



N 96TH BOMB GROUP NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2019

ISSUE NO. 73

Lt. Robert W. Lewis Crew



(**Top row L-R**) Tail Gunner Sgt. Forest Corley, Visalia CA; Ball Turret Gunner Sgt. Paul B. Howard, Charlotte NC; Top Turret Gunner Sgt. Carl T. Duff, Cleveland TN; Radio Operator Sgt. Dyson W. Herrin, Ventura CA; Right Waist Gunner Sgt. Kenneth E. Elliott, Wayne MI; Left Waist Gunner Sgt. Alexander J. Klecha, Garfield NJ. (**Bottom row L-R**) Navigator Lt George L. Korty, Chickasha OK; Co-Pilot Lt Gustaf J. Soderlund, East Providence RI; Pilot Lt. Robert W. Lewis, Mason City IA; Bombardier Lt. Kenneth W. Foote, Phoenix AZ. (See story page 8)

CONTENTS

| | | | |
|--|----|--|----|
| Bert Patrick | 2 | Memorial Plaques for Veterans | 16 |
| President's Corner | 3 | Aviation History | 17 |
| Meanwhile Back at the Old Base | 5 | Bulletin Board | 18 |
| 96th Recipients French Legion of Honor | 6 | New Members & Membership Application | 19 |
| St Louis Honors Legion recipients at July 4 Parade ... | 7 | Dues Notice & Remittance Form | 19 |
| In Memoriam Lt. Robert W. Lewis | 8 | Reunion Notice | 19 |
| Rum Boogie Crew Members: | 11 | Officers & Contacts | 20 |
| Sentinel of Memory | 13 | Final Mission | 20 |



Bert Patrick

April 25th 1928
March 13th 2019

The 96th Bomb Group became part of Bert`s life in his teenage years and was to last his whole lifetime. His parents ran Quidenham Post Office, the next village to Snetterton and on the edge of the base, during WW2 and his mother washed clothes for some of the serving 96th personnel.

One of those young Americans, who Bert befriended was Lt. Miles Mc Fann. They corresponded for many years and in 1992 they met again in Abilene Texas at the 50th Anniversary reunion. Many stories were shared together over a few days as well as a few whiskeys.

Bert was extremely proud to have been the choir boy to carry the cross in Quidenham Church in November 1944 at the dedication of the wonderful memorial window.

In the late 1980s Dad helped Geoff Ward to set up a museum dedicated to the 96th at The New Eccles Hall school. The museum opened in 1990 and Bert, his wife Sombra and daughter Jill enjoyed attending 8th AF Reunions and entertaining veterans returning to their old base.

Bert was also very proud of "The Silver Dream" memorial at Snetterton race track. His knowledge of the area and wartime stories were always enjoyed by visitors.

Bert`s ashes were interned in Quidenham Church yard on July 12th.



Bill Thorns and Bert Patrick



Bert Patrick and Geoff Ward



Bert Patrick and Miles Mc Fann in Abilene, Texas 50th Anniversary Reunion of the 96th Bomb Group.



Choir boy Bert Patrick leads the procession carrying the cross November 12, 1944.



Sombra and Bert Patrick at Snetterton "The Silver Dream" Memorial

President's Corner



Hello again everyone,

In the last newsletter, Bert Patrick was listed as having taken his Final Mission. In this newsletter you will find a beautiful tribute to Bert from his daughter Jill Tebble. You may know that Bert was a true and great friend to the 96th BGA. In 2013, my sister Melissa and I were fortunate to be able to meet up with a 96th Bomb Group Association tour group in England for a visit to Snetterton. While there, we met Bert and his wife Sombra, as well as Geoff and Margaret Ward. Bert asked us about our connection to the 96th and we explained that our Dad had served with the 96th, in the 339th Squadron. After a bit, Bert spirited Melissa and me away from the group and gave us a car tour of the base area, pointing out where each squadron would have been. We ended with a walk around the 339th area - all that remains there are two concrete bomb shelters. I know it was very special for both of us to be able to walk in the area where Dad walked as well. I will always be thankful to Bert for that time.



Melissa McIlraith, Sombra and Bert Patrick touring the Snetterton Air Field in 2013. One of many tours that he gave over the years

I hope your summer is going well! The Independence Day holiday has come and gone. I hope everyone had a chance to reflect on the freedoms we all enjoy in this country.

Also I hope you all watched the amazing displays and remembrances that took place to honor the 75th anniversary of D-Day. There were some very special celebrations and very poignant memories for us to see and consider.

That brings me to my topic for this edition of my corner: Keeping the memories alive. A stated goal of the 96th Bomb Group Association is "To Keep Their Memories Alive."

I have assembled a few ideas of how we each might do this. We all are in different situations and with different abilities or interests, but I think one or more of the following might help a majority of our group to be more involved in keeping their memories alive.

First off, if you are a WWII veteran, have you documented your memories of your service? From your induction right through to your discharge, whatever you have on file in your memory, find a way to preserve that. Have a family member or friend interview you. This could be videoed easily nowadays with a smart phone. If not that, do you have a diary or other written notes of your service? If not, try making some notes, or ask someone to help you jot down your thoughts, feelings, and anything else. Don't worry about how others might view minor details, someone will find this info interesting.

Next, do you have a family member or friend who is a veteran? See the paragraph above maybe you could be that one to interview a veteran? If they don't want to talk about their experiences straight out, maybe just a question here and there. Build on those questions and soon you may have a story going!

If you do get a story going, or if you already have a story, please submit it for the newsletter! Dale is always on the lookout for articles and stories. Give it a try you will probably be thrilled to see your efforts in print!

Now, if you aren't directly connected to a veteran, or if you want to do more, there are many on-line sites that have ways for you to learn or even be interactive.

The 96th BGA has a Facebook Page (search for 96th Bomb Group Association). When this page was created, Facebook had some interesting restrictions on how pages could be controlled. I am sorry to say we chose a way that today limits the user-friendliness. We are exploring our options for improving this page. There is also another Facebook page called 96th Bomb Group - 339 Sq 8th Air Force this page is more user-friendly and active (this page was set up outside of the 96th BGA). I would ask that you try both pages and ask questions or help answer questions when others ask. Please give us any feedback so that we can work to improve our page.

The 96th BGA also has a website at www.96bg.org. This is not very interactive, but there are a number of the past newsletters posted there, plus a history of the 96th, a listing of all the 96th men who were killed during the war, and other things. We are hoping to add more photos and even more past newsletters to this site. If you have an interest and experience with web sites, please let us know.

A website that I find more interesting each time I visit is for the American Air Museum in Britain www.americanairmuseum.com. Their stated goal is to eventually have info on every American who served in Britain as a part of the Air Corps during WWII. They have created an entry for every person they have info for and many of these entries have only the basic info available to the museum personnel. Here is the great part of this site: you can add to each entry if you have pertinent info. And, you can link different entries together. For instance, I can add the medals my father was awarded to his entry. And I can link my father to the other crew members in his plane. Once that is done, anyone looking at one of those entries would also see the entries for the other crew members and could investigate in those directions. And each person can be linked to the entry for a specific aircraft, and a Bomb Group, and a Squadron, etc. – you get the idea. This is really a well done website with a lot of info now – but we can all work to make it even better!

Continuing with the interactive possibilities – The 2019 8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion is fast approaching – October 16th through the 20th in St. Louis, Missouri. I hope you have already registered, but if not, now is a great time to do so! The 96th BGA always has a great turnout, and we have a lot of fun together. This reunion will have a program on Thursday, October 17th titled “Researching the Past: Step-by-Step”, along with other programs and tours. Please see the 8th AFHS web site for all the info on the reunion and the hotels: www.8thafhs.org.

Another way to be a part of these memories is to become a 'Sentinel of Memory' for one of the ninety-three 96th Bomb Group men who is buried in the American Cemeteries in Belgium. This is a very nice way to keep the memory of a fallen hero alive. More information on this program can be found on Page 13 of this issue of the 96th Bomb Group Newsletter. Included is a complete listing of the 93 men by name, rank, serial number and state of enlistment.

As I mention in each newsletter, if you'd like to connect with someone, please visit or call a veteran. Certainly, if you know a WWII veteran, please give them a call or pay them a visit, but don't limit yourself to just WWII veterans – anyone who has served certainly has a story to tell. I am sure most would like to know

that someone cares and is interested. They may not all want to tell everything, but you can express your thanks for their service and go from there.

I also need to get to the business side of things - If you haven't paid your 2019 dues for the 96th BGA, would you take a moment to do that now? The dues are \$20 per year.

Please make your checks payable to **96th Bomb Group Association**, and send them to:

Susan Hinchman
706 Miami View CT
Loveland, OH 45140

Thank You for your time, and I hope to see you in St. Louis!



Mike McIlraith
President – 96th BGA



96th Bomb Group Emblem

The 96th Bomb Group crest is imbued with blue and yellow as they are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The falcon's head heraldically denotes the organization's bombardment function and also symbolizes the unit's hot pursuit of mission accomplishments. The red drop bomb is the color of fire and denotes martial prowess, boldness and hardiness. The motto of the 96th Bomb Group; *E SEMPRE L'ORA*, “It is Always the Hour,” refers to the 96 BG's ability to bomb around the clock without fighter support during WWII.

Emblem. Approved on 18 Feb 1943

Meanwhile Back at the Old Base



It's been a memorable few weeks here at the old base and with so much history being recalled nationally and internationally with the D Day landing commemorations. There has been so much footage, many of it harrowing and reminding us of the conditions and bravery of those men and women who served in WWII and paid the ultimate price for doing so.

Another sad note that many readers may already know, is that we have also lost one of the founding fathers of the 96th Bomb Group Museum. Bert Patrick was known by so many both here and in the US. I knew Bert and his family for years before I became a member of the 96th Bomb Group. I remember him as a lovely man, very much respected with a twinkle in his eye and lots of fun.

In May several members of the committee got together for the annual Museum spring clean and I suppose it's because it's an original war time building it always seems that spiders and cobwebs feel at home among the artefacts however, all has been swept away and everything is spruced up, spick and span and ready for visitors.

The first of these was Maggie Miracle. Maggie's family connection with the 96th was that her father Lt Andrew Miracle was the B17 pilot of the 'The Miracle Tribe'. The crew were from the 338th Squadron. On their way home after the Regensburg Shuttle mission in North Africa, they brought back the beloved little donkey known as Lady Moe. In fact, Lady Moe became the mascot for the 96th and from all accounts got up to all kinds of mischief and had the run of the whole base.



"The Miracle Tribe" crew and newly acquired *"Lady Moe"* on the wing of their aircraft ready to return from North Africa



Maggie Miracle and Geoff Ward our Historian toured the Museum at Eccles and visited "The Silver Dream" at Snetterton Heath.

Maggie had travelled over with her husband who had undertaken a parachute jump onto the Normandy beaches.

Other visitors included John and Joanne Buchanan who had also been over for the D Day commemorations in Normandy, France. John's relation, Wayne Buchanan top turret gunner on Lt Ralph Colflesh crew. On 29th July 1944 the mission was to Leuna/ Mersberg, 42- 97262 the 'Silver Slipper' of 339th Squadron. It was last seen after the target, with one engine out and later observed when it broke in half. Sadly, there were no survivors.

More recently a local lady, author Ann Partridge requested some information, she is researching the history of a B17 plane that took off from Snetterton Heath crashed a few miles from the base, in the next village. Ann is planning to write a book of war time in the local area and wanted to include this story. Geoff Ward was able to recount the facts she required, provided some photographs and showed her around the Museum.

Rebecca Lutz has been doing a fantastic job in getting the first batch of the name plaques. So far, I think that 53 will be placed on the fence surrounding the memorial, Steven Wills and Geoff Ward are working out the order that they will be positioned

Many thanks Jean Wills

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Jean Wills



96th Bomb Group Recipients French Legion of Honor

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|
| Marbury L. Councill Jr. | 337th | Stanley A. Peterson | 338th |
| Salvatore "Sal" Cracolici | 338th | Jesse A. Reese | 337th |
| Paul R. Frank | 338th | James A. Rich Jr. | 338th |
| Joseph Garber | 338th | Henry "Ed" Tessien | 413th |
| George A. Gorman | 339th | William M. "Bill" Thorns | 338th |
| Glenn A. Harrison | 339th | Rudolph Villalobos | 413th |
| Joseph O. Ingram Jr. | 337th | Frank A. Wiswall | 413th |
| Richard M. Jerger | 413th | Richard P. Woodson III | 337th |
| Lloyd Mitchell | 413th | | |

Listed above are those members of the 96th Bomb Group known to have received the French Legion of Honor. If you have received this award and are not listed please let the Newsletter Editor know so you may be included in the future.

If you believe you may be eligible for this award you can find more complete information on the 8th Air Force Historical Society web page link at www.8thafhs.org/reunion/french.htm. You will be able to download the actual application forms from this link and begin gathering the information you will need to apply. Should you need help with where to find the information that you will need, Bill Thorns, an award recipient, would be glad to assist. His contact information can be found on the last page in "Where to Call or Write."

How to request being awarded the French Legion of Honor

The Legion of Honor is France's most distinguished decoration and it can be bestowed to recognize the special contribution and act of bravery while fighting for the liberation of our country during WWII. The decision to honor World War II combatants applies only to living veterans who served on French territory and in French territorial waters and airspace from 1944-1945.

The medal will not be awarded posthumously.

In order to study your request you must provide the following documents:

1. Proposal Memory Form - Attach the form completed in block letters and print legibly (with a detailed personal narrative related to your campaigns in France in which you participated, indicating the dates and locations where you fought, the divisions or units you belonged to and your functions).

2. Honorable Discharge Papers — Attach a copy (do not send originals) of both sides of yours showing proof of service in France between June 6, 1944 and May 8, 1945.

3. A copy of any of the following decorations you or your unit may have been awarded is also required: Bronze Star, Silver Star, Purple Heart, Congressional medal, French Croix de Guerre/French Fourragere.

4. All information (newspaper articles, books, etc. describing your actions in France during WWII.

5. Mail to one of the French Consulates on the list below. Please note that upon receipt of these documents your file will be submitted to our Embassy in Washington DC. and then to the Grand Chancellery of the Legion of Honor in Paris, France, for a final decision after a close study of the veteran's record by a committee. The review of application for the Legion of Honor may take over a year. Please don't call: applicants will be contacted directly if any questions or problems arise.

If your request is accepted, you will have to go to one of the French Consulates to receive the medal.

FRENCH CONSULATES IN THE U.S.

Consulat Général de France
4101 Reservoir Road
Washington DC 20007

Consulat Général de France
934 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10021

Consulat Général de France
Park Square Building, Suite 750
3 1, Saint James Avenue
Boston MA 02116

Consulat Général de France
The Lenox Building
3399 Peachtree Rd NE, Ste 500
Atlanta, GA 30326

Consulat Général de France
Espirito Santo Plaza, Suite 1050,
1395 Brickell Avenue
Miami FL 33131

Consulat Général de France
205 North Michigan Avenue, Suite
3700
Chicago, IL, 60601

Consulat Général de France
777 Post Oak Boulevard, Suite 600
Houston, TX 77056

Consulat Général de France
1340 Poydras Street- Suite 1710
New Orleans LA 70112

Consulat Général de France
10390 Santa Monica Blvd. Suite 410
Los Angeles, CA 90025

Consulat Général de France
88 Keamy St. Suite 600
San Francisco, CA 94108



St. Louis Honors Veterans In America's Birthday Parade

On the 4th of July, the City of St. Louis included a special recognition for three of its Hometown Heroes in the "America's Birthday Parade".

In January, Al Villagran, Eugene Tarmack and of course, the 96th's own Glenn Harrison were awarded the French Legion of Honor medal. As part of the city's continued celebration of the honor bestowed upon these Veterans, each man was invited to ride in a vintage fire truck with family and friends.



Facing the camera in the firetruck are: Rebecca and Jerry, Annette and Larry Lueckenotte, son-in-law, Walter Peter, daughter Alison Harrison, son Glenn Harrison and Glenn

Prior to the Parade, each Veteran was interviewed by a reporter from the local CBS television station and those interviews were syndicated to other stations around the country, reaching an audience of 34 million people. Glen and Mr. Villagran were also featured in the HBO documentary "The Cold Blue" which was previewed after dinner at our last reunion.



Glenn enjoying his interview for TV before the parade.

The parade organizers arranged for breakfast in the VIP room that was also visited by the beauty queens, representing several states, who were also in the parade.



Rebecca and Jerry Lutz with Miss Arkansas in the VIP room prior to the parade

Glenn continued to "do the 96th Proud" as he had the largest contingent of family and friends requiring two firetrucks to accommodate everyone.



Glenn, daughter, Alison Harrison, son, Glenn Harrison and daughter-in-law, Nancy Harrison in the VIP room prior to the parade

It was a wonderful day, even though it was hot and humid, but the huge crown was so appreciative, with many people shouting "Thank you" as the Veterans rode by. It truly was a very special day.

In Memoriam: Lt. Robert Lewis

By Kerry Lewis

I'm writing this article to honor the memory of my cousin Lt. Robert Lewis, who was killed in action 75 years ago, 12 May 1944, when the B-17 he was piloting was shot down by Luftwaffe fighter planes over Germany. At the time, Cousin Bob had been flying missions in the 338th Squadron of the 96th Bomb Group at Snetterton since April 1944.

I know about cousin Bob and his military career because of all the photos of him and newspaper articles about his service in the Army Air Corps that I received from my parents. Over the past 15 years I've been able to augment these materials with information from other sources, such as the Missing Air Crew Report (MACR) for the B-17 Bob was piloting and Individual Deceased Personnel File (IDPF) for Bob.

Bob Lewis was born in Mason City, Iowa on 21 April 1921. He and his cousin Glenn Lewis, my father, who lived in the small farming town of Klemme about 25 miles away, grew up together and saw each other often when they were kids. After Bob graduated from high school in 1939 he attended junior college for a year and then worked as an assistant manager for the Des Moines Register Tribune office in Mason City.

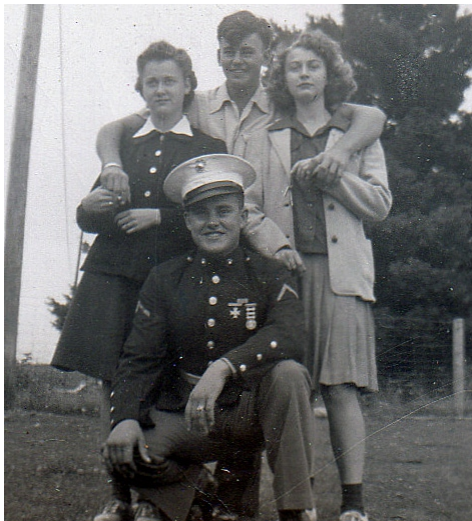
Bob developed an early interest in flying. Family lore has it that on one occasion around 1940 he created a sensation by landing a small plane in a field near Klemme, where my father and other Lewis relatives lived.

In October 1942 Bob drove to Klemme to see his cousin Glenn, who had enlisted in the Marine Corps in early 1941 and was on home leave from the base in San Diego before being deployed to the South Pacific.

In this photo from the Klemme visit, my father looks very proud of his dress uniform! Bob brought two girls with him from Mason City for this occasion.

The girl on the left is my mother June Elaine Spencer, who was Bob's girlfriend at the time. (She and my father married after the war.)

I get misty-eyed looking at this photo, knowing that a year and a half later Bob would



Kerry Lewis

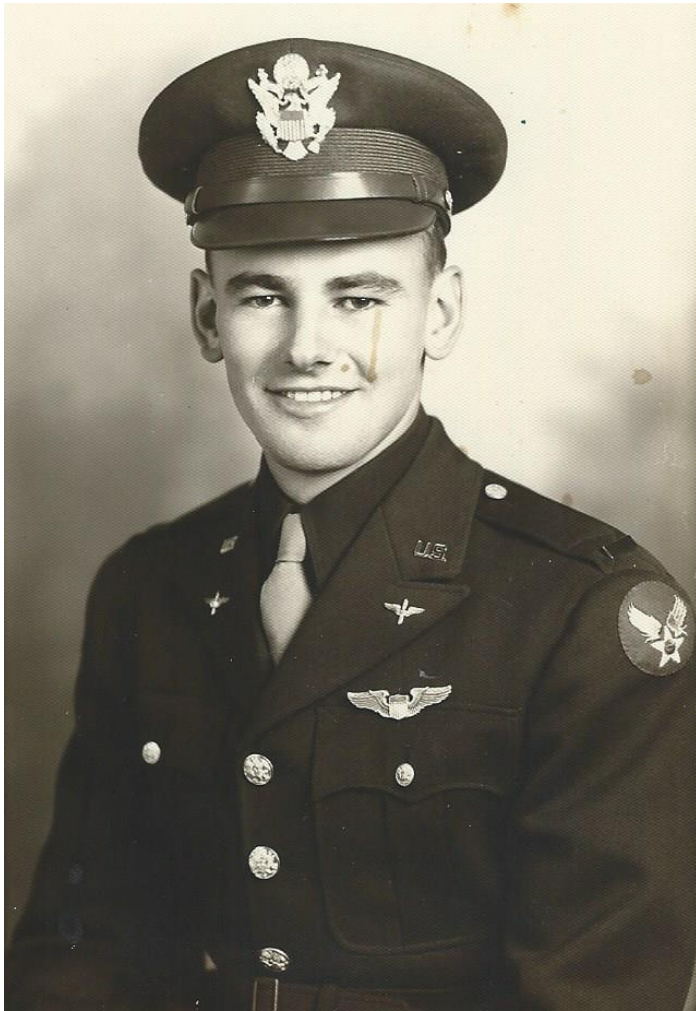
be dead at age 23, while my father would (thankfully) survive the war and live to the age of 88.

That October day in Klemme was the last time that Bob and my father saw each other, and close to the last time that my mother saw Bob. My father returned to base in San Diego, and from there was soon transported to New Caledonia in the South Pacific. Later in October my mother and her parents left Iowa and moved to California.

On 10 October, 1942 Bob Lewis enlisted in the Army Air Corps and was sent to St. Petersburg, Florida for training. In August 1943 Bob received his commission at Moody Field in Georgia.



Here's a photo of Bob and his mother, taken in Mason City when he was on leave in September 1943.



Here's a portrait of Bob in uniform. I have a frayed Army Air Forces insignia like the one on the sleeve of his uniform. I'm guessing he sent it to my mother at some point.

Bob's pilot training continued at various U.S. bases during 1943 and early 1944. (Apparently, he was in Salt Lake City at some point; two Salt Lake City street car tokens were found in his pocket when his body was recovered.)



This photo of Bob (2nd from left) and other airmen on the tarmac was apparently taken at one of the U.S. training sites. [Can anyone identify any of the other airmen?]

According to an article in the Mason City newspaper, Bob Lewis "was graduated a pilot on a Flying Fortress [B-17]" in November 1943. I suppose he was granted home leave to visit Mason City before being deployed to the U.K., via Iceland, in early 1944.

In April 1944 Lt. Robert Lewis was assigned to duty in the 338th Squadron at Snetterton Heath airfield in Essex on the east coast of England, where the 96th Bomb Group had been based since June 1943. Bob and his crew were one of 28 new 10-man B-17 crews assigned to Snetterton in April.

April and May 1944 were terrible, deadly months for the 96th Bomb Group. As an indicator, the heading for the May 1944 section of the *Snetterton Falcons* book is "Massacre Month." Dozens of missions were launched to bomb key targets in Germany, France, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, and elsewhere. The Allied forces were, of course, trying to inflict as much damage as possible on the German defenses and infrastructure in advance of the D-Day invasion planned for June. By June the Allied bombers had gained the upper hand, but in April and May the casualty rate was horrendous.

Lt. Lewis and his crew started flying bombing missions in late April, as follows:

- 24 April: Fredrickshaven, Germany
- 1 May: Metz, France
- 7 May: Berlin, Germany
- 8 May: France
- 11 May: Brussels, Belgium

Thus, their final mission on 12 May was only the 6th one they had flown. According to Frank Wiswall of the 96th Bomb Group Association, whom I contacted in 2006 when I started to seriously research cousin Bob's military service, the crew would have been considered "newbies" at this point, with only that handful of missions under their belt.

Bob and his crew awoke at 4 A.M. on Sunday (Mothers Day!) May 12, 1944. They and the other airmen in their unit were briefed on the targets of that day's bombing missions: the German petroleum refineries at Zwickau and surrounding areas, about 800 miles away. The men looked at a map with a long red line extending from Snetterton very, very far to the eastern edge of Germany. Bob's plane was one of twenty-six B-17's from the 96th Bomb Group that were dispatched to attack these key targets. Each plane probably carried about 4000-4500 lbs. of bombs for this long-range mission.

In an account written in 1955 for a college English class assignment, Bob's crewman Alexander Klecha recalled "The crew was in high spirits, as was the rest of the Group in our element. We were all invited to attend an anniversary party of the group celebrating 100 missions over enemy territory, which was to be celebrated that same evening." I think the party was probably cancelled after so many planes did not return to the base later that day.

Note: The *total* number of aircraft dispatched on this May 12 mission from the entire Eighth Air Force was an astounding 886 bombers accompanied by 735 fighter planes! This was indeed a “full court press” to degrade the German military's resources and functionality as much as possible in advance of D-Day.

The bombers from Snetterton took off early in the morning on their very long mission, flying in 14-ship formations. Everything went smoothly until 12:10, about 75 miles west of Frankfurt, when dozens of Luftwaffe fighter planes suddenly appeared and ripped through the formation, downing several B-17's and causing general havoc. After this initial attack lasting several minutes, the German fighters regrouped a short distance away and soon attacked again.

A third German air attack occurred at 12:30, and it was in this attack that Lt. Lewis's B-17 was shot down and crashed, along with two other B-17's, near the small village of Merzhausen about 20 miles north of Frankfurt. So Bob and his crew never reached their designated target and never dropped their bombs. When the villagers were interviewed by American military investigators after the War, they described seeing about 50 parachutes in the air over the village on that day, as many airmen (both American and German) bailed out of their stricken planes.

Here is the account of the crash of Lt. Lewis's B-17, excerpted from the *Snetterton Falcons* book:

A/C 42-31343 piloted by the 338ths Lt. Robert Lewis was on fire when the alarm bell rang. The two waist gunners and the tail gunner bailed out the side hatch. The ball turret gunner, blown out of the plane when it exploded, somehow survived. But from the radio compartment forward everyone perished. The plane crashed 13 Km southwest of Friedburg near Wherbeim Lake, Hartsteiner.

More detailed information about the moments before the crash emerges from the MACR report. Just before the plane exploded, top turret gunner Sgt. Duff reported that he shot the tail assembly off an attacking fighter plane. The enemy planes attacked from the 12 o'clock position, or head-on, undoubtedly trying to kill the pilot and co-pilot. Just before the plane exploded in the air (having a full load of bombs), Lt. Lewis got on the intercom and gave the command to bail out.

On that day, May 12, twelve of the 26 planes that took off from Snetterton in the morning did not return, and 121 airmen were listed as MIA. A very, very dark day for the 96th Bomb Group! To put it in perspective, for the entire month of May 1944 the 96th Bomb Group lost 30 planes and reported 300 airmen MIA.

An airman in one of the B-17's from Snetterton that did make it to Zwickau and dropped its bombs there, later described his shock on the flight back to England when he was able to see only four of the original 14 bombers flying in formation.

On pages 139-142 of *Snetterton Falcons: The 96th Bomb Group in World War II* you can find a lot of

additional information about the planes that were shot down on May 12 and those that made it back to the base.

The four crew members from Bob's plane who bailed out (or were blown out) survived the May 12 crash and became POWs in Germany. Three of the four survivors – Alexander Klecha, Paul Howard, and Kenneth Elliot – survived the war. The tail gunner, Forest Corley, died while in captivity in Germany.

The villagers in Merzhausen did not mistreat the surviving American airmen, who were soon picked up by the German military. One survivor on the ground was dragged away from a downed plane by a villager moments before it blew up, saving his life.

The local authorities in Merzhausen recovered 12 bodies from the three crash sites near their village and stored them temporarily in a barn. Not surprisingly, all the recovered bodies were burned and badly mangled. ID tags were recovered from three of the bodies, including Lt. Lewis's, and were sent to Geneva. Two days after the crash Polish slave laborers dug a mass grave in the old section of the village cemetery and buried the recovered bodies there. The bodies were not placed in caskets but were wrapped in tarps or blankets along with any recovered personal effects (in Bob's case, some coins and a couple of Salt Lake City streetcar tokens).

Bob's mother Gladys Anderson in Mason City was notified in late May 1944 that her son was MIA. In January of 1945, Bob was awarded the Air Medal for “meritorious achievement while participating in heavy bombardment missions over enemy occupied continental Europe.” About a year after the plane crash, Bob's status was changed to Killed in Action.

The Merzhausen villagers placed a small wooden cross at the mass grave with the inscription “Here lie 12 American soldiers.” The burial place was reported several times to the German and American authorities. The villagers may have perceived by this time that Germany was losing the war, and they knew that the Americans would come around after the war to investigate and to recover the bodies.

American military investigators arrived in Merzhausen in February 1947 and exhumed the 12 bodies. Thus began Bob's long, convoluted journey back to Mason City. The 12 bodies were initially sent to Strassbourg, France. From there, Bob's body was sent for burial in an American military cemetery in Neuville-en-Condruz, Belgium. His mother, however, had requested that his body be returned to Iowa, and this was accomplished in May 1949, five years after his death. Rest in peace, cousin Bob.

I'm very glad to get this all down in writing and to thus honor the memory of my brave cousin Lt. Robert Lewis. I would be thrilled to receive any photos, memories, or other materials from the descendants and families of any of Bob's crew. You can contact me at Kerry_lewis@msn.com.

Kerry Lewis, June 2019

Rum Boogie Crew

The Bombardier

2nd Lt William H. Spencer

By Vicki Ekmark



William (Bill) Spencer was born in Marion, Indiana, on May 10, 1917. His family lived in the small rural town of Sheridan, Indiana, an hour away from Marion.

His father, Avery, was a farmer, and his mother, Floy, was a housewife. They were 35 and 33 years old respectively when he was born.

Bill was only 17 years old in 1934, when his father died at the age of 54 and did not graduate from Sheridan High School until the following year 1935.

Bill enlisted as an aviation cadet in the Air Corps on January 21, 1942, at Lockbourne Army Air Base in Columbus, Ohio. He received his commission and the Wings of a Bombardier at Victorville, California in August of the same year. Lt Spencer was assigned to the 96th Bomb Group and the crew of the "Rum Boogie," one of the original 38 B-17 crews deployed to England on April 30, 1943.

I don't have a date for when Bill married Helen Malley, but my guess would be sometime between his enlistment date of January 21, 1942 and the birth of their daughter, Lucinda, on May 22, 1943 as his enlistment record indicates he was single at that time.



Rear L/R Sgt. George T. Gant, Gunner, Sgt. Richard J. Postier, Radio Operator and Waist, Sgt. Charles F. Goyette, Assistant Radio Operator and Gunner, Sgt. Ellis P. Savoie, Engineer and Gunner, Sgt. George P. Wyherek, Ball Turret Gunner. Front L/R Lieutenant Lloyd J. Fickler, Co-Pilot, 2nd Lt. Harry J. Miller, Navigator, 1st Lt. James H. Sanders, Pilot, Sgt. Alvin Neff, Tail Gunner, Not pictured the photographer 2nd Lt. William H. Spencer, Bombardier **Rum Boogie Crew**

During WW2, Lt. Spencer was decorated with an air medal (given after completing mission #5 on 21 May 1943). He also received a purple heart and an oak leaf cluster, possibly for shooting down a German fighter. I'm not sure which mission or missions these decorations were for, but Rum Boogie's eighth mission to Kiel on June 13, 1943, was an especially difficult one and is probably where the injuries happened and the awards were earned. The Navigator, Harry J. Miller, who Bill was good friends with, describes the fight, "we fought for more than two hours, with 200 enemy fighters milling around in the sky, and before the fight was over we had used up all but 25 rounds of ammunition." In the end, three B17 bombers and the 30 men who made up their crews were lost.

On his last officer's pay allowance form, dated November 24, 1945, Mrs. Helen Spencer is still listed as Bill's wife. After returning to civilian life, he took up his career in broadcast radio management and was a troubleshooter for a chain of radio stations, moving his family to new locations while he took over station management to get it back on its financial feet, then moving on to his next assignment somewhere in the Midwest. At some point between the end of Bill's war service and 1963, Bill and Helen divorced.

His mother, Floy, died in August of 1972 at the age of 89 at the Turtle Creek Convalescent Center in Sheridan, Indiana.

In December of 1972, three days before Christmas, Bill died in San Francisco at the age of 55. One of his friends called the family to inform them what had happened. His daughter, Lucinda, went to bring his body back to Indiana, where he is buried in the Spencer Family Cemetery in Sheridan.

Lucinda and Phil divorced after 11 years of marriage in 1976.

(continued on page 12)

On March 28, 1988, Bill's ex-wife Helen died in Springfield, Ohio, at the age of 76. It appears that she never remarried.

On October 26, 1992, Bill's daughter Lucinda died at the age of 49 in Los Angeles.

Bill is survived by his son-in-law Phil Bacon and three grand children.



Many returning veterans carried their own demons with them after the war, and Bill was no exception. He was a heavy drinker which contributed greatly to his downward spiral, loss of job opportunities, and divorce. In 1967, he was admitted for alcohol addiction and recovery to Eastern State Hospital in Lexington, Kentucky. At that time, he had one grandchild who he saw briefly. Eventually, two more grandchildren were born who he never met.

On a snowy weekend in February, I was researching Bill with a visit to Ancestry.com when I turned up a lot of information regarding his death that I didn't expect to find:

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| 1A. NAME OF DECEASED - FIRST NAME WILLIAM | | 1B. MIDDLE NAME H | | 1C. LAST NAME SPENCER | | 1D. DATE OF DEATH DECEMBER 22, 1972 | | 1E. AGE AT DEATH 55 | |
| 2A. SEX Male | | 2B. COLOR OR RACE White | | 3A. BIRTHPLACE Indiana | | 3B. DATE OF BIRTH May 10, 1917 | | 3C. AGE AT BIRTH 55 | |
| 4A. NAME AND BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER Avery Spencer - Indiana | | 4B. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER 303-16-8938 | | 4C. MARRIED, NEVER MARRIED, DIVORCED, WIDOWED, SEPARATED Separated | | 4D. NAME AND BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER Floy Swaim - Ark. | | 4E. NAME OF SURVIVING SPOUSE (IF WIFE, ENTER MARRIAGE DATE) Unknown | |
| 5A. CITIZEN OF WHAT COUNTRY U.S.A. | | 5B. STATE OF LAST EMPLOYING COMPANY OR FIRM Unknown | | 5C. KIND OF INDUSTRY OR BUSINESS Unknown | | 5D. NAME OF SURVIVING SPOUSE (IF WIFE, ENTER MARRIAGE DATE) Unknown | | 5E. NAME AND BIRTHPLACE OF SURVIVING SPOUSE (IF WIFE, ENTER MARRIAGE DATE) Unknown | |
| 6A. PLACE OF DEATH - NAME OF HOSPITAL OR OTHER IN-PATIENT FACILITY San Francisco | | 6B. STREET ADDRESS - STREET AND NUMBER OR LOCATION 459 Turk Str., Rm. #331 | | 6C. COUNTY San Francisco | | 6D. YEARS OF DEATH IN COUNTY OF DEATH 5 | | 6E. YEARS OF DEATH IN COUNTY OF DEATH 5 | |
| 7A. USUAL RESIDENCE - STREET ADDRESS AND NUMBER OR LOCATION 459 Turk | | 7B. COUNTY San Francisco | | 7C. STATE Calif. | | 7D. YEARS OF DEATH IN COUNTY OF DEATH 5 | | 7E. YEARS OF DEATH IN COUNTY OF DEATH 5 | |
| 8A. CITY OR TOWN San Francisco | | 8B. COUNTY San Francisco | | 8C. STATE Calif. | | 8D. YEARS OF DEATH IN COUNTY OF DEATH 5 | | 8E. YEARS OF DEATH IN COUNTY OF DEATH 5 | |
| 9A. CORNER - STREET CORNER OR INTERSECTION Investigation | | 9B. PHYSICIAN - NAME AND ADDRESS John & Bryant Sts. Coronado | | 9C. DATE SIGNED 12-23-72 | | 9D. SIGNATURE OF PHYSICIAN <i>[Signature]</i> | | 9E. SIGNATURE OF PHYSICIAN <i>[Signature]</i> | |
| 10A. FUNERAL HOME - NAME AND ADDRESS Halsted & Company | | 10B. DATE OF FUNERAL Dec. 26, 1972 | | 10C. LOCAL REGISTRAR - NAME AND ADDRESS Sheridan, Indiana | | 10D. SIGNATURE OF LOCAL REGISTRAR <i>[Signature]</i> | | 10E. SIGNATURE OF LOCAL REGISTRAR <i>[Signature]</i> | |
| 11A. PART I. DEATH WAS CAUSED BY Massive fatty infiltration of the liver. | | 11B. CONDITIONS OF ANY WHICH GAVE RISE TO THE UNDERLYING CAUSE Unknown | | 11C. DATE OF DEATH 1972 | | 11D. DATE OF DEATH 1972 | | 11E. DATE OF DEATH 1972 | |
| 12A. PLACE OF INJURY - STREET AND NUMBER OR LOCATION AND CITY OR TOWN Unknown | | 12B. DATE OF INJURY Unknown | | 12C. TIME OF INJURY Unknown | | 12D. DATE OF INJURY Unknown | | 12E. TIME OF INJURY Unknown | |
| 13A. PLACE OF INJURY - STREET AND NUMBER OR LOCATION AND CITY OR TOWN Unknown | | 13B. DATE OF INJURY Unknown | | 13C. TIME OF INJURY Unknown | | 13D. DATE OF INJURY Unknown | | 13E. TIME OF INJURY Unknown | |
| 14A. DESCRIBE HOW INJURY OCCURRED Unknown | | 14B. NATURE OF INJURY Unknown | | 14C. NATURE OF INJURY Unknown | | 14D. NATURE OF INJURY Unknown | | 14E. NATURE OF INJURY Unknown | |

Gentlemen:
Please complete checked items and return to us so that we can get certified copies to you. Clothes from hotel are enclosed.
Thanks for calling us.
Pat Moore Gen mgr



On Memorial Day, 2017, I commemorated Bill with a red rose in San Francisco Bay. I hope at last he is in a peaceful place.



What happened to Bill is not that unusual for men who have defended our country in war. They have seen and been a part of horrific things. I grew up during Viet Nam. My brother joined the Marines right after high school and was part of the ground war there. I thank God every day that my brother is all right and still on the planet, because I see Viet Nam vets who aren't - who have been ravaged by drugs and alcohol and homelessness and a country who didn't welcome them home. If you would like to make a charitable donation to any service related charity, please consider doing so today. Here is a possible link:

- Air Force Aid Society
- Official Charity of the U.S. Air Force
- Supporting Airmen Since 1942
- Four Star Charity on Charity Navigator
- www.afas.org

This article was written with the cooperation of the four living relatives of William Spencer. Thank you for sharing his story.

You can follow Rum Boogie Crew on the sites below:

- Web Page <https://www.rumboogieweb.com>
- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/rumboogieweb>
- Twitter <https://twitter.com/rumboogieweb>
- Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/rumboogieweb>

New Belgium Cemetery Program from



AOMDA Foundation
AMERICAN OVERSEAS MEMORIAL DAY ASSOCIATION

Sentinel of Memory

You may know that there are more than 70,000 American service men who died in WWII that are buried in cemeteries in Europe. These cemeteries have 'grave adoption' systems to allow residents in the area to adopt the grave of an American.

Our good friends Wim Jacobs and his wife Nadine in Belgium are active adopters of multiple graves for Americans buried in Belgium's Ardennes American cemetery and Henri-Chapelle American cemetery.



In the two American cemeteries in Belgium there are 90 soldiers buried, two soldiers listed at the Walls of the Missing and one soldier buried in an isolated grave, that were members of the 96th Bomb Group.

Wim's message about this new program for assigning a grave in an American Cemetery was first announced in our 96th Bomb Group Newsletter No.70 in February 1918.

AOMDA's home website is [:http://aomda.org/en](http://aomda.org/en) visit here and explore the opportunities provided for the remembrance of our fallen American veterans.

What's new is "**Serve as Sentinel of Memory**". A unique opportunity for "Anyone - anywhere in the world - to become a Sentinel of Memory for any serviceman buried in Belgium." Please read this page carefully:

<http://aomda.org/en/content/serve-sentinel-memory>

Take note of what the difference is between Primary Sentinel of Memory and Sentinel of Memory. Not clear is the fact that to participate you must register first. To register go to the bottom of this web page and click on REGISTER. There is no fee and you can register as an individual or as an organization. You will have to give your first and last name, e-mail address and create a password. You will be sent an access code that will enable you to sign in and add your name as a Sentinel of Memory and submit information and photos.

Wim has suggested that it would be nice if all 93 soldiers would receive a Sentinel of Memory. What a nice memorial to these soldiers and recognition of their deeds. One person cannot do this alone but with some involvement of our membership and friends it can be achieved.

Wim has provided us on the next two pages of this Newsletter with a complete listing of all the 96th Bomb

Group personnel for each of Belgium's American Cemeteries. It gives their name, rank, serial number and State of enlistment.

It has been suggested that the 96th Bomb Group should register as an Organization and become a Sentinel of Memory for each of the 93 Airmen, What do you think and would you be willing to help with the process? It will be discussed at our annual meeting in St. Louis, please let your Officers and Board members know your opinion.

Below is a sample of what you can expect to see when you visit the location of an individual through the AOMDA Sentinel of Memory web page.

The grave of Jennings Greuter from the 96th BG is one of those adopted by Wim Jacobs.

When you enter the name Jennings Greuter on the page "Serve as a Sentinel" of Memory, press enter and the page of Jennings Greuter becomes visible. If you click once more on the photo it reveals all the information.

Here you can see Wim Jacobs' name as Primary Sentinel of Memory and the name of Nadine and others as Sentinel of Memory.

Please share with Wim your thoughts about his suggestion?


Wim hopes it is clear what he asks, and that you understand that this is not for him but he just wants this opportunity to remember and honor these veterans.

They died for Freedom
Honor them

Over one-half million members of the United States Armed Forces lost their lives during World Wars I and II. Over 14,000 are buried in Belgium.

Help us to honor their memory and to pass the value of freedom to each new generation.

Wim & Nadine
jacobs.wi@telenet.be

| | |
|--|--|
|  | <h1>GREUTER JENNINGS C</h1> |
| Rank | STAFF SERGEANT |
| Unit & Div | 338 BOMB SQ 96 BOMB GP/H/ |
| Service Number | 35545269 |
| Final Resting Place | Ardennes American Cemetery |
| Awards | Purple Heart |
| Primary Sentinel of Memory | Wim Jacobs (Since 2011) |
| Sentinels of Memory | Nadine Huylebroeck Lawrence Greuter Tanya Brunner Defiance County Veterans Office |
| Entered Service From: | OH United States |
| Died | 12 May 1944 |
| | Belgium |
| Add my name | PlotC Row22 Grave7 |

This is a facsimile of the Sentinel of Memory listing for Jennings C.

**96th Bomber Group
Ardennes American Cemetery**

337th Bomber Squadron

| | | | | | |
|------------|---------|----|--------------------|----------|----------------|
| Bolstad | Edmund | I. | First Lieutenant | 0-730353 | Minnesota |
| Cameron | John | J. | Technical Sergeant | 36580749 | Michigan |
| Dover | Clifton | M. | Second Lieutenant | 0-757706 | South Carolina |
| Haney | William | I. | Technical Sergeant | 35277674 | Ohio |
| Hassebrock | Oscar | H. | Staff Sergeant | 37303273 | North Dakota |
| Humke | David | A. | First Lieutenant | 0-663377 | Iowa |
| Kuhn | Olin | R. | Second Lieutenant | 0-809821 | Georgia |
| McDermott | Charles | E. | Staff Sergeant | 12064102 | New Jersey |
| Means | Hobert | E. | Staff Sergeant | 7656190 | Iowa |
| Moore | Richard | F. | Second Lieutenant | 0-709432 | Connecticut |
| Morales | Frank | V. | Staff Sergeant | 18090330 | Arizona |
| Morrison | Robert | J. | Technical Sergeant | 15377111 | Ohio |
| Niswonger | Harold | L. | First Lieutenant | 0-803857 | New Mexico |
| Rude | Charles | C. | Staff Sergeant | 12095675 | New Jersey |
| Slaybaugh | Earl | A. | Corporal | 37324549 | North Dakota |
| Wojcik | Albert | A. | Technical Sergeant | 38368910 | Texas |



338th Bomber Squadron

| | | | | | |
|------------|-----------|----|--------------------|----------|----------------|
| Ashmead | John | A. | Second Lieutenant | 0-702356 | Minnesota |
| Bassett | Herbert | D. | Staff Sergeant | 35332655 | Pennsylvania |
| Baumann | William | F. | Technical Sergeant | 16078488 | Illinois |
| Bedell | John | E. | First Lieutenant | 0-676879 | New Jersey |
| Burke | John | D. | Staff Sergeant | 35096550 | Indiana |
| Connell | William | J. | Technical Sergeant | 16036494 | Illinois |
| Davis | George | L. | First Lieutenant | 0-677454 | Texas |
| Flusche | Julius | O. | Second Lieutenant | 0-682316 | Texas |
| Greuter | Jennings | C. | Staff Sergeant | 35545269 | Ohio |
| Grissom | Thomas | J. | Technical Sergeant | 34467488 | North Carolina |
| Guderian | Lester | L. | Second Lieutenant | 0-683989 | Texas |
| Hainline | Harold | D. | Staff Sergeant | 35299701 | Ohio |
| Hauser | Alfred | C. | Second Lieutenant | 0-703991 | New York |
| Hayes | William | O. | Second Lieutenant | 0-818868 | Florida |
| Hester | Walter | L. | Second Lieutenant | 0-818870 | California |
| Hilton | Thomas | B. | Second Lieutenant | 0-814901 | New York |
| Jackson | Bernard | C. | Second Lieutenant | 0-805054 | Massachusetts |
| Kennedy | Richard | W. | Staff Sergeant | 11091521 | Massachusetts |
| Koch | Walter | A. | Technical Sergeant | 39230035 | California |
| Korolchuk | Alexander | | Sergeant | 10601117 | Michigan |
| McCloy | Earl | L. | Staff Sergeant | 16019876 | Illinois |
| McMonigle | Evert | D. | Staff Sergeant | 18131450 | Oklahoma |
| Miller | Jack | A. | Staff Sergeant | 19190015 | California |
| Milward | Jack | I. | Staff Sergeant | 37538424 | Kansas |
| Montgomery | Thomas | A. | Technical Sergeant | 16013911 | Missouri |
| Pearce | Ronald | J. | Staff Sergeant | 32271971 | New Jersey |
| Pen sack | Leonard | R. | Technical Sergeant | 32454362 | New Jersey |
| Reynolds | Henry | G. | Second Lieutenant | 0-670251 | Alabama |
| Thompson | James | M. | Technical Sergeant | 34353849 | Florida |
| Townley | Arthur | S. | Staff Sergeant | 18117341 | Texas |
| Young | William | J. | First Lieutenant | 0-753266 | Washington |



339th Bomber Squadron



| | | | | | |
|------------|----------|----|--------------------|----------|--------------|
| Armanini | Dinno | J. | Staff Sergeant | 39845994 | California |
| Avantini | Carmine | | Technical Sergeant | 12173646 | New York |
| Cipresso | Berline | | Second Lieutenant | 0-680407 | Michigan |
| Cline | James | W. | Second Lieutenant | 0-695878 | Iowa |
| Cralle | Hersal | B. | Staff Sergeant | 33559075 | Maryland |
| Drabnis | Alfred | | Flight Officer | T-000072 | Pennsylvania |
| Ellis | James | C. | Technical Sergeant | 17032360 | Arkansas |
| Gaston | James | W. | Second Lieutenant | 0-873776 | Ohio |
| Green | Benjamin | | Staff Sergeant | 36328634 | Illinois |
| Henley | Wayne | R. | Staff Sergeant | 14167037 | Tennessee |
| Jennings | Charles | E. | Second Lieutenant | 0-817686 | Virginia |
| King | Anderson | M. | Staff Sergeant | 18160058 | Oklahoma |
| Korff | Robert | W. | Staff Sergeant | 16047941 | Wisconsin |
| Langley | Linwood | D. | Staff Sergeant | 12132488 | New Jersey |
| Lee | Henry | F. | Sergeant | 12077477 | New Jersey |
| Leonard | Lester | A. | Second Lieutenant | 0-749438 | Illinois |
| Massey | James | Y | First Lieutenant | 0-748439 | Georgia |
| McCarson | Buford | V. | Staff Sergeant | 38369240 | Texas |
| Meyer | William | L. | Sergeant | 31278065 | Connecticut |
| Neuhuetler | Joseoh | R. | Staff Sergeant | 36658091 | Illinois |
| Pivmeii | Donald | J. | Second Lieutenant | 0-692457 | Oregon |
| Provost | Wilbert | A. | Staff Sergeant | 18187762 | Texas |
| Robertson | Robert | D. | Sergeant | 17115207 | Illinois |
| Rotfeld | Herbert | J. | Technical Sergeant | 16135148 | Illinois |
| Suessman | Charles | H. | Staff Sergeant | 32107118 | New York |
| Swedo | Edmund | E. | Staff Sergeant | 16147541 | Illinois |
| Thomas | David | L. | First Lieutenant | 0-713570 | Pennsylvania |
| Young | Nathan | L. | First Lieutenant | 0-747542 | South Dakota |

413th Bomber Squadron



| | | | | | |
|-----------|---------|----|--------------------|----------|---------------|
| Colflesh | Ralph | M. | First Lieutenant | 0-760964 | Pennsylvania |
| Gray | John | R | First Lieutenant | 0-736594 | Illinois |
| Hutton | Charles | T. | Staff Sergeant | 33735373 | Maryland |
| Kasch | Donald | O. | First Lieutenant | 0-675850 | Illinois |
| Kelley | Bernard | J. | Technical Sergeant | 31330434 | Connecticut |
| Ladd | Graham | H. | Second Lieutenant | 0-735777 | Texas |
| McLean | James | E. | First Lieutenant | 0-798539 | Kentucky |
| Miller | David | | Staff Sergeant | 15102913 | Indiana |
| Proudfoot | John | | Second Lieutenant | 0-772723 | California |
| Seefurth | Howard | E. | First Lieutenant | 0-811449 | Illinois |
| Sulzner | Robert | L | Second Lieutenant | 0-812001 | Pennsylvania |
| Wenzel | Elmer | H. | Second Lieutenant | 0-819369 | Pennsylvania |
| Winn | Richard | R. | Technical Sergeant | 31109970 | New Hampshire |
| Zlotnik | Harold | | Second Lieutenant | 0-685068 | Illinois |

Henri-Qhapelle American Cemetery

339th Bomber Squadron

| | | | | | |
|-------|---------|----|-------------------|----------|----------|
| Flynn | Charles | J. | Second Lieutenant | 0-690397 | Missouri |
| Smith | John | D. | Sergeant | 39908212 | Idaho |

Isolated graves

339th Bomber Squadron

| | | | | | |
|----------|--------|----|----------------|----------|-------|
| Sorensen | Gerald | E. | Staff Sergeant | 19095816 | Idaho |
|----------|--------|----|----------------|----------|-------|



Memorial Plaques for Veterans at the Silver Dream

Because the Silver Dream is such a beautiful icon dedicated to the men who served at Snetterton during World War II, there was a suggestion made at the last reunion that we place commemorative plaques along the fence which now surrounds the Memorial.

We have made arrangements with a sign company in Texas to make these plaques, which will be 4x6 inches and engraved with name, position, squadron, and if the Veteran was a Prisoner of War or Killed in Action. The plaques will be anodized aluminum with the background in black with white engraving and will be weatherproof since they will obviously be outside.

We have developed a form to be filled out for each plaque, which will cost \$20.00, which will include the shipping cost. The forms and payment should be sent to Rebecca Lutz, who is working with the sign company to produce these plaques. The plaques will then be sent to Geoff Ward in England. He has made arrangements with Stephen Wills and Jamie Hopper to install the plaques along the fence.



We have included a picture here of the Silver Dream, with the fence, to show where the plaques will be located. We have also included samples of what the plaques will look like.

Please complete the order form below and include your personal information so you may be contacted with any questions about your order.

If you have any questions, please contact Rebecca Lutz at twolutz@att.net or call 512-238-8581.

CPT. THOMAS H. BARTON
PILOT
339TH SQUADRON

2ND LT. GLENN A HARRISON
CO-PILOT
339TH SQUADRON
POW - JUNE 20, 1944

S/SGT. CHARLES P. WILDER
WAIST GUNNER
337TH SQUADRON
KIA - DECEMBER 16, 1943

Veteran's Information for the Silver Dream Plaques

Please print clearly and legibly

Rank and Name of Veteran: _____
(Rank while at Snetterton)

Position: _____

Squadron: _____

POW----Date: _____

or

KIA ----Date: _____

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Relationship to Veteran: _____

Mail this form with a check for \$20.00 to the 96th Bomb Group Association at the address below:
 Rebecca Lutz, 2104 Saint Andrews Drive, Round Rock, Texas 78664

A Chat From Your Chaplain

From: Mike McIlraith, <mmc@bhinc.com>
Date: Jul 9, 2019, at 10:39 AM,
Stan Hand <stanhand@bellsouth.net>

Hello Dr. and Mrs Hand!

I hope you are doing well.

I wanted to ask you to consider something. As you may know, Bill Thorns has resigned his position as the 96th BGA Chaplain. Bill did a really wonderful job in writing an item for the newsletter twice a year. He also sent a note to the family of any 96th BG veteran upon their passing.

When we were notified that Bill would like to resign, I received a couple of nominations for Joanne Hand to be asked to take on this position. Shortly after this is when Stan had his medical emergency. We of course all hoped and prayed for his recovery, and we were very excited to hear that he has had a very excellent recovery.

Since then, it has been suggested to me to ask the Hands as a couple to consider handling Chaplain duties for the 96th BGA. We all know and see your deep commitment to your faith. We also know you have strong ties to the 96th BG. The Chaplain position is not necessarily a religious position, but one that can offer a useful message in each newsletter.

I would be very grateful if you two, or either of you individually, would consider taking this on. The position can be whatever you would like to make it - I don't want it to be a burden, but rather an enhancement of your membership in the 96th BGA.

Thank You very much,
Mike McIlraith
President - 96th Bomb Group Association

From: Stan Hand <stanhand@bellsouth.net>
Date: July 10, 2019 at 6:55:28 AM CDT
To: "Mike McIlraith, PE, LEED AP" <mmc@bhinc.com>
Subject: Re: A 96th Bomb Group Association question

Joanne and I would love to help you out in this important role of the 96. We are a little bit unclear as to the exact duties and the length of commitment. Staying up with and getting the information for newsletters and condolence letters it's a little unclear to us. Will be happy to give it a try. We will reach out to BILL this week and get more information. Thank you for considering us. We are happy to help out in this endeavor.

Now the Hand's first Chat

*Stan as our Chaplain will to write a personal letter on the behalf of the 96th Bomb Group to the family of all our members that have flown their **Final Mission**. You can help him and the 96th Bomb Group by letting him know in a timely manner of a members passing and the address to which he might send the letter.*

Peace to you all,

I feel that I am invading a long held trust in taking on this responsibility, because Bill Thorns has done this so long and so well.

I always look to his part of the newsletter, and am encouraged by what He writes. I received a hand written letter upon Dad's death, which meant so much to me. Bill knew my Dad personally.

Recently, events in my life have caused me to evaluate my relationship with my family, and where I will spend eternity. On Nov 12th, Veterans Day 2018, I experienced the most painful headache ever. I immediately lost all sight and hearing, collapsed and was rushed to the ER. A ruptured brain aneurysm was diagnosed. Three brain surgeries were performed to drain the hemorrhage, and relieve the increased intracranial pressure. I spent 54 days in bed and rehab learning how to walk and talk again.

The result of being brought back to life is overwhelming. I was the recipient of many prayers. Through the grace and mercy of my loving GOD and Savior, I am able to do almost everything as before. The best things I can do are write and think.

Is it a piece of the American dream that folks are looking for? I have found the Peace that passes all understanding and want to share this gift.

John 14:27 Peace I (*Jesus*) leave with you, My Peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid.

Isaiah 26:3-4 He will keep in perfect peace the person whose mind is set on Him (*Father God*), because he trusts in You. Trust in the Lord forever for the Lord is the rock eternal.

Philippians 4:7 The peace of God, which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Shalom is Hebrew and can not be translated by a single word. It means an absence of all negative forces. There is no disorder, injustice, corruption, hatred, conflict, abuse, violence, pain, suffering or immorality in that definition. No good thing is withheld. When shalom reigns there will be no immorality or injustice. The command to love your neighbor will then be made complete.

Numbers 6: 24-25-26 The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his countenance upon you and give you peace.

I look forward to serving as your Chaplain. Do not hesitate to call me with concerns you may have.

Stan Hand, Jr, M. D.

Address your correspondence for our Chaplain to:
Stanley Hand
1016 Ridgecrest Road
Orlando, FL 32806
Mobile: (321)-662-3305
E-mail: stanhand@bellsouth.net

BULLETIN BOARD



Snetterton Falcons and *Snetterton Falcons II – In the Nest And On The Wing*

It gives us great pleasure to make both of these out of print books available to our members, family and friends who are interested in the lives of our veterans and the history of the 96th Bomb Group at a reasonable price. This was not done to be a fund raiser but to make the books that many wanted available to all without hardship.

(This order form and the one for European orders as well is available for download on our web site at: <https://www.96bg.org/>)

SNETTERTON FALCONS CD/FLASH DRIVE

The 96th Bomb Group is very excited to announce the “long awaited” digital version of the Snetterton Falcons book, as well as Snetterton Falcons II – In the Nest And On The Wing, on either a CD or a flash drive. Upon receipt of this form and check, we will send your choice of either the CD or flash drive.

Reproduction of this prized book collection has been with the permissions of the authors and the publisher. Proceeds (after the Groups costs for reproduction and postage) will be used to support the Snetterton Heath 96th Bomb Group Museum at New Eccles Hall School and the St. Andrews Church, located in Quidenham, England, where the Memorial Window is located.

To order this two-book digitized collection, please complete the form below and mail with your check payment.

Please make checks payable to 96th Bomb Group Association.

Please mail form and payment to:

Sue Hinchman, Sec’y/Treas.
96th Bomb Group Association
706 Miami View Court
Loveland, OH 45140

Snetterton Falcons – Digital*

Please print clearly and legibly

- \$25.00 CD for current paid 2019 members**
- \$25.00 Flash Drive for current paid 2019 members**
- \$45.00 2019 Membership Renewal & CD**
- \$45.00 2019 Membership Renewal & Flash Drive**
- \$45.00 CD (non-member)**
- \$45.00 Flash Drive (non-member)**
- \$20.00 (2019 dues)**

Total: \$ _____

Your Name _____

Address: _____

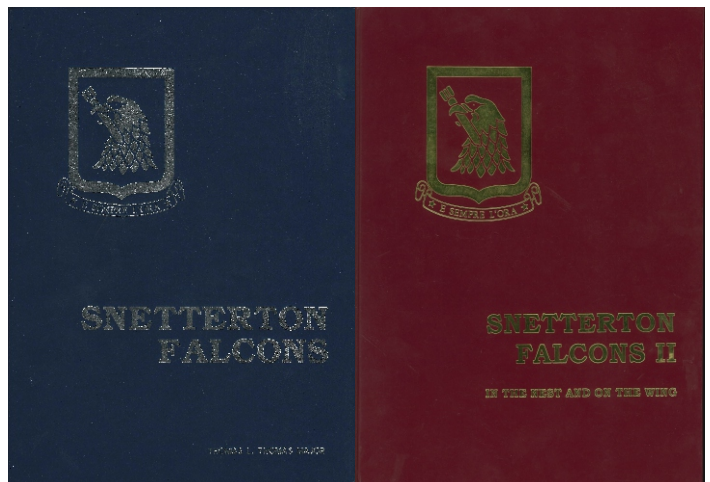
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State & Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

*We realize there are those who would like to make a copy for a family member; however, we would ask that you be respectful of the 96th Bomb Group, and other purchasers, by only making one additional copy from each purchase. If you wish to make more than one additional copy, please purchase an additional CD or flash drive for each additional copy.



- I would like to become a member of the 96th Bomb Group Association (dues are \$20 per year).**

I have included below information regarding my connection to the 96th Bomb Group:

Service Member’s Name _____

Squadron _____ **Number of Missions** _____ **Position** _____ **Ground Crew** _____

Other crew members or information you feel might be useful to the 96th: _____

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Since April, 2019



Graves, Jordan
Graves, Nathan
Hershfield, Rob
Messina, Mrs. Jo-Ann (Johnston)

2340 Leighton Way, Spring Hill, TN 37174-8226
8554 E. Bellevue Street, Scottsdale, AZ 85257
90 Highwood Lane, East Falmouth, MA 02536
513 Clarenbridge Drive, Cary, NC 27519-0996

Daughter of John S Johnston 339th N

Powell, Dr. Walter
Trusler, Judith Ann
Wilcox, Scot R.
Woods, Lisa
Skolnik, Rick
Young, Michael

65 Cherry Street, Plymouth, MA 02360
1634 Morris Lane, Frisco, TX 75034
1702 W. Abingdon Drive, #301, Alexandria, VA 22314
1695 Sunnybrook Avenue, Upland, CA 91784
1319 Wolf Lair Drive, Collierville, TN 38017-8303
524 Splitrail Drive, Encinitas, CA 92024-1953

All of our members are encouraged to invite their family members, relatives and friends to join us. They will receive two issues of our Newsletter each year. We hope they will find them informative as well as give them an understanding of what the 96th Bomb Group and its members contributed to World War II.

96th Bomb Group Association Membership Application / Dues Remittance

Name _____ Spouse's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ + _____

Phone # A/C _____ - _____ - _____ E-mail address: _____

Squadron _____ Number of Missions _____ Position _____ Ground Crew _____

Other crew members or information that you feel might be useful to the 96th: _____

Dues are \$20.00 per year payable to: 96th Bomb Group Association, 706 Miami View Court, Loveland, Ohio 45140



YOUR 2019 DUES SHOULD BE PAID NOW

This may be your last *Newsletter!*
if not unless you are a Life Member
Send your **\$20 annual dues**

To: **Susan Hinchman**
96th Bomb Group Association
706 Miami View Court
Loveland, Ohio 45140

(Make checks payable to 96th BGA)

(Annual Dues were raised to \$20 at General Meeting September 2002)
Due January 1st each year.

SNOWBIRDS, VACATIONERS BEWARE
BE SURE TO LET Susan Hinchman KNOW
YOUR WHEREABOUTS.
To Insure YOU RECEIVE YOUR
NEWSLETTER



UPCOMING MEETINGS



96th Bomb Group Reunion 2019
with the
8th Air Force Historical Society
45th Annual Reunion
St. Louis, Missouri
October 16 - 20, 2019

Sheraton Westport Lakeside Chalet
Located in the Westport Plaza
191 Westport Plaza
St. Louis, MO 63146
888-627-7066

Complete program and reunion information
on line at: www.8thafhs.org

WHERE TO CALL OR WRITE



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* Denotes Deceased Past Presidents

Texts and/or photos are sincerely solicited. If requested, photos will be returned. The Editor reserves the right to edit text. December 31, 2019 is the deadline for the February 2020 issue.

96th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

706 Miami View Court • Loveland, OH 45140



Final Mission

Those Who Served Their Country
With Honor and Distinction

Arnst, Tille *Spouse of Albert H Arnst GPH SUPY*
Boatright, Willis Dewitt 338th
Butler, Clyde W. Sr. 379th Bomb Group
Hobbs, Howard W. 337th
Jorgenson, Syble Faye. *Spouse of Alvin C. Jorgenson 338th CP*
Maisak, Doris *Spouse of Robert L. Maisak 338th WG*
McDonough, Russell C. 337th
McDonough, Dora Jean *Spouse of Russell C. McDonough 337th B*
Modine, Wylder R. 413th
Slutsky, Yolanda *Spouse of Bernard J. Slutsky GPH PERS*
Small, Claire O. *Spouse of Sherman Small 339th TG*
Stone, Dr. Sam H. 337th
Voscinar, Louise *Spouse of Frank Voscinar 337th N*
Williams, Phyllis N. *Spouse of Daniel H. Williams 338th P*

We will print the names of all deceased 96th airmen sent to us whether or not they are current members of the 96th BGA.

We will also print the names of members of other Bomb Groups if they are current members of the 96th BGA. Written notification is required. Send to: Susan Hinchman Secretary/Treasurer, address on this page.

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