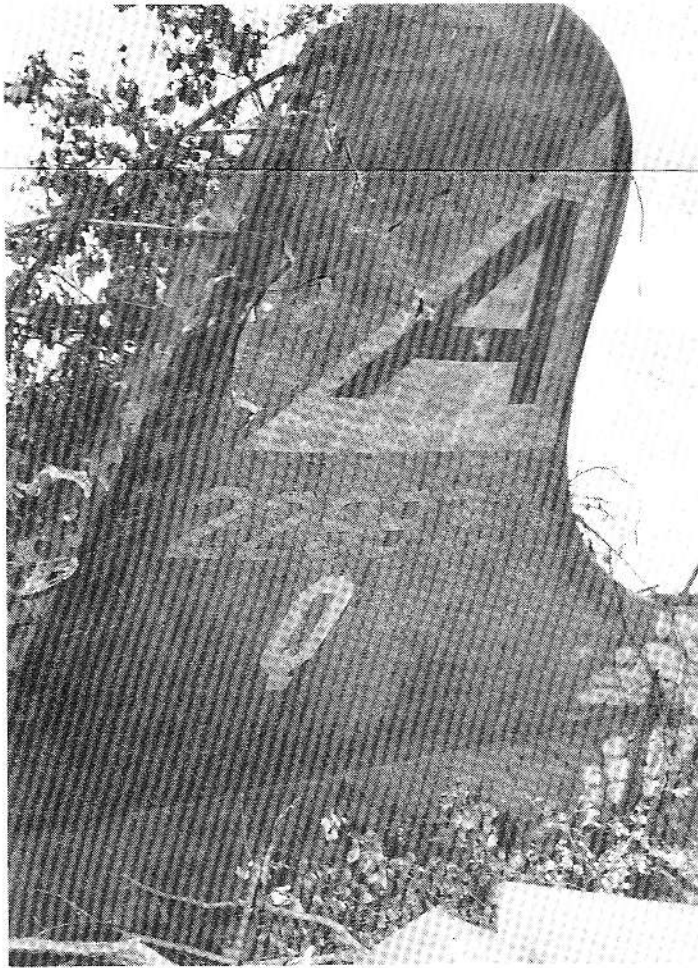
"About the time we would get the hangar queen reassembled last winter, some ship with a higher priority would grab one of her engines. For three months, off and on, we worked on the Sack. Finally we sneaked her into the air," Roberts said. Today she has 22 raids in her log book.

"She has lived down her jinx," Sgt. Roberts brags. "Now she has the reputation of being lucky. Her main wing spars are always missed by enemy shells."

The second winter of RAF and USAAF round-the-clock bombing is here.

Out in the shacks and huts of the dispersal areas where the heavy bombers are parked, huddling around tiny fires, are the ground crews waiting for their ships to come back.

Tonight by dimmed flashlights in the brittle cold December blackout, they will fumble with tiny rivets, patching bullet and flak holes, with grease-stiff tools making engine change and with cold-congealed rags wiping dirty oil from engine nacelles. The bombers must be ready to fly again.



Left: This photo of the tail section of the 322nd sq's PADDY GREMLIN JR was found with the extreme right photo on page one. Research by Historian "Bud" Evers reveals 1LT Roger's plane crashed in Wooten Poldate, Southern England while returning from Romely on Aug. 31, 1943.

Rogers and all but two of his crew were killed. Right: The 323rd Sq's OLD

BATTLE AXE, 337887 ORT, was a more fortunate Fort. Operational on July 31, 1944, she survived the war and on June 8, 1945 was scheduled for servicing for her flight back to the States. Standing before her is probably one of her proud Ground Crewmen.

91st Bomb Group (H) Memorial  
Association, Inc.

**Schedule of Events** \* \* \* \*

Wednesday— August 31, **1988**



Early Bird Arrivals  
Hotel check-in (Group rates apply)  
Pre-Registrants pick-up tickets  
Optional Golf (Glenview NAS)  
Independent sight-seeing  
City Tour Coach - 2:30 pm  
Near-by Shopping  
Hospitality Suite may open

Thursday— September 1,

Reunion Registration  
Independent Dining  
City Tour, Reserved Seats by ticket  
departs Hotel, Rush St. 11:30 am  
with Lunch included, enroute.  
Optional Golf (Glenview NAS)  
Sight-seeing  
Shopping  
Hospitality Suite opens

Friday— September 2,

Registration Late Arrivals  
Information Desk open  
Tour Desk open  
City Tour with boat trip and Lunch  
included enroute, departs  
Hotel, Rush St. at 9:30 am  
on Reserved seat ticketing  
Optional Golf (Glenview NAS)  
Independent shopping, sight  
-seeing and dining by you  
Hospitality Suite open

Saturday— September 3,

Members Business Meeting  
Optional Group Lunch (Sieben Brewery)  
Afternoon free  
Cocktail Hour  
Banquet Dinner and Dancing, Live Music

Sunday— September 4,

Group Breakfast Buffet  
Memorial Service (Fr. Michael Ragan)  
Independent Hotel Check-out or extend  
for another night at Group rate.  
Bon Voyage, safe journey home

**Chicago, Illinois Reunion**

NOTE: If you don't want to cut your RI  
send a photocopy of this form.

August 31-September 4, 1988

**Registration Form**

REUNION FEE Includes Sat. Cocktail Hour  
set-up and services (Cash Bar) gala Ban-  
quet Dinner complete with Entree choice,  
live dance band, souvenirs and administra-  
tive costs.

Cost per	Number of	Amount
<u>Person</u>	X <u>Persons</u>	= <u>Enclosed</u>
\$ 45.00	x _____	= \$ _____

Your choice of Dinner Entree  
Broiled Top Sirloin Steak \_\_\_\_\_ (no.)  
Rock Cornish Game Hen \_\_\_\_\_

**AMERICAN SIGHTSEEING-CHICAGO**

- (1) WED. Grand City Tour/with Sears Tower  
Depart 2:30pm and return 5:30pm  
\$ 15.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) THURS. Grand Tour/Sears Tower/LUNCH !  
Depart 11:30am return 4:30pm with the  
Magnificent Mile, the Loop, view from the  
103rd floor of Sears Tower, PLUS a full  
Italian buffet, with Spumoni & Beverage -  
\$ 28.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) FRI. Boat trip/Visitors Film/LUNCH !  
Departs 9:30am returns 3:30pm. River  
cruise, thru Locks to Lake Shoreline and  
complete Lunch in CHINATOWN with shopping.  
\$ 26.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) SUN. FATHER RAGAN MEMORIAL BREAKFAST  
Join with us in tribute to this Catholic  
Chaplain and guests from his home Parish.  
\$ 10.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

REGISTRATION TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ FIRST \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY & ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE A/C ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ SQDN \_\_\_\_\_

SHARING WITH \_\_\_\_\_

DO IT TODAY! DON'T WAIT!  
Mail checks or money orders, payable to:  
91 st BOMB GROUP (H) MEMORIAL ASSN.  
TO: LTC Charles R. Hackstock, Treas.  
14224 S.E. 288th Street  
KENT, WA 98042



### HOTEL REGISTRATION

**THE CHICAGO MARRIOTT HOTEL**  
 540 North Michigan Avenue  
 Chicago, Illinois 60611  
 (312) 836-6128

**MAIL TODAY!**

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ room(s) for \_\_\_\_\_ persons

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Firm \_\_\_\_\_

Will arrive on \_\_\_\_\_ (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (date) \_\_\_\_\_ (time)

Will depart on \_\_\_\_\_ (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (date) \_\_\_\_\_ (time)

Name of 2nd Occupant \_\_\_\_\_

**Reservations held until 6 p.m. local time. To hold reservations beyond 6 p.m. please indicate that room is to be guaranteed with a credit card for late arrival or please forward deposit to cover first night. NOTE: If room is not available at rate requested, reservations will be made at nearest available rate. Check out time is noon. Check in time is 4 p.m.**

**American Airlines**  
 offers attendees a special Meeting Saver Fare\*  
**AA** To the 91st Bomb Group (H) Memorial Association, Inc. Reunion  
 Chicago, Illinois  
**August 31-September 4, 1988**

To take advantage of this exclusive low fare, you must purchase your ticket up to 7 days prior to departure. If a deeper discount is available from your departure city, you will earn an additional 5% off that low promotional fare when you meet all requirements of the tariff. Tickets may be obtained from American Airlines or through your travel agent. The special Meeting Saver Fare\* is valid for roundtrip travel to Chicago on American Airlines & American Eagle domestic segments—and is available only through the Meeting Services Desk. Meeting Saver and other promotional fares vary between cities of departure and Chicago. To find out what special fares are available from your departure city, call the Meeting Services Desk TOLL FREE from anywhere in Canada and the USA (Including Hawaii, Alaska, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands) seven days a week from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 midnight central time.

the exclusive Meeting Saver Fare\* arranged for you on all domestic segments of American Airlines & American Eagle flights. You can only earn the exclusive fare by calling American's Meeting Services Desk at **1-800-433-1790**

Ask for STAR File #S-66803



### MEETING SAVER FARE\*

**91st BOMB GROUP (H) MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
 \* **NATIONAL REUNION AUG. 31 - SEPT. 5, 1988**

Please guarantee on the following credit card:

Credit Card	Exp. Date
Name _____	_____
Number _____	_____
Signature _____	_____

Please guarantee—check for one night's lodging enclosed.

Singles \$65.00  
 \* Doubles (2 persons) \$65.00  
 Suites please contact hotel

Current Rates:  
~~Single Occupancy \$125~~  
~~Double Occupancy \$125~~

**CUT-OFF DATE: August 3, 1988**

All reservations received after this date will be accepted on a space available basis only.

Your Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Rooms subject to 10.1% Illinois and City room tax.

### AIRSHOW

LATE, GREAT NEWS! "Roll-Out Ceremonies" are planned for the 401st Sq's restored SHOO SHOO BABY on Saturday, Sept 10, 1988 at the Dover AFB, DE.

No flights are planned during a program including an "Open House" beginning at 10 AM and "Ceremonies" from 1:30 to 2:45 PM.

SHOO SHOO BABY will be flown to Wright-Patterson AFB, OH on or about Oct 15th for display at the USAF Museum.

Salute the Dover AFB Reserve Technicians for a project well done!

### A Request for Data AIRPLANES OF THE 91st

We are endeavoring to gather more information about planes which 91st BG crews flew during WWII. We need more input from everyone involved. Please complete all data that you can on this coupon or a reproduced copy if necessary. Use other copies or paper to include any additional aircraft with which you may have had contact and add any anecdotes that you can

Name of plane \_\_\_\_\_ Plane # \_\_\_\_\_

Model: F G Sqd. Assignment \_\_\_\_\_ Tail Letter \_\_\_\_\_

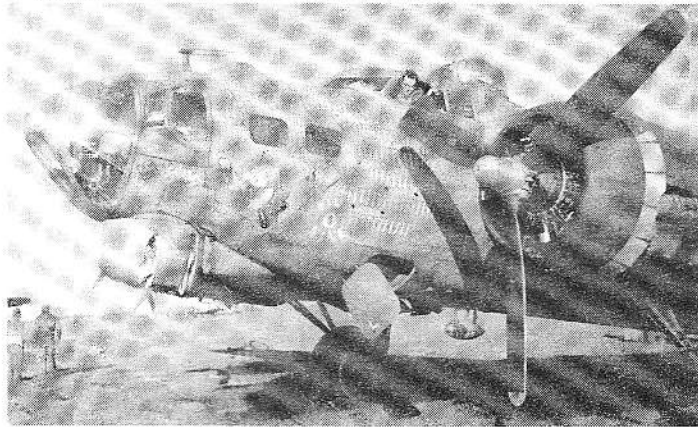
Crew Chief(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Pilot(s) assigned more or less permanently \_\_\_\_\_

If you have a good picture of this plane, would you copy it, or loan it to be copied?

**Return this coupon to:** Hilary "Bud" Evers, 91st BGMA Historian  
 21 Barony Lane  
 Hilton Head SC 29928

# CREW CHIEF'S WIDOW ADDS "NINE-O-NINE" DATA



21st Edwin D. Pitts, 323rd Sq Bombardier, supplies this 909 photo taken about June 8, 1945 while she was being readied for flight back to the USA. Though returned to perfect condition by Crew Chief Rollin L. Davis and his crew, 909 still displays a war scar. The last "E" in the first "Nine," punched out by flak, was patched but the lost "E" was not repainted. Maj. William E. Reid waves from the pilot's seat.

*Violet M. Davis, the widow of MSGT Rollin L. Davis of Austin, TX added to the data recording the important and essential role of Ground Crewmen in 91st BG(H) operations.*

*Mrs. Davis, who became a 91st BGMA Life Member early this year in memory of her husband who died May 27, 1984, sent the following article which appeared in the SAN ANGELO STANDARD-TIMES sometime in 1943. At that time "NINE-O-NINE" was one of the 91st's planes receiving Davis' "tender-loving-care." The members of his ground crew were, Cpl Robert Detwiler, Cpl Charles H. Huffman, Sgt Edward Lincoln and Sgt Wallace Southward. Davis received a Bronze Star for his service. After hostilities ceased he was among the passengers who flew back to the States in the 323rd's indestructible "NINE-O-NINE" which flew 140 missions without an abort. The SAN ANGELO STANDARD-TIMES article follows:*

AN EIGHTH AIR FORCE BOMBER STATION, England - Climbing 1,800,000 feet with full bomb loads is a lot of "lift" for one aircraft.

Flying Fortress "Nine-O-Nine", serviced and maintained by MSGT Rollin L. Davis, of Miles, has climbed at least 1,800,000 feet, and perhaps more, while flying 90 sorties over German targets.

Not once has "Nine-O-Nine" turned back for mechanical reasons - a record not equaled in the 91st Heavy Bomber Group, Davis' outfit, which is combat home of Fortress "Memphis Belle."

As each sortie over the continent starts with a climb from near sea level when variable-pitch propellers are put in "low" in order to pull the heavily laden aircraft to 20,000 feet or more over the North Sea before starting to level out for the run in over the continent, "Nine-O-Nine" is nearing two million feet of upward travel in some 825 hours of combat flying.

A former student at Sul Rosa State Teachers College, Alpine, Davis came overseas with the 91st in September, 1942, as an assistant crew chief. In February, 1943, he was given his own crew of six mechanics and made a crew chief.

The first Flying Fortress he serviced made 25 missions without turning back once for mechanical reasons. On the 26th sortie it was shot down in a fierce air battle over Germany.

At the present time Davis is servicing two B-17s, "Sweet 17," and "Nine-O-Nine. The former has made 67 missions in 625 combat flying hours with little trouble.

But the record string of 90 missions on "Nine-O-Nine" is the talk of veteran 91st ground mechanics.

When asked how he does it, Davis replied, "We've been lucky and haven't had any cockpit trouble." Giving all the credit to his pilots, Davis does not tell of the hours he and his men by the light of flashlights have worked through foggy, blacked-out nights in a windswept dispersal area.

The pilots are lush in their praise of the Texan's careful care and maintenance work. "When he says a bomber is ready to go, one pulls her off the ground with every confidence in the world she will bring us back ok after dropping the bombs on Germany," they said.

"Nine-O-Nine" has had the usual combat damage. Five times flak-punctured Tokyo tanks in the wings have been changed.

The right hand inner wing panel was changed after flak bursts riddled the ship. The vertical rudder over the tail-gunners position is pock-marked with patches resulting from battle-damage.

On the 44th mission No. 3 engine was sprayed by flak. Davis' crew replaced the engine and all accessories. Altogether Sgt. Davis and his mechanics have made 12 engine changes on the veteran ship, replacing either damaged or worn-out motors.

As this is written, "Nine-O-Nine" is on another mission over Germany. When the Forts return late this afternoon and circle for landing, the first aircraft most everyone will ask about will be "Nine-O-Nine." The entire 91st Group is "sweating out" 100 trips for the veteran B-17.

## folded Wings

• BARCZAK, JOHN V., 323rd, 516 Hillcrest Dr., Bradenton, FL 33529; May 22, 1988. Reported by the US Postal Service.

• LAGOWNIK, ALPHONSE V., 324th, Naugateck, CT; Sept. 14, 1986. Reported by his wife, Jane.

• MULLINS, REESE W. LTC USAF (Ret.), 323rd, 316 Sanford, Covington, TN 38019; July 30, 1987. Reported by his wife, who writes her husband, who knick-named "Moon," was the pilot of "OUTHOUSE MOUSE."

• STULL, WILLIAM H., LTC USAF (Ret.), 323rd, PO Box 38, Montverde, FL, 32756; Sept. 15, 1987. Reported by his wife, Leona.

• THORNLEY, HOWARD R., 322nd, 974-17th AV, S.E., Minneapolis, MN, 55414; March 1987. Reported by his wife, Phyllis.

• WAHLER, PAUL H. 324th, 247-68th St., Niagara Falls, NY 14304; March 23, 1988. Wahler completed 25 missions while serving in the USAF from 1941 to 1945. Reported by his war-time 324th friend, John L. Taylor, of Niagara, NY.

## 1987 91st BGMA'S FINANCIAL REPORT

TREASURER CHARLES R. HACKSTOCK'S 1987 Financial Report for the 91st BGMA is published below.

### TREASURY REPORT for 1987

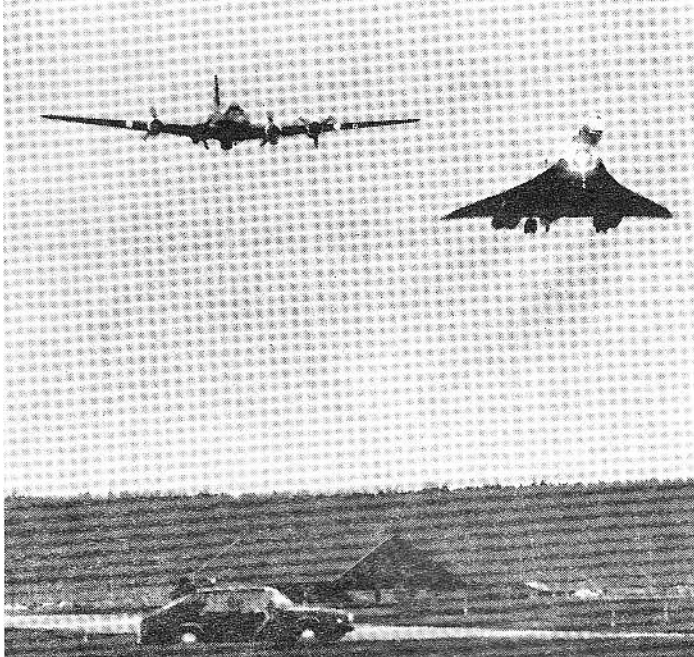
<b>Checking Account</b>	
Balance brought forward . . . January 1, 1987	\$5754.01
Yearly Income (dues, Life Memberships, donations)	7049.44
Interest on Checking Acct. (Year total)	83.44
	sub total \$ 12886.89
1987 Total operating Expenses . . . . .	-11565.10
December 31, 1987 Checking Account balance . . . . .	<u>\$ 1321.79*</u>

<b>Savings Account</b>	
Balance brought forward . . . January 1987	\$4050.37
Yearly income deposits (Life Memberships, dues)	3500.00
Interest on Savings Acct. (Year total)	342.61
	sub total \$ 7892.98
Year end transfer to Checking	- 1000.00
December 31, 1987 Savings Account balance . . . . .	<u>\$6892.98**</u>

<b>Totals beginning January 1, 1988</b>	
Checking Acct. balance . . . . .	\$ 1321.79*
Savings Acct. balance . . . . .	6892.98**
Ragged Irregular Draw Acct. . . . .	885.99
Total Funds Dec. 31, 1987 . . . . .	<u>\$ 9100.76</u>

Note: Asterisks indicate a current report on that item will be available at the 1988 Chicago Convention.

## AIRSHOWS, POW REUNION SET FOR AUG. AND SEPT.



Will "SALLY B" be part of the National Warplane Museum Airshow at Genesco, NY Airport this August? Your donations will help! "SALLY B" is pictured above with Concorde at Vesteraas, Sweden in 1987. (Photo by Kenneth Hudd).

• THE AUGUST 19, 20 and 21, 1988 "WINGS OF EAGLES" AIR Show at the Genesco, NY Airport based National Warplane Museum will be highlighted by the appearance of seven Flying Fortresses (possibly eight) and 70 to 100 other WWII aircraft. All will fly during the three day show.

In addition, the National Warplane Museum has set up a "SALLY-B Fund" to help cover the cost of flying the Imperial War Museum's B17 "SALLY-B" to the US for an appearance at the show. If she arrives the Genesco Air Show will have the largest gathering of Flying Fortresses since WWII - eight in all!

Donations of \$10 or more to the "SALLY-B FUND" will receive free Air Show admission; \$20 or more will receive free admission plus a distinctive souvenir patch of this historic event.

Donations should be sent to: THE SALLY-B FUND, C/O The National Warplane Museum, PO Box 159, Genesco, NY 14454. For additional info call the museum: (716) 243-0690 or 243-9887.

• THE 17th ANNUAL GATHERING OF WARBIRDS SHOW will be held August 20 and 21, 1988 at the Madera Airport, north of Fresno, California. Details of the event appeared in the March 1988 MILITARY MAGAZINE but, unfortunately, are unavailable to the R/I. The show is reported to be one of the largest air shows on the West Coast each year.

• THE FIRST POW MEDALS WERE AWARDED ON APRIL 6, 1988 at the Marine Corps Air Station, Yuma, AR. Ex-POWs of the 91st BGMA desiring POW Medal information may write the American Ex-Prisoners of War, 700 W Wabash, Olathe, KS 66061.

The American Ex-Prisoners of war group is holding its 41st National Convention on Sept. 26-29, 1988 in Las Vegas, Nevada. For further info write the above address or call: (800) 821-8139.

## CALIFORNIA AVIATION GROUP "PAYS" B17 SPEAKERS

THE B17 COMBAT CREWMEN & WINGMEN Organization of Altadena, CA. is a friendly, informal and receptive group of guys and gals whose monthly meetings feature speakers on aviation topics. Aviation authors and pioneers, fighter pilots, Luftwaffe personalities and even representatives from the "SPRUCE GOOSE" have addressed the group.

Bob Stane, Adjutant of the group whose motto is, "Pride In Our Past...Faith In Our Future," says speakers are written up in the organization's newsletter which is distributed world-wide to members, aviation organizations and museums. If the speaker has written a book, publicity, book and autograph parties are arranged. "All speakers," he says, "receive an honorarium in the sum of a princely check for \$25. In spite of that we still get guest speakers.

"Please drop us a note and tell us about yourself. Also, send catalogues or flyers if you are selling a product. We want news. Don't be shy. We are looking for variety and you may help more than you think," he adds.

Anyone with aviation lore to share is urged to write, Bob Stane, 1963 N. Grand Oaks, Altadena, CA. 91001-3520 or phone: (818) 797-8899.

## NEWEST LIFE MEMBERS

ROBERT J. CALDWELL, Holland Patent, NY  
CHARLES M. EICHERT, Highland Park, NJ  
MANUEL FISHER, Charlotte, NC  
ROBERT FORD, New Haven, CT  
DANIEL J. GANNON, Lowell, MA  
EUGENE L. JOHNSON, Altamont, NY  
PETER A. LOPEZ, Anna Maria, FL  
LARRY SYLVESTER, Pittsburgh, PA  
LEONARD TANNENBAUM, Forest Hills, NY  
ALEXANDER THOMAS, Manchester, MO  
CARLYLE WELLS, Oakland, CA

## THE RAGGED IRREGULAR

These newsletters are published quarterly - October, January, April and July are the scheduled publication months. The R/I's purpose is to keep alive the spirit of the 91st Bombardment Group (H) and to maintain the fellowship of all those who fought together in World War II from AF Station 121 in Bassingbourn, England from 1942 to 1945.

Material for publication should be sent to the Editor, Rudy Malkin, 1643 Thetford Rd., Balto., Md. 21204. "Time-Value" items must be received three weeks before the first day of the month of publication, to permit necessary priority consideration for inclusion in that issue. Every effort will be made to utilize other submitted material in the scheduled or later R/I issues.

91st BG Memorial Assn.  
Charles Hackstock  
14224 SE 288th ST.  
Kent, WA 98042

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