



384th Bomb Group Newsletter

1306 Adams Way
Beavercreek, OH 45434

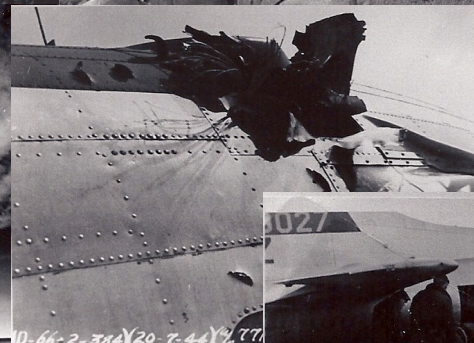
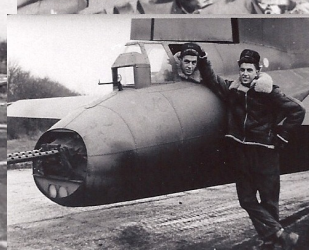
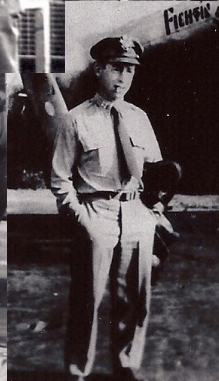


Spring 2012

Celebrating Our Past



All one needs to understand how heroic our men were during WW II, is to know that more 8th Air Force airman were killed during that epic European air battle than all of the Marines in the entire war.



We owe it to these American heroes to do our absolute best with the freedom they fought so hard, and some died for, and to preserve that freedom for future generations. Remember those whose sacrifices were the ultimate ones, and know that Freedom is NOT FREE.



"Keep the Show on the Road...."



Message from Your President... Bill O'Leary



As the ancient Greeks would say: Tempus Fugit, or was it the Romans? Or perhaps the Irish (using a few words that meant the same) when closing time was announced at the local Pub. In any event, September will be upon us before we know it, which is the deadline to make your hotel reservation and to complete the enclosed registration form and mail it to Carol together with the fee of \$108.00 per person. Please note, September 27, 2012 is the deadline set by the hotel for room reservations. We have a block of 35 rooms reserved for our gathering. It is therefore important that room reservations are made early, so if additional rooms are needed, Carol will have the time to hopefully arrange for the rooms especially in the month of October, and in a City that is very 'tourist' busy at that time. If we all set the first week in September as our personal deadline to complete what we need to do, we will at the time help Carol to complete her job in a timely manner. Thank you.

Vets: Our declining presence at several of the last Group gatherings leads me to suggest that we officially turn the operation of the 384th BG over to the 384th NexGen. I am hopeful that all Vets physically capable of making the trip to San Antonio will do so, and thus constitute a representative vote on the suggested change. If you are unable to attend, for whatever reason, please know that you will be with us in spirit.

KEEP THE SHOW ON THE ROAD---TO SAN ANTONIO!

Bill

Doolittle Raiders Gather at Wright Patt for 70th Anniversary



Can you imagine what 40 radial engines must sound like when all of them are running at the same time? That is exactly what we were treated to on 17-18 April when 20 B-25s landed on the Air Force Museum's runway. Pure music! The occasion was the 70th anniversary of the Doolittle raid on Tokyo, when 16 B-25s were launched from the deck of the Carrier Hornet on the morning of 18 April 1942. The military impact of the strike on Japanese targets was minimal,

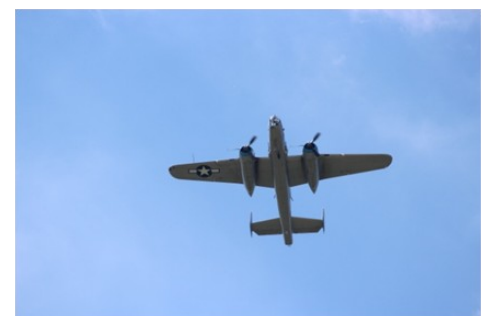
but it was exactly the morale boost the American people needed after Pearl Harbor. The reunion at Wright Patt was attended by four of the five surviving Raiders along with two vet-



eran seamen who were on the Hornet during that infamous Doolittle raid. I was very fortunate in that I had one of the best spots along the flightline fence when the B-25s began to land at a little after 0700 on the 17th. I was as close as 30 feet from the aircraft as they gathered at the end of the runway, waiting for the last one to land. Once all were down, they restarted their engines and taxied onto the runway, where they were open to the public. They launched in 30-second intervals on 18 April and formed up, pretty much the way our veterans did over Grafton Underwood. It took about



half an hour for them to get into the formation that would fly over the ceremony at the Museum's Memorial Garden. They flew over the Garden at 1300, and most of us were surprised when they went around and made a second pass 19 aircraft (one B-25 developed engine problems and departed the formation). And then the best thing occurred. They did a missing man formation with the 4 best pilots and only 4 B-25s. It was a week many of us will remember for years..... Frank Alfter



We Need Your Stories and Photos !!!

I know you all have a wealth of experiences that we would like to publish so others can enjoy and learn, so PLEASE send us your stories!!!! We are getting some traction with stories and we hope to print as many as we can. Let's share the legacy in stories that will keep forever. This issue includes the interesting Doolittle Reunion at Wright Patterson AFB in April; also a story of Leonard Nealis' missions and how they flew most missions in the same plane.

Lucky Thirteen

There are about ten or eleven B-17s that are being restored in the U.S., six of which are planned to be airworthy. One of those airworthy B-17s might be built by Ray Moore of South Carolina, who is the great-nephew of Marvin Hudson, a Line Maintenance Chief for the 546th Sq., 384th BG in 1943-45.



Ray said that his passion to build a B-17 began with a long time interest in B-17s and the Eighth Air Force. He likes mechanical things and uses his skills in his classic car restoration business. While searching for a B-17 project on the internet, Ray came across the story of B-17F 42-3455 *Lucky Thirteen* of the 546th Squadron, 384th BG. *Lucky Thirteen* was lost on September 6, 1943 when it crashed near the village of Clermont, France after being hit by flak on a mission to Stuttgart, Germany. Fortunately, all the Russell Faulkner crew survived the bailout. At about the same time, Ray was able to get reacquainted with his Great Uncle Marvin Hudson. As he learned more about his uncle's service in the 546th and *Lucky Thirteen*, Ray realized that "luck" had

brought them all together. It was very possible that his Uncle Marvin had worked on *Lucky Thirteen* before she was shot down. It was then he said that he realized he had found his B-17 project.

During Ray's research in 2009, he had become aware of amateur archaeologist Gerard Lequien's work excavating pieces of *Lucky Thirteen* from the crash site in France. At about the same time, Ray also introduced himself to Quentin Bland. Ray explained his plans to Quentin, who in turn helped introduce him to Gerard. Gerard later sent Ray some small pieces of *Lucky Thirteen* which he's planning to incorporate into the reconstruction. Because there is so little of *Lucky Thirteen* available, almost all of the airframe will have to be built from scratch. Other mechanical parts like engines and landing gear will be located and installed. She'll basically be a brand new B-17F when finished.

Ray Moore has undertaken a very challenging task rebuilding *Lucky Thirteen*. It's going to take a long time. But the project is feasible for several reasons. One is Ray's passion for the project. Another is that today's computer aided manufacturing techniques make it possible for a builder to make many structural parts themselves. An economy of means is possible with the B-17 projects being done now. Finally, Ray is sharing construction work with some of the other B-17 restorations. What he repairs or rebuilds for others, he uses as a pattern to make another from scratch for his project. Ray said that the goal is to rebuild *Lucky Thirteen* and



fly her with the Triangle P painted on her tail just as she flew on her last day in September 6, 1943.

Some of the projects Ray has made parts for are Bruce Orriss' B-17G *Piccadilly Lilly* for the WWII Museum in New Orleans; construction jigs for Mike Kellner's B-17E *Desert Rat* restoration and his B-17C reconstruction project in Marengo, Illinois, as well as for Don Brooks' new B-17G project in Georgia. Sadly, Ray lost his great uncle in August 2011. But Ray's work continues, inspired by his Uncle Marvin and as a tribute to all the men of the 384th Bomb Group and the Eighth Air Force.

If you want to contact Ray Moore, you can call him in South Carolina at (864)590-8338 or email him at mooresautofab@gmail.com



Almost Home Prints Still Available

We have received ten copies of an art print of Richard Boyd's 1945 original painting titled *Almost Home*. They come from Quentin Bland's collection, via Matt Smith. The prints depict a B-17G with an escort of two P-51s. The name "Fightin' Hebe" has been added to the B-17G, along with the Triangle-P tail marking. The prints were apparently commissioned by Nathan "Mike" Mazer, namesake of the "Fightin' Hebe". They are serially numbered, and are signed by Mazer. Each print measures 18-1/4 width x 17-3/8 height overall. We still have 2 prints.

We are offering nine of these prints (one of the ten suffered some "flak damage" during shipment) on a first-come, first-served basis for a donation of \$30 postpaid. Please send payment - payable to 384th Bomb Group - to Carol Alfter, Treasurer, 384th Bomb Group Inc., 1306 Adams Way, Beavercreek, OH 45434. Be sure to include the shipping address(es).

Fred Preller



Remembering Leonard Nealis—Gary Nealis

Being a flight engineer/Top Turret Gunner began for Tech Sergeant Leonard Martin Eugene Nealis when he enlisted at Fort Sill, Oklahoma on 30 Sep 1941. He then went to Jefferson Barracks, MO for basic training and then on to Chanute Field, IL for Airplane Mechanics School from 7 Nov thru 15 Apr 1942, where he also taught the electrical course for about a month.

From there Leonard went to MacDill Field, Tampa, FL in May where he joined the 322nd Bombardment Squadron. Following MacDill, he next traveled to Salt Lake City, UT for training at the Radio Operators School from 3 July until 12 Sep, and then on to Wendover, UT for Aerial Gunnery training through 24 Oct 1942. Upon graduating from gunnery school, Leonard was promoted to Staff Sergeant and sent to Gowan Field, Boise, ID to join up with the 384th Bombardment Group, led by Colonel Budd Peaslee. He was assigned to the 546th Squadron with Capt Harris commanding. His bomber crew was led by Lieutenant Kelly

Between 3 Feb and 5 Apr 1943, the Group was in training at Wendover and went on temporary duty at Great Falls, MT the week of 22 to 27 Feb, due to a shortage of fuel at Wendover. The next stop for the Group was Sioux City, IA for group formation training and combat equipment issue.

April 21 to 25 saw them at Salinas, CA participating in mass simulated bombing attacks on San Francisco, and the following week Leonard's crew received and checked out B-17F tail number 033, *Little America*, which had a penguin as nose art. Following check out Leonard took advantage of a pre-deployment furlough from 6 to 12 May and went home to Bartlesville, OK. He barely made it out on the last train from Bartlesville because of major flooding in the area.

Little America's crew departed Bangor, Maine on 19 May 1943, for Gander Lake, Newfoundland, and on his 24th birthday, 22 May, left there for Prestwick, Scotland, landing there on the 23rd. From there they flew on to their new base at Grafton Underwood, Leicestershire, England. The ground element left New York on the Queen Elizabeth on 27 May.

From 28 May until 6 June, Leonard attended the Advanced Gunnery School at King's Lynn, Norfolk, England.

The crew of *Little America* began flying combat missions on 22 Jun 1943 and all of the crew survived their combat tour and uninjured. All but Lt Faulkner finished their 25 missions together, while he was lost on 6 Sep on the Stuttgart raid, and evaded capture. Lt Kelly's crew flew their last mission on 5 Dec 1943, to St Jean d'Angelay, France.



<u>Msn</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Ship</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Notes & Flight Duration</u>
1	22 Jun	033	Antwerp, Belgium	Tank works, lost 2
	23 Jun		Goering Hq, France	Group aborted - 4:20
	25 Jun	033	Hamburg, Germany	Ship aborted - weather - 2:05
2	26 Jun		Villacoublay, France	Credited with FW 190 - 4:50
3	28 Jun	033	Beaumont le Roger, France	4:30
	29 Jun	033	Villacoublay, France	Weather abort - 4:30
4	4 Jul	033	Le Mans, France	2:45
	10 Jul	033	Abbeville/Drucat, France	Ship aborted - 2:40
5	14 Jul	855	Villacoublay, France	5:30
6	24 Jul	033	Heroya, Norway	7:40
	25 Jul		Hamburg, Germany	No
7	28 Jul	033	Kassel, Germany	Damaged Me 109, shot out of formation afire - 5:00
				5:30
8	29 Jul	843	Kiel, Germany	
9	30 Jul	216	Kassel, Germany	
	12 Aug	139	Gelsenkirchen, Germany	Ship aborted - 0:55
10	15 Aug	196	Poix & Amiens, France	4:00
	16 Aug		Le Bourget, France	No
11	17 Aug	065	Schweinfurt, Germany	6:55
	27 Aug		Watten, France	No
12	31 Aug	033	Romilly-sur-Seine, France	3:30
	3 Sep		Romilly-sur-Seine, France	No
13	6 Sep	033	Stuttgart, Germany	Nearly out of gas - 7:45
				Former copilot lost/evaded
14	7 Sep	033	Brussels (Evere), Belgium	4:25
15	9 Sep	033	Artois, France	5:00
16	16 Sep	033	Nantes, France	7:15
17	23 Sep	141	Nantes, France	Now Capt Kelly pilot - 7:00
18	27 Sep	651	Emden (Aurich), GE	6:30
19	2 Oct	033	Emden, Germany	BGen Travis in ship - 6.7 hr
20	4 Oct	033	Frankfurt, Germany	
	8 Oct		Bremen, Germany	No
21	9 Oct	033	Anklam, Germany	8.5 hr
22	10 Oct	033	Munster (Coosfeld)	6.2 hr
	14 Oct		Schweinfurt, GE	No
23	20 Oct	033	Duren, GE	6:10
24	3 Nov	033	Wilhelmshaven, GE	6:40
	5 Nov		Gelsenkirchen, GE	No
	29 Nov		Bremen, GE	No
	1 Dec		Solingen, GE	No
25	5 Dec	441	St Jean d'Angelay, France	25 th Msn - B-17G - 6:05

The next 384th mission *Little America* was shot down.

384TH BOMB GROUP 2011 GATHERING, SAN ANTONIO, TX
October 18th through 21st, 2011

NAME: _____ GUEST: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

ADDITIONAL GUEST'S NAME(S): _____

SPECIAL NEEDS: _____

IS THIS YOUR FIRST 384th BOMB GROUP FUNCTION? YES _____ NO: _____

COST PER PERSON IS \$108.00. This covers the reception on Thursday and the banquet on Saturday evening.

\$108.00 PER PERSON X _____ PEOPLE ATTENDING: TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

I have my name tag and lanyard: YES _____ NO _____

I need name tags for: _____

Please mail your completed registration form and payment in full, payable to the **384th Bomb Group, Inc.**, to Carol Alfter, 1306 Adams Way, Beavercreek, OH 45434, **TO BE RECEIVED** not later than **SEPTEMBER 27, 2012. WE WILL NOT ACCEPT LATE REGISTRATIONS!** If you have any questions, call Carol at 937-306-2142 or email at falfter@att.net. Confirmation of registration will be sent on October 1, 2012.

The selected hotel is the Hyatt Regency San Antonio, 123 Losoya Street, San Antonio, TX 78205, telephone number 210-451-6420. Please call the hotel and state you are with the 384th Bomb Group to get the group rate of \$119.00 for a single or double room. Triple rate is \$144.00, quad rate is \$169.00. **ALL RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY SEPTEMBER 27, 2012 IN ORDER TO GET THE GROUP RATE.**

Please list additional guests with their names as you wish them to appear on their name tags.

384th BOMB GROUP, INC.
 EIGHTH AIR FORCE
 1306 Adams Way
 Beavercreek, OH 45434

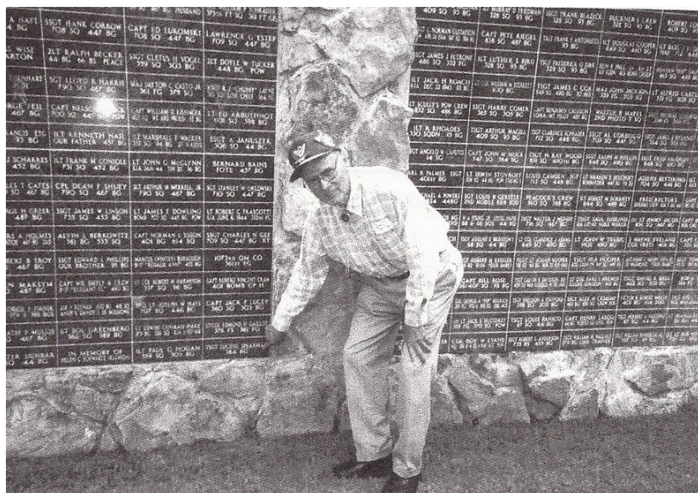


"Keep the Show on the Road...."

We're on the Web at: www.384thbombgroup.com

35 Missions Dr... by Eugene Spearman

If an air crewman completed his required missions (thirty-five, while I was flying), it was a standard practice for the other crew members and friends at debriefing to celebrate his good fortune by giving him our individual little glass or shot of cognac. We celebrated with one of my friends, who according to his own records, had flown the required thirty-five missions only to find out the next morning that the official records showed he had only completed thirty-four missions. He was asked to fly the next mission, but he refused. He was immediately charged with being AWOL and placed in the brig. Later I would see him picking up garbage around the base. I never did know just who made the error in counting the number of missions he had really flown.



NEXGEN: Take an active role in 384th NexGen planning for the future. Contact Fred Preller at f3red@preller.us or call 469-338-1397 to participate.

TAPS as of Spring 2012

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Arthur Adams | Millersburg, PA |
| Richard Benoit | Florence, MA |
| Bertha Castro | Tucson, AZ |
| Wilbert Cunningham | Masonic Home, KY |
| MSgt John Hearne | |
| Dr Ernest Lindell | Moses Lake, WA |
| Donald McDonald | Fresno, CA |
| William Moon | Sutherlin, OR |
| Arlene Perrong | Perkasie, PA |
| Elinor Ruckman | New Orleans, LA |
| Walter Schneider | New Orleans, LA |



384th Bomb Group
Grafton Underwood



If you know any veteran who served with the 8th Air Force during WW II who would be interested in returning, please have them contact Timothy Davis at timothy_davis@tggf.org or call 303-331-1944