

THAT DAY. HEDBERG TOLD ME HE ENDED UP IN A FEW HOSPITALS IN GERMANY AND LATER GOT REPATRIATED ON A WOUNDED PRISONER EXCHANGE. HE HAS A MAKE SHIFED HAND WITH TWO FINGERS. HE AND HIS WIFE WERE OVERJOYED TO SEE ME AND SHE COULDN'T THANK ME ENOUGH FOR SAVING HIS LIFE. I FORGOT TO MENTION THAT WE BOMBED AT 11,000 FT. AND I BAILED OUT AT 7,000

SO IN SUMMARY I WANT TO SAY THAT INSTEAD OF RECEIVING SOME KIND OF CITATION FOR ACTION WHILE UNDER ATTACK AND GIVING FIRST AID AND HELPING SAVE A CREW MEMBER, I READ IN A BOOK THAT I PANIC'D.

Thank you for your time  
May DeWitt (MATTHEW)  
3825 634<sup>TH</sup> ST.  
CLEVE, OHIO 44105

THE RADIO ROOM. (I WAS THE RADIO OPERATOR) I WAS INJURED IN THE FACE, LEG, HAND & BACK, I STAGGERED INTO THE WAIST. (THE INTER COM WAS OUT) THE WAIST DOOR WAS PUSHED OUT AND ONE MAN WAS BAILING OUT, THE OTHER WAIST GUNNER WAS GETTING READY TO BAIL OUT. I LOOKED AT HIM AND HE WAS HURT ACROSS THE HEAD, AND HAD BLOOD ALL OVER HIS FACE, HE TOO BAILED OUT. AT THIS TIME JUST BEFORE I WAS GOING TO JUMP, SOMETHING HIT ME IN THE LEG, I LOOKED DOWN AND SAW THAT IT WAS A HELMET WITH GOGGLES. I LOOKED AND THERE I SAW THE TAIL GUNNER (JOHN HEDBERG) STUCK IN THE TAIL. I WENT AND GOT HIM OUT AND SAW THAT HE WAS HIT BADLY IN THE HAND. I IMMEDIATELY PUT A TOURNIQUET AROUND HIS WRIST TO STOP THE BLEEDING. TWO FINGERS WERE GONE, HE WAS IN A DAZE. I ASKED HIM IF HE COULD PULL HIS RIP CORD, AND HE NODDED YES. I PUT HIS LEGS OUT AND KICKED HIM OUT. BY GIVING HIM FIRST AID PROBABLY SAVED HIS LIFE, I THEN BAILED OUT. IS THIS A SIGN OF PANIC? HERE I WAS ALWAYS PROUD THAT EVEN THOUGH I WAS WOUNDED AND GROGGY I YET SAVED THE LIFE OF ONE OF MY CREW.

THIS LETTER IS ALL SCRAMBLED, AND I DID THE BEST TO PIECE IT TOGETHER. I JUST WANT TO GET IT OFF MY CHEST. BECAUSE IT IS A SHAME THAT SOMEONE WOULD HAVE USED THE WORD PANIC, WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT OCCURED ~~THE~~

DEAR MR STRONG;

I AM GOING TO WRITE YOU A LETTER, TO TRY TO EXPLAIN A PROBLEM THAT HAS OCCURED, AND HAS HURT ME VERY DEEPLY AND EMOTIONALLY.

FOR 40 YEARS I HAVE BEEN TRYING TO LOCATE A MEMBER OF MY CREW, AFTER JOINING THE 306<sup>TH</sup> ECHO AND RECEIVING MY DIRECTORY, I LOCATED MY MAN, HIS NAME WAS JOHN HEDBERG AND HE LIVES AT 4870 LOWELL BLVD, DENVER COLO. THE REASON I WAS LOOKING FOR HIM WAS BECAUSE I THINK I SAVED HIS LIFE, BY MY ACTIONS. I CALLED HIM IMMEDIATELY TO SEE IF HE WAS THE RIGHT MAN, AND THEN FLEW DOWN TO SEE HIM.

WHILE I WAS THERE, HE SHOWED ME SOMETHING THAT MADE ME CRY. HE SHOWED ME THE BOOK FIRST OVER GERMANY, AND IN IT WAS A PARAGRAPH FROM THE 1<sup>ST</sup> BERLIN RAID 3/6/44 OF CAPT. ADAMS CREW OF WHICH 4 CREW MEMBERS PANIC'D AND BAILED OUT, I WAS ONE OF THEM.

WELL THIS WAS A FLAGRANT LIE, AND I WILL TRY TO TELL YOU WHAT HAPPENED.

WHILE WE WERE WARMING UP BEFORE TAKE OFF, WE WERE HAVING A PROBLEM WITH ONE OF THE ENGINES, BUT WE STILL TOOK OFF, LATER EITHER BEFORE THE TARGET OR AFTER I DON'T REMEMBER, WE GOT HIT BY FLAK AND ALSO A WINDMILLING PROP ON THE BAD ENGINE, WE STARTED TO LOSE ALTITUDE CAPT. ADAMS GAVE THE BAIL OUT ORDER TWICE, BUT LT. MATHIS TWICE SAID NO, AT THIS TIME A SHELL BURST IN

Matthew E. Palenica  
3895 E 54th St  
Cleveland, OH 44105-3354

# 1992 England Trip

## Reunion Sets Big Schedule For Thurleigh and London

Fifty years ago next September, the 306th Bomb Group flew into history, with its arrival in England for combat duty with the U.S. 8th AF. That signal event in aviation lore will be recalled once again in August when the men of the 306th, their spouses families and friends will join in a reunion visit to Bedford, the old base at Thurleigh, Madingley cemetery at Cambridge, and to the venerable city of London.

Specific details of the trip were included in the mailing of the October issue of **Echoes**, having been announced in detail earlier that month during the Group's reunion at Pittsburgh. When the festivities were over in the steel city, people left for home with the six-page folder in their hands.

The October issue of **Echoes** announced that the program was open to all friends of the 306th, and the folder

Two options are being offered for those participating in the main trip: A. being to spend two nights in Bedford, at either the Swan or Moat House hotels, which lie across the Ouse River from each other at the bridge; or, #2. to spend four nights at Bedford and the remainder in London. Group A will go on to London after the visit to Duxford, a WWII airfield that served both the RAF and USAAF and which has been restored as a WWII field.

As an added fillip, the travel description includes two extended week-long trips following the activities in Bedford and London: One will go north to Scotland by bus, offering a good look at the North Country, staying three nights in fascinating Edinburgh, and will stop among other places at Oxford, Stratford, Coventry, Harrogate, Carlisle, Chester, Cheltenham (with a brief excursion into

## New Directory Due

Our 1992 directory should come out in May, and we need your help!

The Postal Service has been good about sending us changed numbers, but we need more data from many of you.

We also need to have you check your listing in the 1990 directory and to let the editor know what you need changed.

If we don't hear from you we must assume that the data we have is correct as far as your directory entry is concerned. DIRECTORY O.K. BUT

Check the form below; MY NAME DIDN'T APPEAR IN THE

Name 413<sup>RD</sup> ORGANIZATIONAL LIST. ALSO IN THE

Address EUADÉE LISTING IN THE ECHOIS  
WAS EUADÉE 10 MONTHS IN HOLLAND

City, State and Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone #, with the correct area code \_\_\_\_\_

Can you give us the four-number addition to your zip code? (Look on one of your utility bills for this, if you can't remember it).

On that street address, please designate whether it is St., Ave., Blvd., Road, etc. Rural routes AND box numbers need to be spelled out. In the alpha listing of the Directory, be sure your unit designation is correct. That's the one that counts. (If you were placed in the wrong listing under organizations, don't worry about it. We plan to get it right this time.)

Other data we will store away for possible later use:

Wife's first name DOROTHY

Your birthdate OCT. 25<sup>TH</sup> 1921

Social Security # 285-14-5765

Retirement date/place of employment/job title FROM T.R.W. 3/1/41 TO

3/24/82 41YRS. MFG. SUPT. NUCLEAR DIVISION

Send the above to Russell A. Strong

5323 Cheval Place

Charlotte, NC 28205-4937

704/568-0153

367th

June

20 April 1924

379-12-7272

January 1988/Western Michigan University/Senior Development  
Officer & Director of Research for the WMU Foundation

MAY 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2000



DEAR SIR -

to inform you  
my husband MATTHEW E.  
PALENICA DIED LAST DECEMBER  
9<sup>th</sup>, 1999.

SURVIVORS ARE MYSELF  
(WIFE) DOROTHY, SON MATTHEW  
PALENICA, DAUGHTER MARGARET  
STRAAT, THREE GRANDCHILDREN.

PLEASE TAKE HIS  
NAME OFF YOUR MAILING LIST.

Thank you -  
Dorothy Palenica



Mrs. Dorothy Palenica  
6960 W Peoria Ave. Pl. 185  
Peoria, AZ 85345

JAN 13<sup>TH</sup> 1987

DEAR MR STRONG:

I WANT TO THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR THE LETTER YOU SENT ME. IT WAS VERY GRATIFYING TO KNOW THAT YOU TOOK THE TIME AND EXPLAINED HOW IT CAME ABOUT.

YOU HAVE RESTORED MY FAITH IN MANKIND. IF THERE IS ANYTHING OR ANY INFORMATION THAT I CAN GIVE YOU, PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO ASK.

AGAIN THANK YOU VERY MUCH, I FEEL A WHOLE LOT BETTER NOW

SINCERELY YOURS  
Andy Sabuena

DEAR MR STRONG;

THIS IS A SHORT FOLLOW UP AFTER RECEIVING YOUR LETTER ON MARCH 30<sup>TH</sup> AND WHEN I CALLED YOU THE SAME EVENING.

HOW COULD ANYONE IN HIS RIGHT MIND SAY A PERSON IS SCARED WHEN HE HAS HAD NO CONTACT WITH THEM <sup>BECAUSE THE INTERCOM WENT OUT.</sup> WHAT SO EVER, ALSO ANYONE IN HIS RIGHT MIND WOULD START THINKING WHY DID FOUR MEN JUMP. IF A PERSON WAS SCARED LIKE YOU SAY, MAYBE HE WOULD JUMP. BUT NOT FOUR PEOPLE. THAT IN ITSELF WOULD ALERT SOME ONE THAT SOMETHING WAS WRONG. ALSO AS YOU MAY HAVE HEARD, MANY PEOPLE ARE AFRAID TO BAIL OUT, THEY WOULD RATHER FLY IT DOWN AND SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCE'S.

ALSO WHY WAS THIS BARNE'S STATEMENT? WHERE WAS CAPT. ADAMS AND LT. RATHIS STATEMENT?

I ALSO THOUGHT YOU MIGHT HAVE PUT MORE OF MY LETTER IN THE REPLY.

I HAVE BEEN A RESIDENT OF CLEVELAND, OHIO ALL OF MY LIFE AND IN THE SAME

NEIGHBORHOOD FOR 60 YRS. BEFORE AND AFTER SERVICE.

ALSO THE ONLY REASON THAT YOU HAVE NOT HEARD FROM ME BEFORE IS THAT I DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE RETURN OF THE AIR PLANE, OR THE BOER FIRST OVER GERMANY.

I JOINED THE ECHO'S + 306 BOMB GRP. ABOUT A YEAR AGO THRU A <sup>CLIP</sup> FROM A D.A.V. MAGAZINE. AT THAT TIME I REC'D A DIRECTORY OF THE 306 BOMB GRP. THAT IS HOW I FOUND JOHN HEDBERG'S NAME. IT WAS VERY DEAR TO ME, BECAUSE I HELPED HIM STAY ALIVE. ONE WAY OR ANOTHER I INTEND TO CLEAR MY NAME OF THIS STIGMA.

A LITTLE RECAP OF WHAT HAPPENED. I ESCAPED FROM THE GERMANS, HID OUT IN THE FOREST, WAS FOUND BY DUTCH FARMERS, CARRIED TO A FARM HOUSE BECAUSE I WAS WOUNDED, WAS DOCTORED, FED, WASHED AND WENT TO SLEEP. NEXT MORNING WAS TURNED OVER TO DUTCH UNDERGROUND. WAS GIVEN CIVILIAN CLOTHES, DUTCH PASSPORT. MY GIVEN NAME WAS RUDOLPH VON DORP A DEAF AND DUMB PRINTER. I WAS TRYING TO GET BACK

TO ENGLAND. I WILL NOT GO INTO DETAIL.  
ALL I AM TRYING TO SAY IS I WAS TRYING  
TO GET BACK TO MY OWN OUTFIT. I WAS  
CAPTURED EVENTUALLY AND SPENT TWO WKS.  
WITH THE GESTAPO AND S.S. PERSONNEL  
BECAUSE I HAD CIVILIAN I.D.S. AND CLOTHES.  
I WENT THRU HELL THOSE TWO WEEKS.  
EVENTUALLY I WAS LUCKY AND TURNED OVER  
TO THE HOME GUARD AND THEN PRISON CAMP.  
THESE ARE NOT ACTIONS OF A SCARED PERSON.

I WENT TO THE LIBRARY AND FOUND MICRO  
FILM ON CECH, BUT CAN'T FIND ANY WORD  
OF HIM OR RELATIVES

I AM GOING TO CLOSE BY SAYING THAT  
EVERYTHING I TOLD YOU IS TRUE AND I AM  
WILLING TO TAKE A LIE DETECTOR TEST TO  
PROVE IT. I HOPE TO HEAR FROM YOU AGAIN

SINCERELY YOURS  
May Belmont

HOW CAN ANYONE SAY A PERSON IS SCARED  
WITHOUT SEEING THEM OR TALKING TO THEM??