

80 ST. JOHNS AVENUE  
YONKERS, NY 10704  
10 FEBRUARY 1997

RUSSELL A. STRONG  
5323 CHEVAL PLACE  
CHARLOTTE, NC 28205

Dear Mr Strong,

I became aware that the 306<sup>th</sup> BG ASSOC. existed only this past month. I noticed in William Hesses' book "B-17 FLYING FORTRESS" the photo credits from the 306<sup>th</sup> BG. ASSOC.

I flew my missions in the 306<sup>th</sup> BG, 423<sup>rd</sup> BS. The first mission flown on 27 April 1944 and the last on 6 August '44. I was the tail gunner on LT. J.J. O'BRIENS crew and when he finished his missions on 2 July LT. J. QUINTIS took over the crew for the remainder of our missions. We flew 22 missions in 42-97505 named the DINGLEBERRY KIDS. The rest of the missions were flown in 7 different planes.

I'm afraid I have a lot of questions that I hope you can answer for me. First, How do I become a member of the 306<sup>th</sup> BG, ASSOC.? Second, are any of my crew members of the ASSOC.? If so can I get their addresses?

II

The crew is here listed:

|                  |            |           |
|------------------|------------|-----------|
| LT. J.J. O'BRIEN | PILOT      | 21 Dec 86 |
| LT. J. QUINTIS   | CO/PILOT   | 14 Nov 86 |
| LT. R. RAYMOND   | NAVIGATOR  |           |
| LT. W. RYAN      | BOMBARDIER |           |
| T/SGT. SHIPP     | ENGINEER   |           |
| T/SGT GADD       | RADIO      |           |
| S/SGT LEWIS      | BALL       |           |
| S/SGT ROHER      | WAIST      | 27 Apr 93 |
| S/SGT ROMINE     | WAIST      |           |
| S/SGT KENNEDY    | TAIL       |           |

Third, do you have any records to show the disposition of old 505? I know she was still flying in October '44 because I saw an oil painting depicting a mission on 7 Oct. '44 showing MILK RUN and THE DINGLEBERRY KIDS in it. The painting was done by Col. JOHN MURPHY, the CO. of the 423<sup>rd</sup> BS.

Fourth, is there a written history of the 306<sup>th</sup> BG.? If there is how do I go about getting a copy?

I have the book AIRFIELDS OF THE EIGHTH THEN AND NOW but I found the section on Station III not too informative. Does the Association have anything further? Like better aerial photos of the living areas.

I warned you I had a lot of questions. I hope you can answer them.

Sincerely yours,  
Richard J. Kennedy

III  
P.S. I neglected to mention how I received  
your name & address. I wrote to William Hess  
and also I had sent a photo I had taken of  
SKUNK FACE II to Wallace Forman. He sent me  
a photo of PAPER DOLL that I had flown in. The  
second time I flew in that plane it had been  
renamed PATCHES, for obvious reasons.

Thanks,

RJK

15 February 1997

Dear Dick:

Your letter arrived today, and I'll try to answer your questions, or you will find answers in the accompanying directory:

1. You are now on the mailing list. There are no memberships, no dues. We exist on the contributions of members and on profits from the reunions and very small profits on our memorabilia and publications. You will find both listed in Echoes.
2. Three of your crew are known deceased: John O'Brien, 21 Dec 88; Jacob Quintis, 14 Nov 86, and Roher, 27 Apr 93. We haven't found Raymond. I think the others are in the directory. Talked with Craig Gadd on the phone a couple of weeks ago. Bill Ryan has recently moved from Connecticut to Tennessee.
3. 505 continued on to the end of the war, and then was transferred to the 381st BG and probably flew home. The 306th did not come home until late 1946 after photographing Europe and North Africa.
4. You can get a copy of FIRST OVER GERMANY, using the coupon in Echoes, and also a copy of the 423rd Combat Diary, also using a coupon. There is also available on microfiche all copies of ECHOES through 1994, and the complete roster of the 306th is available on microfilm.

Airfields of the Eighth is a bit of a disappointment. I'll include some maps of the base which may help a bit. Photos of living areas are scarce.

We have a tour going back to Thurleigh, Bedford and London, and you'll find that in the latest ECHOES if you are interested. We had a big tour, 400 people, who went back in 1992 to observe 50 years since the 306th entered combat. Had a small tour in '95 and another this year, probably the last.

Bill Hess is a good friend of mine. Glad you found us. Hope to see you either in England or at the Orlando reunion in November!

PERSONNEL RECORD UPDATE

306th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

Date. . . . .

Complete this form and return to Russell A. Strong, Secretary, 306th BG Assoc., 5323 Cheval Place, Charlotte, NC 28205, to be filed with 306th records.

LAST NAME: KENNEDY FIRST NAME: RICHARD MI: J. TITLE:

Street Address: 80 ST. JOHNS AVE Telephone: ( )

City, State YONKERS, NY Zip + 4: 10704-2914

Winter Address: Telephone: (914)

City, State SAME Zip + 4: 476 -- -5558

Date of birth: 14 MAY 1921 Wife's name: MARGARET #c #gc #ggc

U.S. ARMY COMMAND & STAFF COLLEGE Degree(s), & when: College(s) attended:

Last employment & job title & retirement date:

N.Y.C. POLICE DETECTIVE 1967 STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER CITY OF YONKERS, N.Y. (EMPLOYMENT) Serial #(s): 12129617 0956116 Squadron: 423<sup>2nd</sup> Specialty: TAIL GUNNER ARMORER

Date joined 306th: If combat, what crew? J.J. O'BRIENS

Special duties or assignments w/306th:

No of missions flown: 34 Date of last mission: 6 AUG 44

Date leaving 306th: SEP 44 Highest rank/grade w/306th: S/SGT

Other 8AF units served with, and when:

Top service assignment after 306th:

USAF retirement date: 1974 Rank/grade: LTC USAR

Copies of old 306th orders, either from the Group or Station 111, or any of the Squadrons or other units serving with the 306th, are sought by the secretary, as many of these do not appear in any collections of materials in National Archives or the Air University.

If you know of others who served with the 306th and who do not appear in the current 306th Directory, please add their names and current/WWII hometowns or other addresses to the back of this sheet so that searches may be implemented to add them to our present 306th roster.

80 SAINT JOHNS AVE.  
YONKERS, N.Y. 10704-2914  
24 FEBRUARY 1997

RUSSELL A. STRONG  
5323 CHEVAL PLACE  
CHARLOTTE, NC 28205

Dear Russell,

I'm sending you a photo of J. J. O'BRIENS crew with the ground crew in the back row. The occasion was the 50<sup>th</sup> mission for ~~for~~ BITTER MABEL on 2 July 1944. BITTER MABEL was never painted on any plane, but every plane we flew in we called BITTER MABEL. It was after OB finished his tour and JAKE QUINTTS became our pilot that ~~Jake~~ the DINGLEBERRY KIDS <sup>was</sup> painted on the plane. As Jake explained it; that was not the name of the plane, but a label for those that flew in it. (Come to think of it, we were a collection of characters!!!)

I think it's in order that the story of how the name BITTER MABEL came about. So. Phase Training was done at PYOTE AAF in west Texas. The only town nearby was Monahans. One night the officers of the crew were in town and were in the towns only bar when they overheard a conversation at a nearby table. Two couples were discussing a movie that had been shown on the base and they were remarking on how well the heroine was endowed in the chest area. One of the women, who was very flat chested didn't think that the heroine looked too good and was quite emphatic about her remarks. The other <sup>woman</sup>

II

(well endowed like the heroine) said to her, "OH! DON'T BE BITTER MABEL!" The story hit a funny bone and in a short time the crew started using that expression for anything over which they had no control. From there, it was only natural we started calling "our" plane BITTER MABEL.

To get back to the photo, I don't recall ever seeing a crew photo with the ground crew in the photo. We wanted the ground crew in the photo because we thought so highly of them. Never did we have to abort because of mechanical malfunction and anything we requested of them was always well taken care of.

Please feel free to use the photos and any of this letter as you see fit. I'm sending to surviving crew members and wives of the deceased all of the photos that I have concerning them.

I can't tell you how pleased I was to have found the 306<sup>TH</sup> BG ASSOC. I had been trying to find it for years. Thanks for material you sent me.

Regards  
Dick Kennedy

80 ST JOHNS AVE.  
YONKERS, NY 10704  
17 MARCH '97

Dear Russell,

I'm sending you some photos I come across, and I made copies for you. If any of the unknowns can be identified, or even the knowns, and they want copies I will be only too happy to make them.

I wrote to Gadd Romine Lewis, and Ryan and so far I've only heard from Gadd. Had a letter from him that I enjoyed reading and then on the following Sat. night I had a phone call from him. What a treat!!! We sure hashed over old times. The only member of the crew that is unaccounted for is the engineer, Melvin H. Shipp, a Texas boy.

I wrote to George Lorendo, the only remaining member of the ground crew to see if he could shed some light on when the painting of the Dingleberry Kids was painted out and then put in a different location. I also noted that the bombs painted on the fuselage were also painted over and that 100+ was painted on the nose. I'll let you know if I ever find out.

Regards,  
Dick Kennedy

80 ST JOHNS AVE.  
YONKERS, NY 10704-2914  
6 MAY 1997

RUSSELL A. STRONG  
5323 CHEVAL PLACE  
CHARLOTTE, NC 28205

Dear Russ

Since I was in touch with you last I have been in contact with Bill Ryan, bombardier, and just this week with John Lewis, ball gunner. I believe I told you I had been in touch with Craig Gadd, radio gunner. I can not express my feelings in talking to them. After fifty some odd years it was thrilling, to say the least. Bill Ryan spoke about getting out a letter to the remaining crew about getting together at the convention in Orlando. Sounds real good to me!!!

The reason I'm writing is that I didn't receive the April issue of ECHOES. Please put me on that mailing list.

Regards,

Dick Kennedy

Mailed 5/10/97

80 ST JOHNS AVE  
YONKERS, NY 10704  
1 JULY '97

Dear Russell,

I went to photograph a veterans  
Meeting last week and while there I  
happend to hear some one say "306<sup>TH</sup>"  
At the conclusion of the meeting I asked  
the person that made the remark about  
whom he was speaking and he said  
himself and introduced me to another  
fellow, both from the 423<sup>rd</sup>. I couldn't  
believe it! For some fifty odd years  
I never met anyone and in one night  
I meet two, Anthony Mariani is already  
a member but the other fellow is not.  
He is Ben Spadaro, 46 LAWRENCE PK. CRESCENT  
BRONXVILLE, NY 10708<sup>6105</sup> I told ~~you~~ him that  
I would send you his name and address.

I'm all set for the re-union and my  
bombardier (BILL RYAN) and navigator (DICK RAYMOND)  
are also going to be there.

Thanks for everything

Regards.

Dick Kennedy

3095

REQUEST:

3 MISSION REPORTS

#1 BERLIN 29 APRIL '44

#2 BERLIN 7 MAY '44

#3 MARBURG 20 JULY '44

9/16/99

# 306th PUBLICATIONS

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

## Combat Diaries of the 306th Squadrons

Day-by-day diaries kept by intelligence officers, of the Squadrons' combat activities. More than 150 pages, also including plane and personnel rosters. Plastic bound.

## 306th Echoes, on microfiche

Now available from 1976-1994, with a 41-page index covering those years. Can be viewed at any library.

## Men of the 306th, on microfilm

A role of 16mm film duplicates the 306th card file of nearly 9,000 men, including data extracted from various 306th records, and personal data on some of the men. 1995 edition.

## Mission Reports

Copies of official reports on each mission you flew, including intelligence summaries, track charts, formations and crew interrogation reports. Data for some missions may be missing from the files. Three missions for \$5.

## ORDER FORM

|                                     |         |     |
|-------------------------------------|---------|-----|
| 367th Combat Diary                  | \$17.00 | ___ |
| 368th Combat Diary                  | \$17.00 | ___ |
| 369th Combat Diary                  | \$17.00 | ___ |
| 423rd Combat Diary                  | \$17.00 | ___ |
| 306th ECHOES' Microfiche: 1975-1994 | \$15.00 | ___ |
| 1992-1994                           | \$ 5.00 | ___ |
| Men of The 306th                    | \$20.00 | ___ |

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

Name: RICHARD J. KENNEDY

Mailing Address: 80 ST JOHNS AVE  
YONKERS, NY 10704

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

80 ST. JOHNS AVE.  
YONKERS, NY 10704  
19 FEB 2000

Dear Russell

I have 'two items': Enclosed  
find check for three mission  
reports:

21 JUNE 44 BERLIN, GERMANY  
31 JULY 44 MUNICH, GERMANY  
3 AUGUST 44 MERKWILLER, FRANCE.

7/12/00

Second item: Regarding cover  
photo of JAN 306<sup>th</sup> ECHOES, I believe  
that the tail of the 17 on the extreme  
could be:

44-6585 DEL LINCOLN 16/9/44; DOW FD  
2/10/44; ASS 423 BS/306 BG (RD-K)  
THURLEIGH 13/10/44; TRAN 535 BS/381 BG  
RIDGEWELL 5/45 "COMMANDO CHIEF."

ABOVE info from the B-17 FLYING  
FORTRESS STORY, PAGE 277, BY ROGER  
A. FREEMAN.

I agree with you the photo is  
great!!! I hope you have a lot more  
photos taken by Billy Casseday that you  
will print later!

Thanks  
Richard Kennedy  
RICHARD J. KENNEDY

80 ST JOHNS AVE  
YONKERS, NY 10704  
12 JANUARY 2001

RUSSELL A. STRONG  
5323 CHEVAL PLACE  
CHARLOTTE, NC 28205

Dear Russ

This is the kind of news I don't like but I feel it has to be passed on.

On 23 December 2000 I received a card informing me that JOHN W. LEWIS, S/SGT BALL TURRET GUNNER on J.J. O'BRIENS CREW IN THE 423<sup>rd</sup> had died on 2 August 2000. He died from ALZHEIMERS disease. He left behind his wife Mildred and daughter Linda.

I dropped a line to Dick Raymond, Bill Ryan and Craig Gadd letting them know.

Sincerely,  
Richard Kennedy