

Gailard "Red" Ketcham  
Army Air Corps  
S/Sgt.



Bethany Village  
Graceworks Lutheran Services

*Mr. Gailard Ketcham*  
*6445 Far Hills Ave*  
*Apt. 909*  
*Centerville, OH 45459*

PH-291-7464  
497 6332



# Army of the United States



## Honorable Discharge

*This is to certify that*

GAILARD T KETCHAM

15122318 STAFF SERGEANT 306TH BOMB GROUP SQUADRON 369

**Army of the United States**

*is hereby Honorably Discharged from the military service of the United States of America.*

*This certificate is awarded as a testimonial of Honest and Faithful Service to this country.*

*Given at*

SEPARATION CENTER  
CAMP ATTERBURY INDIANA

*intentional trans with  
Shoy & [unclear]*

*Date*

20 JUNE 1946

RECEIVED  
GEO. BRANDBOURGWEIGER  
RECORDER

FEB 26 10 53 AM 1947

MONTGOMERY CO., OHIO  
RECORDED

BOOK 1 PAGE 183

E. W. HENRY  
MAJOR AC

BOOK 58 PAGE 183

HONORABLE DISCHARGE

20 13 22 NJB

1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL <b>KETCHAM GAILARD T</b>		2. ARMY SERIAL NO. <b>15 122 318</b>	3. GRADE <b>S SGT</b>	4. ARM OR SERVICE <b>AC</b>	5. COMPONENT <b>ERC</b>
6. ORGANIZATION <b>306TH BOMB GP SQ 369</b>		7. DATE OF SEPARATION <b>20 JUN 46</b>	8. PLACE OF SEPARATION <b>SEP CEN CAMP ATTERBURY IND</b>		
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES <b>112 ST PAUL AVE DAYTON MONTGOMERY OHIO</b>			10. DATE OF BIRTH <b>1 APR 26</b>	11. PLACE OF BIRTH <b>PORTERSVILLES OHIO</b>	
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT <b>SEE 9</b>		13. COLOR EYES <b>BROWN</b>	14. COLOR HAIR <b>RED</b>	15. HEIGHT <b>5-4</b>	16. WEIGHT <b>149 LBS</b>
17. NO. DEPEND.	17. NO. DEPEND. <b>0</b>				
19. RACE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WHITE	19. MARRIAGE STATUS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MARRIED	20. U.S. CITIZEN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES		21. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO. <b>STUDENT H S X-02</b>	

MILITARY HISTORY

22. DATE OF INDUCTION		23. DATE OF ENLISTMENT <b>3 MAR 44</b>	24. DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE <b>1 JUN 44</b>	25. PLACE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE <b>COLUMBUS OHIO</b>	
SELECTIVE SERVICE DATA	26. REGISTERED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	27. LOCAL S.S. BOARD NO.		28. COUNTY AND STATE	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	29. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE <b>RFD 1 MALTA OHIO</b>			
30. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO. <b>AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHER - GUNNER 948</b>			31. MILITARY QUALIFICATION AND RATE (i.e., infantry, aviation and marksmanship badges, etc.) <b>MKM CARBINE MKM PISTOL</b>		
32. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS <b>CENTRAL EUROPE</b>					
33. DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS <b>EAME THEATER RIBBON W/1 BRONZE STAR GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL VICTORY MEDAL WORLD WAR II OCCUPATION MEDAL GERMANY</b>					
34. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION <b>NONE</b>					
35. LATEST IMMUNIZATION DATES				36. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U. S. AND RETURN	
SMALLPOX <b>JUN 44</b>	TYPHOID <b>JUN 44</b>	TETANUS <b>AUG 44</b>	OTHER (specify) <b>TYP NOV 45</b>	DATE OF DEPARTURE <b>25 MAR 45</b>	DESTINATION <b>ETO</b>
37. TOTAL LENGTH OF SERVICE				38. HIGHEST GRADE HELD	
CONTINENTAL SERVICE		FOREIGN SERVICE		USA	
YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS	YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS
<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>19</b>
39. PRIOR SERVICE <b>NONE</b>				39. HIGHEST GRADE HELD <b>S SGT</b>	
40. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION <b>CONV OF GOV'T AR 615-365 PART 41 OF 15 NOV 45</b>					
41. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED <b>AIR MECHANICS KINGMAN ARIZ</b>					
42. EDUCATION (Years) <b>VARO, CIVIL, OHIO</b>					

PAY DATA

43. LONGEVITY FOR PAY PURPOSES			44. MUSTERING OUT PAY		45. SOLICIT DEPOSITS	46. TRAVEL PAY	47. TOTAL AMOUNT, NAME OF DISBURSING OFFICER	
YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS	TOTAL \$	THIS PAYMENT \$	<b>NONE</b>	<b>6.25</b>	<b>220.97 BB CALLAWAY LT COL FD</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>				

INSURANCE NOTICE

IMPORTANT IF PREMIUM IS NOT PAID WHEN DUE OR WITHIN THIRTY-ONE DAYS THEREAFTER, INSURANCE WILL LAPSE. MAKE CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO THE TREASURER OF THE U. S. AND FORWARD TO COLLECTIONS SUPERVISOR, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

48. KIND OF INSURANCE			49. HOW PAID		50. EFFECTIVE DATE OF POLICY	51. DATE OF NEXT PREMIUM DUE	52. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH	53. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO	
Net. Serv.	U.S. Govt.	None	Allotment	Direct to V. A.	<b>JUN 46</b>	<b>1 AUG 46</b>	<b>6.40</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue	<input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue

54. RIGHT THUMB PRINT	55. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in W. D. Directives)				
	<p>ERC FROM 3 MAR 44 THRU 30 APR 44                  NO DAYS LOST UNDER AW 107                  ASR SCORE (2 SEP 45) 26                  LAPEL BUTTON ISSUED</p>				
56. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED <i>Richard G. Ketcham</i>			57. PERSONNEL OFFICER (Type name, grade and organization - signature) <b>L R HORTON 1ST LT CAC</b>		

WD AGO FORM 53-55  
1 November 1944

This form supersedes all previous editions of WD AGO Forms 53 and 55 for enlisted persons entitled to an Honorable Discharge, which will not be used after receipt of this revision.

OHIO WORLD-WAR II

CLAIM

440480

COMPENSATION APPLIED FOR

No.

HONORABLE DISCHARGE

20 13 22 NJB

1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL KETCHAM GAILARD T		2. ARMY SERIAL NO. 15 122 318	3. GRADE S SGT	4. ARM OR SERVICE AC	5. COMPONENT ERC
6. ORGANIZATION 306TH BOMB GP SQ 369		7. DATE OF SEPARATION 20 JUN 46	8. PLACE OF SEPARATION SEP CEN CAMP ATTERBURY IND		
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES 112 ST PAUL AVE DAYTON MONTGOMERY OHIO			10. DATE OF BIRTH	11. PLACE OF BIRTH PORTERSVILLE OHIO	
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT SEE 9			12. HAIR BROWN	15. HEIGHT 5-4	16. WEIGHT 149 LBS
18. RACE WHITE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		19. MARITAL STATUS MARRIED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		20. U.S. CITIZEN YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
21. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO. STUDENT H S			X-02		

MILITARY HISTORY

22. DATE OF REDUCTION	23. DATE OF ENLISTMENT 3 MAR 44	24. DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE 1 JUN 44	25. PLACE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE COLUMBUS OHIO		
SELECTIVE SERVICE DATA	26. REGISTERED YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	27. LOCAL S.S. BOARD NO.	28. COUNTY AND STATE		29. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE RFD 1 MALTA OHIO
30. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO. AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHER - GUNNER 948			31. MILITARY QUALIFICATION AND BADGE (I.e., infantry, aviation and marksmanship badges, etc.) MKM CARBINE MKM PISTOL		
32. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS CENTRAL EUROPE					
33. DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS EAME THEATER RIBBON W/1 BRONZE STAR GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL VICTORY MEDAL WORLD WAR II OCCUPATION MEDAL GERMANY					
34. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION NONE					
35. LATEST IMMUNIZATION DATES			36. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U. S. AND RETURN		
SMALLPOX JUN 44	TYPHOID JUN 44	TETANUS AUG 44	OTHER (specify) TYP NOV 45	DATE OF DEPARTURE 25 MAR 45	DESTINATION ETO
37. TOTAL LENGTH OF SERVICE			38. HIGHEST GRADE HELD		
CONTINENTAL SERVICE		FOREIGN SERVICE		38. HIGHEST GRADE HELD	
YEARS 0	MONTHS 10	DAYS 1	YEARS 1	MONTHS 2	DAYS 19
39. PRIOR SERVICE NONE			40. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION ANY GUARANTY OR INSURANCE BENEFIT UNDER TITLE III OF THE SERVICEMEN'S READ CONV OF GOV'T AR 615-365 THAT MAY BE AVAILABLE TO THE PERSON TO WHICH THIS SEPARATION PAPER WAS ISSUED.		
41. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED AIR MECHANICS KINGMAN ARIZ			42. EDUCATION (Years) VARO, CINT., OHIO		

PAY DATA

43. LONGEVITY FOR PAY PURPOSES	44. REGISTERING OUT PAY	45. SOLDIER DEPOSIT	46. TRAVEL PAY	47. TOTAL AMOUNT, NAME OF DISBURSING OFFICER
YEARS 2	MONTHS 3	DAYS 18	TOTAL \$ 300	THIS PAYMENT \$ 100
48. SOLDIER DEPOSIT		46. TRAVEL PAY		47. TOTAL AMOUNT, NAME OF DISBURSING OFFICER
NONE		\$ 6.25		220.97 BB CALLAWAY LT COL FD

INSURANCE NOTICE

**IMPORTANT** IF PREMIUM IS NOT PAID WHEN DUE OR WITHIN THIRTY-ONE DAYS THEREAFTER, INSURANCE WILL LAPSE. MAKE CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO THE TREASURER OF THE U. S. AND FORWARD TO COLLECTIONS SUBDIVISION, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

48. KIND OF INSURANCE Nat. Serv. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	U.S. Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>	None <input type="checkbox"/>	49. HOW PAID Allotment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Direct to V. A. <input type="checkbox"/>	50. Effective Date of Discharge JUN 46	51. Date of Next Premium Due (One month after 50) 1 AUG 46	52. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH \$ 6.40	53. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO Continue <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Continue Only <input type="checkbox"/>	Discontinue <input type="checkbox"/>
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54. RIGHT THUMB PRINT	55. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in W. D. Directives) ERC FROM 3 MAR 44 THRU 30 APR 44 NO DAYS LOST UNDER AW 107 ASR SCORE (2 SEP 45) 26 LAPEL BUTTON ISSUED
56. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED <i>Edward G. Ketcham</i>	57. PERSONNEL OFFICER (Type name, grade and organization - signature) L R HORTON 1ST LT CAC

WD AGO FORM 53-55  
7 November 1944

This form supersedes all previous editions of WD AGO Forms 53 and 55 for enlisted persons entitled to an Honorable Discharge, which will not be used after receipt of this revision.

OHIO WORLD-WAR II CLAIM  
COMPENSATION APPLIED FOR No.

440480



### SEPARATION QUALIFICATION RECORD

SAVE THIS FORM. IT WILL NOT BE REPLACED IF LOST

This record of job assignments and special training received in the Army is furnished to the soldier when he leaves the service. In its preparation, information is taken from available Army records and supplemented by personal interview. The information about civilian education and work experience is based on the individual's own statements. The veteran may present this document to former employers, prospective employers, representatives of schools or colleges, or use it in any other way that may prove beneficial to him.

1. LAST NAME—FIRST NAME—MIDDLE INITIAL			MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS		
KETCHAM, GAILARD T.			10. MONTHS	11. GRADE	12. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY
2. ARMY SERIAL NO.	3. GRADE	4. SOCIAL SECURITY NO.	3	Pvt	Basic Training Army Air Force (521)
15 122 318	S SGT	[REDACTED]	2	S Sgt	Airplane Armorer-Gunner (612)
5. PERMANENT MAILING ADDRESS (Street, City, County, State)			11	S. Sgt	Aerial Photographer-Gunner (940)
112 ST PAUL AVE. DAYTON, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, OHIO:					
6. DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE	7. DATE OF SEPARATION	8. DATE OF BIRTH			
1 Jun 1944	20 Jun 1946	[REDACTED]			
9. PLACE OF SEPARATION					
SEPARATION CENTER CAMP ATTERBURY, INDIANA					

#### SUMMARY OF MILITARY OCCUPATIONS

13. TITLE—DESCRIPTION—RELATED CIVILIAN OCCUPATION

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHER-GUNNER--Served with 306th Bomb Group, Squadron 369, Operated photographer equipment from aircraft in flight to determine information for military purposes. Took still pictures from air while in flight. Operated, assisted in installing, and performed maintenance repairs on cameras. Served overseas in England, Germany, Africa, and France for 15 months.

MILITARY EDUCATION

14. NAME OR TYPE OF SCHOOL—COURSE OR CURRICULUM—DURATION—DESCRIPTION

Army Air Force Flexible Gunnery School - Flexible Gunnery - 6 weeks.

CIVILIAN EDUCATION

15. HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED	16. DEGREES OR DIPLOMAS	17. YEAR LEFT SCHOOL	OTHER TRAINING OR SCHOOLING	
4yrs.H.S.	H.S.Diploma	1944	20. COURSE—NAME AND ADDRESS OF SCHOOL—DATE	21. DURATION
18. NAME AND ADDRESS OF LAST SCHOOL ATTENDED			none	
Mc Luncy H.S., Crooksville, Ohio				
19. MAJOR COURSES OF STUDY				
Academic				

CIVILIAN OCCUPATIONS

22. TITLE—NAME AND ADDRESS OF EMPLOYER—INCLUSIVE DATES—DESCRIPTION

STUDENT, HIGH SCHOOL--Completed 4 years of high school training and education studying the following subjects: English, mathematics, general science, biology, chemistry, and typing. Also worked as automechanic part time disassembling motors, grinding valves, and general tune-up.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

23. REMARKS

none

24. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED

*Richard J. Kitcham*

25. SIGNATURE OF SEPARATION CLASSIFICATION OFFICER

*R.M. Le Ferre*

26. NAME OF OFFICER (Typed or Stamped)

R.M. LE FEVRE, 2d.Lt.Inf.

Dear Veteran,

Samantha Sommer, News-Sun Editor, and myself, will soon be publishing in the daily paper, a section that will spotlight a "**Hometown Hero**," *every week!*

It you are a veteran, you qualify to be recognized, and every veteran *deserves* to be recognized: old vets, young vets, retired vets, active duty vets, combat vets, stateside vets, Cold War vets, National Guard, Reserves, or Army Guard. Please do not think you are undeserving because you feel you didn't do much. If you served, you deserve to be recognized.

You will not be called and questioned, nor will you be interviewed.

Please take the time to fill out the accompanying veteran information form and return it to Samantha Sommer or myself, along with a picture of your choice, preferably, a head shot.

We want to recognize ALL veterans in the Clark and Champaign County areas. You served your country! This is not in the paper to show everyone how great you are, it's merely to let people know that you served, and we want to acknowledge that. Thank you for your service to our country and we hope to hear from you very soon.

Sincerely,

Randall W. Ark  
Vietnam Veteran



Charlotte  
today

I hope to see her but will probably wait until she has had this procedure late  
the lungs clearer.

have the head of the bed up so Rose Anne can sit up. That should help keep  
They will do another x-ray tomorrow and she should be staying clear. They

what Lori said tonight that this is so. The doctor expects to happen at times  
had that she was much better than when she was in the hospital. I think from

with a much better outlook on things. They said Rose Anne was  
really is. I had the earlier information from Lori and she said to Lori this time. She talks

I am beginning to think that when I get into a room and it sounds worse than if  
pneumonia is in both lungs.

now things are looking good and she may be able to go into a room tomorrow. The  
stuff up. I guess this happens sometimes and you may even need to do it again. Right

empty the lung again. It was from where she had been able to cough and bring the  
Rose Anne had the procedure when she was in the hospital with something and were able to

to: [redacted]  
From: [redacted]

Date: 3/10/10 1:28:42 P M Eastern Standard Time  
Subject: she's doing better

Subj: **This on might work !!!**  
Date: 1/31/2016 9:02:07 P.M. Eastern Standard Time  
From: [gschafer@woh.rr.com](mailto:gschafer@woh.rr.com)  
To: [REDKET3069@aol.com](mailto:REDKET3069@aol.com)

#### Veteran Questions

##### Introduction

Where and when were you born?  
Who are/were your parents and what are/were their occupations?  
Who are/were your siblings? If so where did they serve?  
What were you doing before you entered the service? (high school, working, etc.)?

##### Early Days of Service

In which branch of the military did you serve? Were you active duty, National Guard or reserve?  
Why did you choose your branch of the military?  
Did you enlist or were you commissioned? (If officer, did you go through ROTC, OCS, West Point, etc.?)  
What was basic training/boot camp/ROTC/OCS/West Point like?  
Do you recall your instructors? If so, what were they like?  
What was your MOS/ASI/job?  
Did you receive any specialized training (Airborne, Air Assault, etc.)?  
How did you adapt to military life, including the physical regimen, barracks, food and social life?

##### Deployments

Where did you serve?  
If you served abroad, what are some memories you have of that experience?  
What were your duties while deployed?  
Did you witness combat? What experiences are you willing to share?  
If you saw combat, how did you feel when witnessing casualties and destruction?  
What kinds of friendships and camaraderie did you form while serving, and with whom?  
How did you stay in touch with family and friends back home?  
What did you do while not on mission/performing duties?

##### Coming Home

What were you feeling while leaving your duty station?  
How did you return home?  
How were you received by your family and community?  
How did you readjust to civilian life?  
Have you remained in contact with or reunited with fellow veterans? If so, who? Why?  
Are you a member of any veterans' organizations? If so, which?  
What have you done since separating from the military?

##### Reflections

How did your wartime experiences affect your life?  
What are some life lessons you learned from military service?  
How has your military service impacted your feelings about war and the military in general?  
What message would you like to leave for future generations who will view/hear this interview?  
Is there anything you feel like we haven't discussed, or should be added to this interview? If so, what?



**306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association - 306bg.us**

**PO Box 682530**

**Park City, UT 84068**

**March 29, 2016**

GAILARD KETCHAM

6445 FAR HILLS AVE # 909

CENTERVILLE OH 45459

Dear Red,

On behalf of the 306th Bomb Group Historical Association and personally, Charles and I send you our best wishes for a Happy 90th Birthday ( [REDACTED] ). We hope you have a good celebration of the occasion with Joy and Marty, and perhaps additional relatives and/or friends.

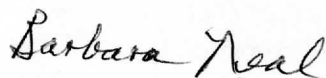
We have so much enjoyed getting to know you (and Joy & Marty) at reunions, and are thrilled that you are helping in many ways with this upcoming Dayton reunion. It was thanks to you being prepared early to "sell" last year's Reunion crowd on the many benefits of Dayton, that we'll be there in September. We look forward, too, to seeing the Champaign museum, where you've been an active volunteer.

We greatly appreciate your service to our country during that dire time of need, in World War II – from your initial training stateside, through your reporting to Thurleigh in early April to the 306th Bomb Group (Heavy) 369th Squadron as a ball turret gunner in Donovan Holve's crew, and onward through your service in the Casey Jones Project. It occurs to me in writing that, that I should ask if perhaps you would be willing to share with me a copy of your Discharge / Separation document, or otherwise alert me of the dates and further locations where you served before leaving the service.


It was thanks to you and so many of your generation that we, and so much of the world, has had these decades of freedom since then. Service such as yours inspires us to carry on the work of the 306th Bomb Group Historical Association, keeping alive the legacy stories of you and so many – stories that reach veterans' families, students, researchers, and historians today and that will continue educating generations to come.

Thank you, for your service abroad for our country back in the 1940s, and for all your participation in years since then, in Ohio in veteran-recognition parades and other events, and in veterans organizations, as well as your active participation with the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association. We wish you, and your family, all the best and look forward to seeing you again soon.

With the utmost respect and appreciation,



Barbara Neal  
volunteer Secretary



Charles Neal 306bg.us  
volunteer Webmaster & immediate Past President

Hello Red,



May you enjoy each day  
to the fullest — today and every day!

Sorry this late but hoping you  
had a great birthday. Presently  
I'm planning to be at the Dayton  
reunion. Likely, will take 2 days  
driving. Thanks for your work on this.  
Sincerely, Ed Sandine and wife, Karen



MAY 1944  
Aviation Cadet



PORTERSVILLE, O. — Gailard Thomas Ketcham, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry H. Ketcham, Portersville, will leave on June 1, for training in the Army Aviation Cadets. He will report to Fort Thomas, Ky., and from there will go to Amarillo, Texas. Gailard is a member of this year's graduating class of McLuney high school.



INLAND PARCEL POST.—7d. not exceeding 3 lbs., 1d. for each additional 1 lb. up to 8 lbs., over 8 lbs. not exceeding 15 lbs. 1s. 1d. No parcel may exceed 15 lbs. in weight. *Limit of size:* greatest length 8 ft. 6 in.; length and girth combined, 6 ft.

C.O.D. FEES are additional to the ordinary Parcel Postage, and must be prepaid by means of a stamp.

TELEGRAMS.—Gt. Britain and N. Ireland—1/- for 9 words; each additional word, 1d.

POSTAL ORDERS.—1d for 6d. and 1s.; 1½d. for 1s. 6d. to 5s.; 2d. for 6s. to 21s.

MONEY ORDERS.—Inland, 4d. not exceeding £3; up to 1s. for £40. Foreign, 6d. for every £1 or fraction thereof up to £3, then 3d. for every £1 or fraction thereof up to a maximum varying for different countries.

REGISTRATION, INLAND.—3d. for £5 compensation; 4d. for £20, and additional 1d. for each succeeding £20. Limit of Registration, £400.

JANUARY 1946

Sun.	6	13	20	27	
Mon.	7	14	21	28	
Tues.	1	8	15	22	29
Wed.	2	9	16	23	30
Thur.	3	10	17	24	31
Fri.	4	11	18	25	
Sat.	5	12	19	26	

Sunrise and Sunset.  
Summer Time.

Jan. 1. Sun rises 9h. 6m.  
Sun sets 5h. 1m.  
Jan. 15. Sun rises 9h. 0m.  
Sun sets 5h. 19m.

Moons.

New M. Jan. 3. Full M. Jan. 17.  
First Q. Jan. 10. Last Q. Jan. 25.



S/SGT GAILARD T. KETCHAM  
1944---1946  
306th BOMB GROUP---369th SQUADRON  
ENGLAND--FRANCE---GERMANY---N.AFRICA



369TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON  
U.S.A.A.F

## CALENDER OF EVENTS FOR GAILARD T KETCHAM PRIOR TO GOING INTO THE US ARMY AIR CORP AVAIATION CADET PROGRAM JUNE 1st 1944

BORN ON APRIL 1st 1926 TO THE PARENTS OF HARRY H. AND EUNICE E.  
KETCHAM----LIVING IN THE VILLAGE OF PORTERSVILLE OHIO--PERRY  
COUNTY

GRAND PARENTS-- JOHN WESTLEY AND SAHRA ETTA KETCHAM  
WILLIAM AND MARY THOMAS

[ALL LIVING IN PERRY COUNTY ]

2 SISTERS--MARY ETTA AND BONNA JEAN-----[ GAILARD THOMAS ]

1921

1923

1926

2 SISTERS-LOIS PAULINE AND DAPHNE ROSALIE-BROTHER-JAMES HARRY

1928

1934

1937

ACTIVE IN THE FOLLOWING SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

PROTESTANT---UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

CHAMPION GRANGE

4 H CLUB---BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

PARTISIPATED IN A SMALL COMUNITY ORCHESTRA--PLAYING THE VIOLIN

SCHOOLING---ONE ROOM SCHOOL--PORTERSVILLE GRADES 1 AND 2

SAYRE SCHOOL---GRADES 3 TROUGH 8

McLUNEY HIGH SCHOOL---CROOKSVILLE OHIO GRADES 9 THROUGH 12

GRADUATED--MAY 24 th 1944 FROM A CLASS OF --8 BOYS--14 GIRLS

HOBBYS---DOING THE THINGS THAT ANY YOUNG BOY SHOULD DO--MIND  
HIS PARENTS--TEASE HIS SISTERS--PLAY BALL--HIKE THE WOODS--GO  
HUNTING IN THE FALL WHEN I WAS OLD ENOUGH TO BE TRUSTED WITH A  
GUN.

STAY OUT OF TROUBLE.



**369TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON  
U.S.A.A.F**

**WORLD WAR BROKE OUT IN DECEMBER 1941 AND MANY CHANGES TOOK PLACE**

**I HAVE WRITTEN A DOCUMENTARY THAT STARTS FROM THAT DAY AND TELLS THE STORY OF MY LIFE--BEFORE THE WAR STARTED--DURING THE WAR AND THE DUTIES THAT I WAS CALLED UPON TO PERFORM AS MY CONTRIBUTION IN THE DEFENCE OF OUR GREAT COUNTRY AS A SOLDIER SERVING IN ENGLAND --FRANCE-GERMANY AND N.AFRICA**

**I AM PROUD THAT I WAS ABLE TO CARRY OUT THAT TASK ALONG WITH THE 16,000,000 OTHER SERVICE MEN EACH IN HIS OWN WAY**

**FEBRUARY 24th 1943----I WENT TO ZANESVILLE TO PICK UP ENLISTMENT PAPERS FOR THE ARMY AIR CORP AVIATION CADET PROGRAM**

**[REDACTED] --MY BIRTHDAY --BECAME ELIGIBLE FOR MILITARY DUTY**

**MAY 17th 1944--RECEIVED MY ORDERS TO REPORT INTO FT. THOMAS KENTUCKY FOR INDUCTION INTO THE ARMY AIR CORP**

**MAY 24th GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL**

1937



1944







**369TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON  
U.S.A.A.F**

**BY GAILARD KETCHAM**

**MY LIFE LEADING UP TO THE BEGINNING OF WW2**

WE LIVED IN A SMALL TOWN BY THE NAME OF "PORTERSVILLE" ON STATE ROUTE 37 LOCATED ON THE COUNTY LINE OF MORGAN AND PERRY COUNTIES, MIDWAY BETWEEN McCONNELLSVILLE AND NEW LEXINGTON OHIO I WAS ONE OF SIX CHILDREN--2 OLDER SISTERS--TWO YOUNGER SISTERS AND A YOUNGER BROTHER

MY FATHER OWNED AND OPERATED AN AUTO REPAIR GARAGE AND FILLING STATION. HE BUILT THE GARAGE THE YEAR I WAS BORN SO NATURALLY I GREW UP BEING HIS UNDER STUDY AND LEARNING THE TRADE AS A MECHANIC. HE WAS A WONDERFUL TEACHER, VERY PATIENT ALWAYS TEACHING ME THE RIGHT FROM WRONG WAY TO DO THINGS.

WE DID NOT HAVE ELECTRICITY IN OUR AREA UNTIL AFTER WW 11 WAS OVER BUT WE DID HAVE NATURAL GAS FOR LIGHTS AND HEATING WATER . MY MOTHER COOKED ON A WOOD AND COAL BURNING STOVE AND HAD OPEN FIREPLACE TO HEAT THE HOUSE IN THE WINTER.

I ATTENDED SCHOOL IN A SMALL ONE ROOM SCHOOL HOUSE FOR MY FIRST 3 YEARS---WE WERE THEN SENT TO A FORMER HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING 2 MILES AWAY IN A NEIGHBORING SMALL TOWN OF --SAYRE OHIO--TO FINISH OUT GRADES--4 THROUGH 8-- AND THEN SENT TO HIGH SCHOOL--9 MILES AWAY NEAR THE VILLAGE OF CROOKSVILLE OHIO

I WAS 15 YEARS OLD WHEN WW-2 STARTED IN DECEMBER OF 1941--MY FATHER WAS A VETERAN OF WW-1 SO I WAS AWARE OF WHAT WAR MEANT THROUGH STORIES HE HAD TOLD ME ABOUT WW-1 AND HIS LOYALTY TO OUR COUNTRY AND HIS FORMER COMRADES.

WE WERE VERY ACTIVE IN THE COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES DURING THE MAY 30th MEMORIAL DAY SERVICES . MY FATHER AND FOUR OF HIS BUDDIES OF WW-1 ORGANIZED A PROGRAM HELD AT THE LOCAL CHURCH AND CEMETARY WHERE SEVERAL VETERANS FROM PAST WARS WERE BURIED. THIS STARTED IN THE YEAR 1922 AND AND COME MEMORIAL DAY 2008 THE 86th MEMORIAL DAY SERVICES WILL HONOR THE PAST DEFENDERS OF THIS GREAT COUNTRY MAY GOD BLESS EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THEM

THE PROGRAM IS MADE UP OF THE LOCAL PEOPLE--AT ONE TIME WE HAD A SMALL ORCHASTRA, AND WE WOULD FURNISH THE MUSIC, I PLAYED A VIOLIN AS MY CONTRIBUTION.THERE WOULD BE SINGING GROUPS--SOME ONE MAY RECITE A POEM AND OFCOURSE THERE WAS ALWAYS A SPEAKER TO DELIVER A SPEECH FOR THE DAY

AFTER THE PROGRAM WAS OVER, ALL THE CHILDREN WERE ASSEMBLED BEHIND THE CHURCH AND AND A PARADE THROUGH THE CEMETARY FOLLOWED THE HONOR GAURD CARRYING THE AMERICAN FLAG AND THE CHILDREN WOULD PLACE FLOWERS ON EACH VETERANS GRAVE. THE PARADE WOULD END AT THE SITE OF THE MARKER OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER. THE REMAINING FLOWERS WAS PLACED THERE SOMEONE IN THE BACKGROUND WOULD SOUND TAPS AND THE SERVICES WOULD END UNTIL THE NEXTYEAR

I STILL REMEMBER THE SUNDAY MORNING OF DECEMBER 7, 1941 . WE WERE GETTING READY TO GO TO CHURCH AND MY FATHER HAD HIS EAR GLUED TO THE RADIO AND PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT WAS ANNOUNCING THAT PEARL HARBOR HAD BEEN ATTACKED BY JAPAN AND THAT WE WERE DECLARING WAR AGAINST THEM



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MANY THINGS BEGAN TO CHANGE IN A HURRY. THE YOUNG MEN IN THE SURROUNDING AREA AND ALL OVER AMERICA WERE BEING DRAFTED. MY OLDEST SISTERS HUSBAND WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TO GO. THERE WERE 22 YOUNG MEN IN OUR LOCAL AREA THAT WERE CALLED INTO THE ARMED SERVICES PLUS I HAD 8 COUSINS AND ONE UNCLE TO BE CALLED INTO THE SERVICE, WE REPRESENTED ALL BRANCHES OF THE ARMED SERVICE

I WAS AWARE THAT IF THE WAR LASTED ANY LENGTH OF TIME I WOULD HAVE TO ALSO GO INTO THE SERVICE. I WAS 15 YEARS AND 9 MONTHS OLD A SOPHMORE IN HIGH SCHOOL AT THAT TIME.

THE GARAGE BUSSINESS WAS NOT TOO GOOD AT THAT TIME AND THERE NO FACTORYS IN THE LOCAL AREA AND MY FATHER BEING A PATROTIC MAN MADE THE ANNOUNCEMENT TO HIS FAMILY THAT HE WAS GOING TO GO FIND A JOB IN SOME FACTORY THAT WAS PRODUCING MATERIALS FOR THE DEFENCE OF OUR COUNTRY.

HE CAME TO DAYTON WHERE HIS BROTHER AND FELLOW WW-1 VETERAN WAS LIVING AND WORKING FOR THE DELCO PRODUCTS DIVISION OF GENERAL MOTORS. HE ASKED HIS BROTHER IF HE COULD STAY WITH HIM UNTIL OTHER ARRANGENMENTS COULD BE MADE FOR A PLACE TO LIVE IF HE GOT A JOB.

HIS FIRST MORNING IN DAYTON HE APPLIED FOR EMPLOYMENT AT THE FRIGIDAIRE DIVISION OF GENERAL MOTORS LOCATED ON TAYLOR ST IN DAYTON.. HE FILLED OUT HIS APPLICATION FORM AND TURNED IT IN AND WAS ASKED TO WAIT AROUND FOR A LITTLE WHILE. WITH IN A HOUR THEY CALLED HIS NAME AND WAS SENT FOR AN INTERVIEW AND ASKED WHEN HE COULD GO TO WORK... HE REPLIED HE COULD START AT ANY TIME. THEY ANSWERED ,HOW ABOUT THIS AFTERNOON ON THE 3;;PM TO 11:00PM SHIFT.--THEY SENT HIM TO THE MEDICAL DEPT AND GAVE HIM A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND -- THE DOCTOR PASSED HIM THIS WAS NEAR NOON OF THAT DAY AND WAS TOLD TO REPORT BACK ABOUT 2;30 READY TO GO TO WORK AT 3:PM. THIS WAS IN MAY 1942 AND HE STAYED THERE UNTIL NOV 1945. HE WAS THE DISCHARGED DUE TO THE VETERANS RETURNING HOME WHOM HAD BEEN EMPLOYED BY FRIGIDAIRE BEFORE THEY WERE DRAFTED AND NOW COULD RETRIVE THEIR JOBS.

UPON HIS FINDING A JOB IN DAYTON HE IS NOW 130 MILES AWAY FROM PORTERSVILLE. HOUSING WAS AT A PREMIUM IN DAYTON AND IT WAS SOME TIME BEFORE HE FOUND A HOUSE THAT HE COULD PURCHASE.

THIS LEFT MY MOTHER MYSELF ,--MY TWO SISTERS AND BROTHER IN PORTERSVILLE.

I BECAME THE MAN OF THE HOUSE--GOING TO SCHOOL TAKING CARE OF ANY PROBLEMS AROUND THE HOUSE. THANK GOD FOR THE TRAINING MY FATHER GAVE ME PRIOR TO THIS I WAS ABLE TO TAKE CARE OF MOST OF THE PROBLEMS THAT MAY ARRIVE. I HAD MY DRIVERS LICENSE SO HE LEFT THE CAR WITH US SO WE COLD GET AROUND.GASOLINE WAS RATIONED SO WE DID NOT DRIVE ANY WHERE EXCEPT WHEN IT WAS NECESSARY. IF ANYONE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD WAS GOING TO GO ANY PLACE AND NEEDED ANYTHING YOU WERE GLAD TO HELP THEM.

IN THE SUMMER MY MOTHER AND I WOULD RAISE A LARGE GARDEN AND HARVEST THE VEGTABLES AND STORE THEM IN THE BASEMENT, EVERYBODY HAD THEIR JOB --- I ALSO WAS TAKING ANY ODD JOBS WORKING FOR ANY BODY THAT NEEDED HELP THESE JOBS AMOUNTED TO A NICKLE HERE--A DIME THERE--MANY TIMES A DOLLAR A DAY AND MY DINNER WHEN THE LOCAL FARMERS WERE PLOWING THEIR CORN FIELDS--MAKING HAY---THRASHING THE WHEAT OR AT OTHER TIMES IN THE SUMMER I WOULD MOW THEIR LAWNS WORK IN THE GARDENS.-- IN THE WINTER I WOULD CARRY COAL AND ASHES. CUT FIREWOOD AND KINDLING FOR SEVERAL OF THE



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IN THE SPRING OF 1944 I WOULD TURN 18 YEARS OLD AND BE ELEGIBLE FOR THE DRAFT INTO THE SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.. OF COURSE ALL MY FRIENDS IN HIGH SCHOOL WERE TALKING ABOUT THE BRANCH OF SERVICE WE WOULD LIKE TO SERVE. MY 18th BIRTHDAY WAS ON APRIL 1st 1944. I HAD TALKED IT OVER WITH MY PARENTS AND THEY AGREED I SHOULD PICK THE BRANCH I WANTED TO GO INTO.

ON FEBRUARY 24 1944---[EXACTLY 64 YEARS AGO TODAY AS I WRITE THIS OUTLINE} I DROVE TO ZANESVILLE OH AND WENT TO THE AIR FORCE RECRUITING OFFICE AND PICKED UP THE PAPERS FOR VOLUNTARY ENLISTMENT INTO THE ARMY AIR CORP AVIATION CADET PROGRAM--I WANTED TO BE A 'FLYBOY I TOOK THEM HOME AND FILLED THEM OUT AND MY PARENTS SIGNED THEM WITH THEIR BLESSINGS.

I ALSO HAD TO HAVE CHARACTER REFERENCES FROM THREE PEOPLE THAT KNEW ME PERSONNELLY. THIS WAS NO PROBLEM.

DR. M. O. SMITH---OUR FAMILY DOCTOR

MR EDGAR ALLEN--MY MUSIC TEACHER AND LOCAL NOTARY PUBLIC

MR RONALD KENT-- A VERY DEAR FRIEND AND OPERATOR OF A LOCAL FILLING STATION

NOW ALL I HAD TO DO WAS WAIT TO SEE IF I HAD BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE ARMY AIR CORP.



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MY FATHER WAS WORKING IN THE FRIGIDAIRE FACTORY HELPING TO BUILD THE 50 CALIBER MACHINE GUNS THAT I HAD JUST FINISHED TRAINING ON HOW TO USE IN GUNNERY SCHOOL OUT IN KINGMAN ARIZONA .HE HAD ARRANGED TO GET TIME OFF WHILE I WAS HOME. HE HAD TOLD HIS FOREMAN THAT I HAD JUST COMPLETED MY GUNNERY TRAINING ABOARD THE B-17 BOMBERS.AND WOULD SOON BE GOING OVERSEAS. MR DUFOUR, HIS FOREMAN ASK HIM TO BRING ME INTO THE FACTORY THE NEXT DAY AND HE WOULD SHOW ME HOW THE GUNS WERE MADE. MY FATHER AND I WERE TAKEN ON A CELEBRATY TOUR OF THE PRODUCTION TRACK. BOY ,WHAT A THRILL THIS WAS TO SEE HOW THEY WERE MADE STARTING WITH BLANK PEICES OF STEEL AND TUBING AND COMING OFF THE END OF THE TRACK A COMPLETED AND TEST FIRED MACHINE GUN READY TO BE PACKED AND SENT TO THE BATTLE FRONT

THIS BEING THANKSGIVING WEEK WE DECIDED THAT WE WOULD GO BACK TO PORTERSVILLE AND VISIT WITH MY TWO OLDER SISTERS AND GRANDPARENTS WHOM WERE NOW LIVING IN OUR HOUSE THERE THIS WE COULD BE TOGETHER AS A COMPLETE FAMILY. THERE WAS PLENTY OF ROOM FOR US TO STAY THERE AND I WOULD ALSO GET TO SEE SOME OF MY RELATIVES ,FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS.

ONE OF MY COUSINS WAS ALSO ON LEAVE AND WE GOT TOGETHER AND HAD A GOOD TIME EXCHANGING OUR ASSIGNMENTS---WE WERE BOTH IN THE ARMY AIR CORP. HE WAS A COOK IN THE MESS HALL. AND I AS A AERIAL GUNNER ON A PLANE

IT WAS A BUSY FEW DAYS AND CAME TO AN END VERY QUICKLY. WE RETURNED TO DAYTON FOR THE REMAINING THREE DAYS BEFORE I HAD TO LEAVE FOR AVON PARK AAF BASE FOR MY FINAL PHASE OF TRAINING.

NOVEMBER 29th, 1944-----MARCH. 25th, 1944

ON THE MORNING OF NOVEMBER 29th I BOARDED A TRAIN FOR TAMPA FLORIDA. THERE WERE SEVERAL HUNDRED OF US REPORTING FOR ASSIGNMENT TO THE AVON PARK ARMY AIR BASE WHITCH WAS NOT TOO FAR FROM TAMPA. THEY MET US AT TRAIN STATION AND PUT US ON TRUCKS AND TOOK US TO OUR NEW QUARTERS.

AFTER GETTING SETTLED WE BEGAN TO LOOK UP SOME OF OUR BUDDIES THAT WE WERE IN GUNNERY SCHOOL WITH. I SOON FOUND MY GOOD FRIEND JOHN HUNNICUTT WHOM HAD BECOME A VERY SPECIAL FRIEND. HE TOLD ME HE HAD BECOME ENGAGED TO HIS GIRL FRIEND WHILE HE WAS HOME

AS SOON AS EVERY BODY HAD BEEN PROCESSED AND LOCATED. WE WERE ASSIGNED TO A CREW THAT YOU WOULD STAY WITH FROM THAT DAY ON. BEING AS FOLOWS---OFFICERS-----PILOT---CO-PILOT---NAVIGATOR----BOMBRIDIER---- ENLISTED MEN---ENGINEER- [CREW CHEIF]---RADIO OPERATOR---ARMORER GUNNER---BALL TURRET GUNNER---WAIST GUNNER AND TAIL GUNNER---10 MEN IN ALL FROM NOW ON YOU WOULD TRAIN WITH THESE MEN--SLEEP WITH THEM---LEARN TO WORK TOGETHER AS A TEAM--YOU WERE NO LONGER AN INDIVIDUAL---YOUR LIVES WILL DEPEND UPON EACH OTHER WHEN YOU GET INTO COMBAT

THE NEXT 12 WEEKS WERE SPENT LEARNING YOUR DUTIES--PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS--MENTAL ADJUSTMENTS PREPARING FOR THE UNKNOWN.UPON COMPLETION OF OUR TRAINING I WAS PROMOTED TO CORPORAL. I NOW WOR TWO STRIPES ON THE SLEEVE OF MY UNIFORM

WE COMPLETED OUR FLIGHT TRANING ON MAR 15th AND WERE GIVEN A THREE DAY PASS BEFORE MOVING TO CAMP KILMER NEW JERSY FOR DEPLOYMENT TOO????????



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MAY 17th 1944-----JUNE 1st 1944

ON MAY 17th WHEN I ARRIVED HOME FROM SCHOOL I HAD RECEIVED MY ORDERS TO REPORT TO FT. THOMAS KENTUCKY ON JUNE 1st.- I GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL ON THE 24th OF MAY-- ONE WEEK BEFORE I WAS TO REPORT FOR DUTY--WHAT A WHIRL WIND WEEK THAT WAS

IN THE MEAN TIME MY FATHER HAD FOUND AND PURCHASED A HOUSE IN DAYTON. WE WERE MAKING ARRANGEMENT TO MOVE ON THAT VERY SAME DAY I HAD TO REPORT FOR DUTY----- SO MY FAMILY HAD A DOUBLE DOSE OF EMOTIONAL FEELINGS TO DEAL WITH

#1---LEAVING A HOME AND FRIENDS MOVING INTO A LARGE CITY AND HAVING TO MAKE NEW FREINDS IN A COMPLETELY NEW INVIRONMENT

#2---MY LEAVING TO JOIN THE ARMED FORCES AND NOT KNOWING FOR SURE THAT THEY WOULD EVER SEE ME AGAIN. THIS IS WHERE YOUR FAITH IN GOD AND FAMILY IS PUT TO THE ULTIMATE TEST.

ON MAY 31th THE AFTERNOON BEFORE WE WERE TO DEPART--MY FAMILY GOING TO DAYTON AND MY CATCHING A TRAIN TO GO INTO THE ARMY---ALL AT ONCE PEOPLE BEGAN TO COME INTO OUR YARD CARRYING BASKETS AND BOXES PARKING THEIR CARS WHERE EVER THEY COULD----THERE WERE ONLY 30 HOUSES IN PORTERSVILLE AND ABOUT 110 PEOPLE LIVING THERE. PLUS MANY MANY IN THE OUTLAYING AREA. THROUGH MY FATHERS GARAGE BUSSINESS WE KNEW MANY PEOPLE. THERE WERE AT LEAST 150 PEOPLE SHOWED UP TO GIVE US A GRAND SEND OFF . THEY SET UP TABLES AND SPREAD OUT A BUFFET THAT YOU WOULD NEVER BELIEVE.. OUR FRONT YARD FORTUNATELY WAS A VERY LARGE OPEN AREA AND THERE WAS ROOM FOR EVERY ONE..

MANY TEARS FELL AS THEY BEGAN TO LEAVE AND BEST WISHES WERE PASS ALONG. WHAT A WONDERFYL FEELING TO KNOW THAT YOU HAVE FRIENDS THAT CARE ABOUT YOU.

I GOT UP EARLY THE NEXT MORNING AND DROVE TO MY GRANDPARENTS HOME TO TELL THEM GOODBYE. I ATE BREAKFAST WITH THEM AND SOON IT WAS TIME TO LEAVE. THEY WALKED OUT TO THE CAR WITH ME AND AS I STARTED TO LEAVE MY GRANDMOTHER TOOK MY HANDS AND SAID TO ME YOU ARE A VERY MUCH LOVED YOUNG MAN. AND ALWAYS REMEMBER THIS---WHERE EVER YOU GO---AND WHAT EVER YOU DO---PUT YOUR TRUST IN THE LORD---HE WILL CARRY YOU THROUGH.--- I HAVE NEVER FORGOTTEN THOSE WORDS AND HAVE RECALLED THEM MANY MANY TIMES.

I DROVE THE 4 MILES BACK TO PORTERSVILLE AND HAD ABOUT 2 HOURS BEFORE MY MOTHER AND FATHER TOOK ME TO NEW LEXINGTON TO CATCH THE TRAIN AT 11:00 O'CLOCK---I SAID MY GOODBYES TO MY SISTERS AND BROTHER, MY OLDEST SISTER WAS LIVING ACROSS THE ROAD SO SHE WOULD BE STAY WITH THEM. THEY THOUGHT IT BEST THAT ONLY MOM AND DAD WOULD TAKE ME TO THE TRAIN JUST AS WE WERE TO LEAVE THE MOVING VAN PULLED UP TO LOAD THEIR BELONGINGS FOR THE MOVE TO DAYTON.

THE TRAIN WAS ON TIME . WE SAID OUR GOODBYES AND MY FATHER SAID TO ME. SON-WE ARE VERY PROUD OF YOU AND HAVE TRIED TO TEACH YOU HOW TO FACE RIGHT FROM WRONG--FROM THIS DAY ON YOU WILL HAVE TO MAKE YOUR OWN DECISIONS- YOU ARE NOW YOUR OWN MAN. YOU HAVE A NEW LIFE AHEAD OF YOU ,LIVE IT AS BEST YOU CAN

MY MOTHERS PARTING WORDS WERE---SON--THIS IS NOT GOODBYE--ONLY SO LONG UNTIL YOU COME HOME AGAIN. WE LOVE YOU AND WILL PRAY FOR YOUR RETURN.



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JUNE 1, 1944 UNTIL-----NOVEMBER 29th, 1944

THE NEXT NINE MONTHS WAS WENT BY VERY FAST. AFTER REPORTING FOR DUTY IN FT THOMAS. I WAS ISSUED A NEW WARDROBE OF CLOTHING IDENTIFYING ME AS A SOLDIER OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. I WAS ONE OF 106 NEW RECRUITS TO BE SENT TO AMARILLO AIR FORCE BASE IN AMARILLO TEXAS. WE BOARDED THE TRAIN ON JUNE 7th AND ARRIVED THERE ON JUNE 9th. WE WERE ASSIGNED TO OUR BARRACKS THAT WAS TO BE OUR HOME FOR THE NEXT 13 WEEKS. OUR TRAINING STARTED IMMEDIATELY. WE WERE THERE TO BE SELECTED FOR FLIGHT TRAINING---PILOTS --NAVIGATORS OR BOMBRIDIERS---WE WERE TESTED TO SEE WHICH WE WERE BEST QUALIFIED FOR.

THER WAS TO BE A VERY DISSAPOINTED BUNCH OF YOUNG BIRDMEN WITH THE FOLLOWING ANNOUNCEMENT AFTER WE WERE THERE FOR ABOUT SIX WEEKS.DUE TO THE LOSS OF MANY AIRPLANES AND CREW MEMBERS DURING THE D-DAY INVASIONS OF FRANCE AND GERMANY ON JUNE 6th THERE WAS A CRITICAL NEED FOR REPLACEMENT GUNNERS. SO NOW OUR DESTINY WAS TO BE SENT TO GUNNERY SCHOOL. WE FINISHED OUR BASIC TRAINING WHICH CONSISTED MOSTLY OF TEACHING YOU DISCIPLINE--- AND HOW TO FOLLOW ORDERS---..BUILDING YOUR PHYSICAL STAMINA. HOW SURVIVE IN THE WORST OF CONDITIONS.

ON SEPTEMBER 17th AFTER COMPLETEING BASIC TRAINING WE BOARDED THE TRAIN AND WAS SENT TO KINGMAN ARMY AIR BASE IN KINGMAN ARIZONA TO BE TRAINED AS AERIAL GUNNERS ON THE B-17 4 ENGINE FLYING FORTRESS BOMBERS TRAINING BEGAN IMMEDIATELY.. WE TOOK TRAIING CLASSES HOW TO IDENTIFY ENEMY AIR CRAFT--WERE TAUGHT HOW TO TAKE A FIFTY CALIBER MACHINE GUN APART BLINDFOLDED AND PUT IT BACK TOGETHER. THEY TOOK UP OUT ON THE FIRING RANGE AND TAUGHT US HOW TO FIRE THE MACHINE GUN AT A MOVING TARGET THAT RAN AROUND A N OVAL TRACK. IT WAS OVER A THOUSAND YARDS ACROSS THE BACKSIDE AND ABOUT THREE HUNDRED ACROSS THE FRONT SIDE MOVING VERY FAST, THIS TAUGHT YOU HOW TO LEAD YOUR TARGET SO THAT WHEN YOUR BULLETS WERE FIRED AT THE TARGET THEY WOULD ARRIVE TO GETHER AT THE SAME TIME I WAS ASSIGNED TO BECOME THE GUNNER IN THE BALL TURRET. IT WAS LOCATED ON THE BOTTOM OF THE PLANE. IT CONTAINED TWO MACHINE GUNS. MY JOB WAS TO DEFEND THE UNDERSIDE OF THE PLANE FROM ENEMY AIRCRAFT THAT WOULD ATTACK FROM BENEATH THE PLANE. THE TURRET WOULD REVOLVE 360 DEGREES--AND ELEVATE THE GUNS 45 DEGREES UP AND DOWN.

I GRADUATED FROM GUNNERY SCHOOL ON THE 11th OF NOVEMBER .I RECEIVED MY CREW MEMBER WINGS TO PIN ON MY UNIFORM AND WAS PROMOTED TO PRIVATE FIRST CLASS. I NOW WORE A STRIPE ON EACH SLEEVE OF MY UNIFORM..

I WAS GIVEN UNTIL NOV.30th TO REPORT FROM KINGMAN ARMY AIR BASE IN KINGMAN ARIZONA TO THE AVON PARK ARMY AIR BASE IN AVON PARK FLORIDA. THIS GAVE ME TIME TO STOP IN DAYTON TO VISIT MY FAMILY

I ARRIVED IN DAYTON ON THE MORNING OF NOVEMBER 14. I CAUGHT A TAXI FROM THE TRAIN STATION TO MY NEW HOME. THEY KNEW I WAS COMING BUT NOT THE EXACT TIME. I ARRIVED AT THE HOUSE AND MY BROTHER WAS JUST COMING FROM THE CORNER GROCERY STORE. HE CAME RUNNING DOWN THE SIDEWALK YELLING AT THE TOP OF HIS VOICE. WE WENT INTO THE HOUSE AND GREETED THE REST OF THE FAMILY.IT WAS A HAPPY REUNION



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IN THE AFTERNOON OF MARCH 25th WE WERE TAKEN TO THE BOAT DOCKS AND MARCHED ABOARD THE OCEAN THE [ QUEEN ELISABETH ] OUR 52 CREWS PLUS 20,000 SOLDIERS HEADED FOR --WE LATER FOUND OUT--GLASGOW SCOTLAND.

WE ARRIVED ON APRIL 1st --ON EASTER SUNDAY---ALSO MY 19th BIRTHDAY, ONE THAT I WILL NEVER FORGET.

WE WERE LOADED ON TO TRUCKS AND TAKEN TO DISTRIBUTION POINT. THE 52 CREWS WERE SENT OUT TO ALL THE DIFFERENT AIR BASES IN ENGLAND. MY CREW AND FIVE OTHERS WERE ASSIGNED TO THE 306th BOMB GROUP AT THURLIEGH AIR BASE LOCATED IN BEDFORDSHIRE ENGLAND. MY CREW WAS ASSIGNED TO THE 369th BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON.. WE WERE READY FOR OUR CALL TO INTO COMBAT

THE WAR WAS MOVING VERY FAST ON MANY OF THE BATTLE FRONTS AND THE GERMANS WERE RUNNING OUT OF FOOD AND SUPPLYS. FUEL WAS IN SHORT SUPPLY AND THEY COULD NOT GET THEIR PLANES OFF THE GROUND---MOVE THEIR EQUIPMENT AND WE WERE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THERE PROBLEMS AND POUNDING THEM VERY HARD. AND WE WERE NOT LOSING MANY PLANES SO THE MEN THAT WERE ALREADY THERE WERE GIVEN A CHANCE TO COMPLETE THEIR TOUR OF DUTY [35 MISSIONS] OUR CREW WAS ASSIGNED TO HELP KEEP THE PLANES READY FOR FLIGHT UNTIL WE WERE NEEDED AS A REPLACEMENT CREW.

ON MAY 8th THE GERMANS SURRENDERED AND THIS ENDED THE FIGHTING OF WW11 IN EUROPE.

MY CREW DID NOT FLY ANY COMBAT MISSIONS ALTHOUGH WE WERE READY TO DO SO.

MANY CHANGES WERE TO TAKE PLACE WITH IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS.. SOME ONE HAD TO STAY AND SEE THAT THE SURRENDER TREATIES WERE ENFORCED.. THE 306th BOMB GROUP WAS TO STAY IN EUROPE TO HELP WITH THIS TASK.. WE WERE TO MOVE FROM ENGLAND INTO GEIBLSTADT GERMANY---THIS MOVE WILL TAKE PLACE IN DECEMBER 1945.

I WAS CHOSEN TO BECOME AN ARIAL PHOTOGRAPHER AND OUR MISSION WAS TO PHOTOGRAPH THE EUROPEAN AND AFRICAN CONTINENTS FOR MAPPING PURPOSES. MANY OF THE COUNTRIES BOUNDARYS HAD CHANGED DUE TO THE WAR AND THEY HAD TO BE REARRANGED THIS WAS A VITAL PROGRAM TO RECORD THESE CHANGES. FOR FUTURE MAPPING PURPOSES . THE NAME "CASEY JONES" WAS ASSIGNED TO THIS PEJECT I WAS SENT TO SCHOOL TO LEARN HOW TO OPERATE AND REPAIR THE CAMERAS. THEN FLEW AS TRAINEE FOR SEVERAL MISSIONS OVER FRANCE --GERMANY-- AUSTRIA--POLAND-- AND MANY OF THE SMALL COUNTRYS

DURING ALL THE PREPARATIONS FOR THIS PROGRAM ANOTHER NEED FOR MORAL SUPPORT OF THE THOUSANDS OF SOLDIERS THAT WERE TO GO HOME. THEY NEEDED SOME SORT OF ENTERTAINMENT WHILE THEY WERE AWAITING THEIR TURN TO GO HOME.

THE SPECIAL SERVICES THAT PROVIDED THE ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE OVERSEAS TROOPS DECIDED TO HOLD A CONTEST AMONG ALL THE AIR BASES LOCATED IN ENGLAND.EACH AIR BASE WAS TO PUT TOGETHER A 15 MINUTE STAGE SHOW MADE UP OF THE MEN ON THESE BASES. I WENT IN FOR AN AUDITION AND WAS PICKED AS ONE OF THE ACTORS ON THE STAGE. THERE WERE 17 MEN IN ALL. A FIVE PEICE BAND---8 ACTORS AND 4 STAGE HANDS PLUS THE SPECIAL SERVICES OFFICER FROM OUR AIR BASE



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THEY WOULD BE SENT TO LONDON AND HOLD THE CONTEST IN THE PLADIUM THEATRE-- IT IS ONE OF THE BEST KNOWN THEATRES IN LONDON. THE BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION WOULD BE THE JUDGE FOR THE BEST ACT. AS LUCK WOULD HAVE ITS WAY-- WE WON THE CONTEST--OUR REWARD WAS TO BE RELIEVED OF ALL DUTIES AND PUT TOGETHER A 2 HOUR STAGE SHOW---OUR GOAL WAS TO MAKE THE MEN LAUGH--THE SHOW WAS A VERITY SHOW--NO MATTER HOW SILLY THE ACT MAY BE WE USED IT--- AND THEN WE WERE SENT INTO THE AREAS WHER THE HOSPITALS WERE LOCATED AND REST AREAS WHERE ALL THE SOLDIERS THAT WERE AWAITING THEIR TURN TO COME HOME AND THE NEW REPLACEMENTS WERE COMING TO TAKE THEIR PLACE AS OCCUPATIONAL FORCES. WE TRAVELED OVER ENGLAND-- FRANCE AND GERMANY AND A THREE DAY TRIP TO THE ROCK OF GIBRALTER IN SPAIN. WE WERE ON THE ROAD FOR FOUR MONTHS BEFORE WE HAD TO RETURN TO OUR HOME BASE AND GET READY FO THE MOVE TO GERMANY. IT WAS A VERY INTERESTING ASSIGNMENT

THE 306th BOMB GROUP PACKED UP EVERY THING AND WHAT THEY COULD NOT FLY OUT WAS LOADED ONTO TRUCKS AND ON DECEMBER 20th WE FORMED A CONVOY AND DROVE TO SOUTHAMPTON ENGLAND AND WERE PLACED ABOARD FERRY BOATS TO CROSS THE ENGLISH CHANNEL TO LE HARVE FRANCE. WE WERE ASSEMBLED IN AN AREA CALLED CAMP WINGS. WE WERE THERE FOR THREE DAYS INCLUDING CHRISTMAS DAY. ON DEC 26th WE MOVED OUT AND CONTINUED ON ACROSS FRANCE, PASSING THROUGH PARIS. THEY GAVE US 36 HOURS IN PARIS BEFORE WE MOVED ON. ME AND ONE OF MY BUDDYS DID NOT SLEEP WHILE WE WERE THERE. WE FOUND A CAB DRIVER AND HIRED HIM FOR THE ENTIRE TIME WE WERE THERE TO TAKE US SIGHT SEEING. KNOWING THAT WE MAY NEVER GET TO COME BACK---WE SAW THE EIFFLE TOWER--ARC-DE TRIUMPH--NOTER DAME AND MANY OTHER INTERESTING SIGHTS.

WE THEN MOVED OUT AND AS A COINCIDENCE WE WERE ROUTED THROUGH FRANCE AND INTO GERMANY OVER SOME OF THE SAME TERRITORY THAT MY FATHER HAD MARCHED THROUGH DURING WW1 1918--1919--CROSSING THE RHINE RIVER AT THE VERY SAME LOCATION THAT HE DID 27 YEARS LATER. WHEN I CAME HOME WE HAD A LOT TO TALK ABOUT. WE GOT OUT THE MAPS AND CONFIRMED IT HAPPENED

WE ARRIVED IN GEIBLESTADT GERMANY ON NEWS YEARS EVE AROUND 4:00pm. AND WERE ASSIGNED TO OUR QUARTERS AND SETTLED DOWN FOR A FEW DAYS. THE FOLLOWING WEEK I WAS ASSIGNED TO A GROUP OF 26 MEN TO RETURN TO ENGLAND TO HELP PACK UP ANOTHER AIR BASE. WE BOARDED A B-17 AND FLEW BACK TO ENGLAND. WE WERE THERE FOR FOUR WEEKS. MY JOB WAS TO OPERATE A FORK LIFT MOVING THE PACKED ITEMS TO BE LOADED ONTO TRUCKS AND SHIPPED OUT.

WE RETURNED TO GEIBLESTADT AND ON FEB 14th I WAS ASSIGNED TO A GROUP TO GO AN AIR BASE LOCATED ON THE COAST OF N. AFRICA BY THE NAME OF "PORT LYAUTEY"-- A NAVAL AIR STRIP BETWEEN THE CITSY OF "RABAT" AND "CASABLANCA"-- NOT TOO FAR FROM THE-- " ROCK OF GIBRAITAR"--TO TAKE UP MY DUTIES AS AN AERIAL PHOTORAPHER. WE HAD 12 B-17 s BASED THERE.

OUR CAMERAS WOULD TAKE A PICTURE THAT WAS 9X9 INCHES AND WOULD COVER 20 SQUARE MILES FROM THE ALTITUDE OF 20,000 FEET

THE CREW CONSISTED OF--PILOT--CO-PILOT--NAVIGATOR--RADIO OPERATOR AND 2 CAMERA OPERATORS-- THE CAMERA OPERATORS WOULD TRADE PLACES EVERY 30 MINUTES DUE TO THE STRAIN OF CARING FOR THE CAMERAS... THE CAMERA OPERATORS



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ALSO SUBBED FOR THE FLIGHT ENGINEER DURING HIS REST PERIOD FROM THE CAMERAS. OUR MISSIONS RAN FROM DAYLIGHT TO DARK AND THIS MENT YOU MAY FLY FOR SEVERAL MILES TO GET TO YOUR AREA AND MANY DAYS YOU WOULD FLY FOR 10 TO 12 HOURS. WE HAD EXTRA FUEL TANKS IN THE BOMBAY AND COULD STAY AIRBOURN FOR ABOUT 14 HOURS. WE HAD AN HEATED OVEN THAT KEPT WARM FOOD DURING THE FLIGHT.. SOME DAYS YOU WOULD ENCOUNTER CLOUDS IN THE AREA YOU WERE TO PHOTOGRAPH. SO YOU TURNED AROUND AND RETURNED HOME. I ENJOYED THESE DAYS, IT MENT THAT I WOULD GET TO FLY THE PLANE TAKING THE PILOT OR CO-PILOTS PLACE ON THE RETURN FLIGHT. WHILE HE TOOK A NAP IN THE RADIO ROOM

ON THE DAYS WE FOUND TOO MANY CLOUDS TO TAKE PICTURES WE WOULD DROP DOWN TO 4 OR 5000 FEET AND ENJOY THE COUNTRY SIDE. WE WOULD SOMETIMES FLY TO THE ROCK OF GIBRALTER AND SEE IF ANY SHIPS WERE TIED UP AT THEIR DOCKS. ON ONE FLIGHT WE FOUND THE BATTLE SHIP "USS MISSOURI" TIED UP TO THE DOCKS THIS WAS THE SHIP THAT WAS USED FOR THE SIGNING OF THE SURRENDER OF JAPAN IN AUGUST 1945.

ONE THING I REMEMBER ABOUT THE ROCK OF GIBRALTAR WAS THAT THERE WAS ALWAYS A DONUT CLOUD CIRCLING THE SPIRE OF THE ROCK. JUST BELOW THE TOP. I HAVE A PICTURE I TOOK OF THE SHIP AS WE FLEW OVER

ON MY 20th BIRTHDAY APRIP 1st I MADE A TRIP INTO CASABLANCA FOR THE DAY AND THAT WAS AN INTERESTING TRIP. I REMAINED IN PORT LAYAUTEY UNTIL THE FIRST WEEK IN JUNE.

MY TOUR OF DUTY WAS OVER AND I WAS TO BE SENT HOME. WE FLEW INTO ISTRES FRANCE AND WERE BILLETED AT CAMP PALL MALL AWAITING ASSIGNMENT ON A SHIP TO SAIL TO NEW YORK.

ON JUNE 2nd WE BOARDED A SHIP CALLED THE "USS TUFTS" AND SAILED OUT OF ISTRES FRANCE BOUND FOR NEW YORK. ON BOARD WERE MANY OF THE MEN THAT I HAD SAILED WITH ON THE "QUEEN ELISABETH" 13 MONTHS EARLIER COMING INTO GLASGOW SCOTLAND. WE HAD A GOOD REUNION ABOARD SHIP AND TRADED STORYS OF OUR DUTYS WHILE IN EUROPE

ON JUNE 13th WE ARRIVED IN NEW YORY HARBOR AND WHAT A BEAUTIFUL SIGHT IT WAS TO SEE TE STATUE OF LIBERTY AGAIN. WE TAKEN TO CAMP KILMER NEW JERSY .

ON JUNE 15th IBOARDED A TRAIN TO CAMP ATTERBURY INDIANA. I WAS PROCESSED FOR DISCHARGE FROM THE ARMY AIR CORP

ON THE MORNING OF JUNE 20th I WAS PRESENTED WITH MY DISCHARGE PAPERS AND WAS TAKEN TO THE TRAIN STATION TO CATCH A TRAIN TO DAYTON OHIO AND MY NEW HOME.

I ARRIVED IN THE AFTERNOON AND IT WAS A WONDERFUL FEELING TO BE HOME AGAIN

IT HAD BEEN A WONDERFUL JOURNEY AND I AM PROUD TO HAVE SERVED MY COUNTRY. GOD BLESS AMERICA.



369TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON  
U.S.A.F.

HOME AGAIN----JUNE 1946-----2008 ??????????????????

UPON RETURNING HOME I SETTLED IN DAYTON OHIO AND AFTER A WHILE I MARRIED A GIRL THAT I HAD MET BEFORE GOING INTO THE ARMY

I TOOK A JOB WITH THE FRIGIDAIRE DIVISION OF GENERAL MOTORS. MY MECHANICAL ABILITIES HELPED ME TO JOIN THE FACTORY SERVICE TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT AND I SPENT THE NEXT 35 YEARS WITH THEM BEFORE RETIREING IN 1986

I HAD A VERY INTERESTING CAREER AND ENJOYED IT VERY MUCH AND THE PEOPLE I WORKED WITH.

MY WIFE AND I RAISED 1 DAUGHTER. WE USED OUR VACATION TIME EACH YEAR TRAVELING THE UNITED STATES GIVING HER THE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR GREAT COUNTRY. MEETING ALL TYPES OF PEOPLE LIVING IN ALL SORTS OF ENVIRONMENTS.. SEEING MANY PLACES THAT MANY PEOPLE ONLY READ ABOUT. THIS WAS OUR CONTRIBUTION TO HER EDUCATION.

I HAVE BEEN RETIRED FOR 22 YEARS AND STILL LIKE TO TRAVEL AND REMINISE ABOUT THE PLACES WE HAVE BEEN

KEEP IN TOUCH WITH OUR FAMILY AND MANY FRIENDS WE HAD THE PRIVILEGE TO MEET OVER THE YEARS

ALWAYS REMEMBER

WHERE EVER YOU GO  
AND WHAT EVER YOU DO  
PUT YOUR TRUST IN THE LORD  
HE WILL SEE YOU THROUGH

GOD BLESS

&

GOD BLESS AMERICA



Uncle Gailard,  
I found this when I was  
sorting through some of Mom's  
things a few weeks ago.  
Wanted you to have it,  
Penagaye

# MY SOLDIER BROTHER

No doubt we never will forget the day-  
As all of us stood watching from the door.  
The day my brother proudly marched away  
To face the many tasks brought on by war.

Then just before he vanished out of sight  
He stopped and looked around with one last smile,  
And raised his hand-saluting-yes, just right,  
Then turned to face the following long miles.

He took with him the love of all of us  
Who hold him near and dear within our hearts.  
But wait until he has to go across.  
It is not until then the real pain starts.

The house will seem so empty ~~until when~~ *till the day*  
Our loving brother can come home ~~again.~~ *to stay.*

-Pauline Ketcham-

March 22, 1945

THE SOUND OF MARCHING FEET

I heard the sound of marching feet go by,  
And for each boy my heart cried out in pain.  
They were too young to fight; too young to die,  
But every mother's plea had been in vain  
When trying in some way to keep her boy  
Home, safe from all the awful toils of war.  
Each boy marched on with head held proudly high,  
So proud to think that he was going to fight  
For all such things that money could not buy  
For freedom, happiness, all things so right.  
He had no fear, but kept his spirits high  
As on he marched into the still, blue night.  
The sound of marching feet soon died away,  
And all that we can do back home is pray.

-Pauline Ketcham-



369TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON  
U.S.A.A.F

## GAILARD T. KETCHAM---CALENDER OF EVENTS AS A SOLDIER IN THE ARMY AIR CORPS JUNE 1st ,1944--- UNTIL--- JUNE 20 th, 1946

JUNE 1st 1944---MY FAMILY MOVED TO DAYTON OHIO. MY PARENTS TOOK ME TO NEW LEXINGTON AND I BOARDED THE TRAIN FOR FT. THOMAS KY.

JUNE 7th---BOARDED A TRAIN HEADED FOR AMARILLO TEXAS ARMY AIR BASE--ARRIVED-ON THE 9th--STARTED 13 WEEKS OF BASIC TRAINING  
BASIC TRAINING---

SEPTEMBER 17th BOARDED A TRAIN HEADED FOR KINGMAN ARMY AIR BASE IN KINGMAN ARIZONA--[ COMPLETED A 10 WEEK TRAINING COURSE IN AREIAL GUNNERY ABOARD A B-17 FLYING FORTRESS AS A BALL TURRET GUNNER AND ASSISTANT RADIO OPERATOR

NOVEMBER 11 1944 --GRADUATED FROM GUNNERY SCHOOL AND WAS PROMOTED TO PRIVATE FIRST CLASS--[ PFC ] AND WAS GIVEN UNTIL NOVEMBER 30th TO REPORT INTO AVON PARK ARMY AIR BASE LOCATED IN AVON PARK FLORIDA---WITH A STOPOVER IN DAYTON OHIO TO VISIT WITH MY FAMILY

NOVEMBER 14th UNTIL NOVEMBER 30th

OUR FAMILY RETURNED TO PORTERSVILLE FOR VISITATION OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS FOR 7 DAYS--RETURNING TO DAYTON AND ON THE MORNING OF

NOV 29th I BOARDED A TRAIN FOR AVON PARK FLA. VIA WAY OF TAMPA FLA

DECEMBER 1st UNTI DECEMBER 23rd WE RECEIVED SOME SPECIAL TRAINING AT DREW FIELD NEAR TAMPA

DECEMBER23 rd WE MOVED TO AVON PARK ARMY AIR BASE AND WAS ASSIGNED TO A CREW TO TRAIN FOR COMBAT TRAINING ALONG WITH 51 OTHER CREWS--

[ JAN 1945. ]

OUR COMBAT TRAINING WAS COMPLETED ON



369TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON  
U.S.A.A.F

MARCH 7th 1945 AND I WAS PROMOTED TO THE RANK OF CORPORAL

MARCH 8th , 9th & 10th--GIVEN 3 DAY PASS--JOHN HUNNICUTT AND I WENT TO WEST PALM BEACH.

MARCH 13th BOARDED TRAIN FOR HUNTER FIELD SAVANA GA. FOR PROCESSING AND ASSIGNMENT

MARCH 19th BOARDED TRAIN TO CAMP KILMER NEW JERSY--ISSUED NEW CLOTHING AND COMBAT GEAR

MARCH 20th--WE BOARDED A TRAIN FOR CAMP KILMER NEW JERSY FOR EMBARKATION--{ TO WHERE?}

MARCH 24th--WE WERE TAKEN TO NEW YORK BOAT DOCKS AND MARCHED ABOARD THE OCEAN LINER THE [ QUEEN ELISABETH ] ALONG WITH 20,000 OTHER SOLDIERS--SOME TIME IN THE EARLY AM OF THE 25th WE PULLED OUT OF THE HARBOR

APRIL 1st ---WE ARRIVED IN GLASGOW SCOTLAND--EASTER SUNDAY--MY 19th BIRTH DAY---ONE I WILL NEVER FORGET.

APRIL 4th WE WERE ONE OF 5 CREWS ASSINGED TO THE 306th BOMB GROUP LOCATED IN BEDFORDSHIRE ENGLAND NEAR THE TOWN OF THURLIEGH

MAY 8th THE WAR ENDED IN EUROPE-- THIS DATE WAS CALLED---VE DAY---[ VICTORY IN EUROPE ]

ALL NEW CREWS THAT DID NOT HAVE ELIGIBILITY TO GO HOME WERE PUT ON ALERT FOR POSSIBLE REASSIGNMENT TO THE PACIFIC COMBAT ZONE . BUT THIS DID NOT HAPPEN--THE 306th BOMB GROUP WAS PICKED FOR OCCUPATIONAL DUTY AND WAS TO MOVE TO GEIBLESTADT GERMANY TO OPERATE AN AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT CALLED [CASEY JONES ] ITS ASSIGNMENT WAS TO PHOTOGRAPH THE EUROPEAN AND AFRICIAN CONTINENTS FOR MAPPING PURPOSES. MANY OF THE COUNTRIES BOUNDARYS WERE CHANGED AND RENAMED DUE TO THE WAR

JUNE INTO AUGUST OF 1945



**369TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON  
U.S.A.A.F**

ATTENDED PHOTOGRAPHY TRAINING AND CAMERA REPAIR SCHOOLING  
TO BECOME AN AREIAL PHOTOGRAPHER. FLEW MISSIONS OVER FRANCE --  
- GERMANY AND OTHER SMALL COUNTRY S

IN AUGUST --JOINED A SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT INTO A TRAVELING G I  
STAGE SHOW ENTERTAINING THE TROOPS THAT WERE GOING HOME AND  
THE OCCUPATIONAL FORCES COMING INTO EUROPE- THE SHOW RAN INTO  
NOVEMBER 1945---PROMOTED TO S/SGT

WE WERE CONVERTING THE B-17 AIR PLANES FOR PHOTOGRAPHY USE.  
REMOVING THE ARMOR AND GUNS--INSTALLING THE CAMERAS--  
INSTALLING EXTRA FUEL TANKS IN THE BOMB BAY TO EXTEND THE  
FLYING RANGE.

BY DECEMBER 10th ALL PACKING OF THE ITEMS TO GO TO GEIBLESTADT  
WAS COMPLETED. THE TRUCK DRIVERS WERE ALL TRAINED AND THE  
CONVOY WAS PUT TOGETHER. IT WAS DIVIDED INTO THE FOUR  
INDIVIDUAL SQUADRONS---367th---368th---369th AND 423rd  
I DROVE A SMALL TRUCK CALLED A 4X4 WEAPONS CARRIER. I WAS  
CARRYING THE K-RATIONS WE WERE TO EAT ALONG THE WAY- I  
PAINTED THE NAME [ SALTY DOG] ON THE FRONT BUMPER

DECEMBER 10th--THE CONVOY PULLED OUT AND WE DROVE TO  
SOUTHAMPTON ENGLAND--WE PARKED THE TRUCKS AND AWAITED OUR  
TURN TO BOARD A FERRY BOAT TO CROSS THE ENGLISH CHANNEL TO LE  
HARVE FRANCE---DEC 11 THU DEC 16---WE STAYED IN CAMP WINGS IN  
SOUTHAMPTON----BY THE 17th THE COMPLETE CONVOY WAS IN  
LEHARVE --CAMP PALL MALL---WE SPENT CHRISTMAS DAY AND ON

DEC 26 WE PULLED OUT HEADING FOR GEIBLESTADT---- PASSING THRU--  
PARIS WITH A 36 HOUR LAYOVER--NANCY--OBISSION--METZ----THEN INTO  
GERMANY--WURSBURG--MANNHIEM--TO GEIBLESTADT

DEC 31st 4:00 PM ARRIVING IN GEIBLESTADT

[1946]

JANUARY 12th 26 MEN ASSIGNED TO RETURN TO ENGLAND AND PACK UP A  
FORMER FIGHTER AIR BASE. COMPLETED THE ASSIGNMENT AND ON

FEBRUARY 14th RETURNED TO GEIBLESTADT



**369TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON  
U.S.A.A.F**

FEBRUARY 24th I WAS TO RESUME MY DUTIES AS AN AREIAL CAMERA MAN. I WAS FLOWN TO ISTRES FRANCE AND ON

FEBRUARY 25 th I FLEW TO " PORT LYAUTEY" N AFRICA--FRENCH MORROCO TO JOIN MY CREW..

I REMAINED THERE UNTIL IT WAS MY TIME TO START HOME ---MY TOUR OF DUTY ENDED ON MAY 11th

MAY 13th I BOARDED A B-17 WITH 19 OTHER MEN AND WE WERE FLOWN TO ISTRES FRANCE AND WERE BILLETED AT CAMP PALL MALL AWAITING ASSIGNMENT ON A SHIP TO SAIL TO NEW YORK

JUNE 2nd 1946 WE BOARDED AN NAVY LIBERTY SHIP BY THE NAME OF "USS TUFTS" ALONG WITH MANY OF THE SAME MEN THAT I HAD SAILED WITH ON THE QUEEN ELISABETH SOME 13 MONTHS EARILER COMING INTO GLASGOW SCOTLAND

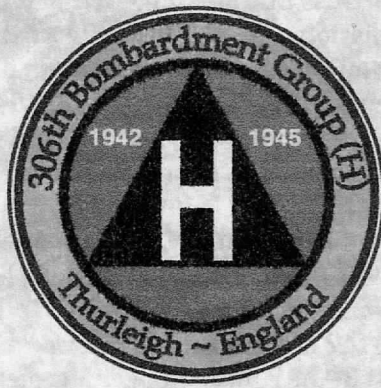
JUNE 13th ARRIVING IN NEW YORK IT WAS A WONDERFUL SIGHT TO SEE THE STATUE OF LIBERTY AGAIN- TAKEN TO CAMP KILMER NEW JERSY UNTIL

JUNE 15 th THEN BOARDED A TRAIN HEADED FOR CAMP ATTERBURY INDIANA STAYING THERE FOR PROCESSING MY DISCHARGE FROM THE ARMY AIR CORP

JUNE 20 th I WAS PRESENTED WITH MY DISCHARGE AND WAS TAKEN TO THE TRAIN STATION AND HEADED FOR DAYTON OH AND HOME. ARRIVING THERE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE AFTERNOON OF THAT MEMORIAL DAY.

IT HAD BEEN A WONDERFUL JOURNEY AND I AM PROUD TO HAVE SERVED MY COUNTRY. GOD BLESS AMERICA





## **306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group (H)**

### **A Brief History**

#### **306<sup>th</sup> BG History**

The 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group (Heavy) was officially activated on 1 March 1942 at the Salt Lake Army Air Base, Salt Lake City, Utah, three months after the entry of the United States into World War II. The Group consisted of four heavy bombardment squadrons: the 367<sup>th</sup> "Clay Pigeons," 368<sup>th</sup> "Eager Beavers," 369<sup>th</sup> "Fitin-Bitin," and 423<sup>rd</sup> "Grim Reapers" along with ground units and other supporting commands. The Group trained to fly B-17 Flying Fortresses at Wendover AAB, Utah from 6 April to 1 August 1942 when the Group commenced deployment to the European theater of operations (ETO). The ground support units proceeded via the Army Air Airfield at Richmond, Virginia and Fort Dix, New Jersey before sailing on the passenger liner Queen Elizabeth on 31 August. They arrived at Greenock, Scotland 5 September 1942, and then two days later at the RAF airfield at Thurleigh in Bedfordshire, England. The air echelon proceeded via Westover Field, Massachusetts, flying to Prestwick, Scotland by way of Gander, Newfoundland, the final leg between Gander and Prestwick spanning over 2000 miles of the North Atlantic Ocean. Of the 35 aircraft that left Gander, one inexplicably exploded mid flight with the loss of all crewmen, and a second aircraft, running low on fuel, ditched at sea just off the coast of Ireland with all aircrew surviving. The remaining 33 aircraft and crews shuttled from Prestwick to Thurleigh between 8 and 13 September 1942. The airfield at Thurleigh was officially turned over to the 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group and became Army Air Force Station number 111.

Assigned to the fledgling 8<sup>th</sup> Army Air Force, the 306<sup>th</sup>, commenced training in the

skies over England until it was declared combat ready 28 September 1942. The 306<sup>th</sup> flew its first combat mission over "Fortress Europe" on 9 October, bombing the locomotive works at Lille, France. On this mission the 306<sup>th</sup> lost its first aircraft to enemy action, "Snoozy II," piloted by Captain John Olsen, six crewmembers perishing with the aircraft. Constrained by bad weather over the remaining months of 1942, the Group would fly another eleven missions, all to targets in France that included submarine pens, docks, and railway marshalling yards at St Nazaire, Brest, La Pallice, Lorient, Rouen, and Romilly-Sur-Seine.

Events in December 42 and early January 1943 resulted in Colonel Frank A. Armstrong Jr. (a member of the VIII Bomber Command staff) being ordered to relieve the 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group commanding officer. These and others events would become the basis for the book and movie "12 O'clock High." Later that month, Colonel Armstrong and the 306<sup>th</sup> would lead the first 8<sup>th</sup> AAF mission over a target in Germany, bombing Wilhelmshaven 27 January 1943, and laying claim for the 306<sup>th</sup> as "First Over Germany."

During these early months of 1943 as enemy opposition grew, combat losses of aircraft and crewmen from the 306<sup>th</sup> and other bombardment groups of the 8<sup>th</sup> Army Air Force took a mounting toll on men and machines. Major Thurman Shuller, flight Surgeon for the 306<sup>th</sup>, recognized the physical and mental stress that was being endured by combat aircrews. He wrote a letter in March, that was forwarded through the chain of command, expressing his concerns and recommending that the 8<sup>th</sup> AAF establish a limit to the number missions that a man would be required to fly before being relieved of combat duties. Three weeks later General Ira Eaker, 8<sup>th</sup> AAF Commander, directed that 25 combat missions be established as the limit for bomber crews. In 1944 the mission limit would be raised to 30,

and then 35 missions, as the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force established greater air superiority in the skies over Europe.

Through 1943 the 306<sup>th</sup> BG combat missions were opposed by ever increasing numbers of Luftwaffe fighter aircraft and German anti-aircraft flak, resulting in greater combat losses of aircraft and crew. From October 1942 through August 1943, the 367<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron had the heaviest losses of any unit in VIII Bomber Command, earning them the "Clay Pigeons" moniker. During approximately the same period of time, from January to late July 1943, the 369<sup>th</sup> Squadron set the record for most consecutive missions flown (forty-two) without the loss of any aircraft in combat. Heaviest losses were experienced on missions to Bremen, Germany, 17 April when ten B-17's were shot down, while another ten aircraft were lost on the infamous "Black Thursday" second Schweinfurt raid of 14 October 43. A mission to St Nazaire on 1 May resulted in only a loss of three airplanes, but another six sustained heavy battle damage in the airspace over Brest, France in one of the 306<sup>th</sup> Group's fiercest battles and most memorable missions. During this mission Sergeant Maynard "Snuffy" Smith earned the Medal of Honor, fighting multiple fires in his aircraft while continuing to engage the enemy with machine guns and rendering first aid to wounded crew mates.

During early 1944 the 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group continued to bomb strategic targets in Germany and France. As D-day arrived in June, more tactical support missions were mixed with strategic bombing. Again, heavy losses of multiple aircraft occurred on a number of missions. Ten aircraft were shot down on 24 April 1944 during a mission to Oberpfaffenhofen, Germany, and nine more were lost on a mission to Ruhland, Germany 12

The 306<sup>th</sup> was soon reactivated in July 1947 with the newly established United States Air Force, Strategic Air Command as a B-29 "Super Fortress" bombardment group (very heavy). The 306<sup>th</sup> continues today as the 306<sup>th</sup> Flying Training Group (306<sup>th</sup> FTG) that was reactivated in October 2004 at the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) at Colorado Springs, Colorado, operating the Air Force Academy Airfield and providing the associated training activities for the USAFA cadets.

### 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group (Heavy) Commanding Officers:

- Col. Charles B. Overacker Jr.-16 March 1942 to 3 January 1943
- Col. Frank A. Armstrong Jr.-4 January 1943 to 17 February 1943
- Col. Claude E. Putnam-17 February 1943 to 20 June 1943
- Col. George L. Robinson-20 June 1943 to 23 September 1944
- Col. James S. Sutton-23 September 1944 to 16 April 1945
- Col. Hudson H. Upham-16 April 1945 to May 1946

Commands and units stationed at AAF Station #111 (Thurleigh) providing ground support functions to the 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group (Sept 1942 to Dec 1945):

- 39<sup>th</sup> Service Group
- 352<sup>nd</sup> Service Squadron
- 4<sup>th</sup> Station Complement Squadron

- 
- 18<sup>th</sup> Weather Squadron Detachment 111
  - 449<sup>th</sup> Sub Depot
  - 982<sup>nd</sup> Military Police Company (aviation) Detachment A
  - 1628<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Supply & Maintenance Company (aviation)
  - 1208<sup>th</sup> Quartermaster Company (service group)
  - 876<sup>th</sup> Chemical Company (air operations) Detachment A
  - 2099<sup>th</sup> Engineering Fire Fighting Platoon (aviation)
  - 204<sup>th</sup> Finance Section
  - 527<sup>th</sup> Army Postal Unit
  - 19<sup>th</sup> Photo Squadron
  - 414<sup>th</sup> Air Service Group (note 1)
  - 664<sup>th</sup> Air Material Squadron (note 1)
  - 840<sup>th</sup> Air Engineering Squadron (note 1)

Notes: (1) these units were established in April 1944 as part of the reorganization of Army Air Forces, and were constituted by the some of the commands listed here above.

September. The year was also marked by a visit to Station 111 by the Royal Family, the King and Queen of England and their daughter, Princess Elizabeth, the future Queen. The occasion was the christening of a new replacement 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group B-17G, the "Rose of York" that was named in honor of young Princess Elizabeth.

The 306<sup>th</sup> lost only eight aircraft to combat action during the first four months of 1945 (the last four months of the war). The last airplane lost in combat was on 10 April when "Flak Shack," piloted by 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Allen L. Babin was brought down by German flak batteries on a mission to Oranienburg. The tail gunner in the plane, Sgt Theodore J. Rickerl was the only fatality from the crew, the last 306<sup>th</sup> crewman to die in combat. The final 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group combat mission was flown to Falkenberg, Germany on 19 April 1945 with only one aircraft being damaged by flak which also resulted in the last 306<sup>th</sup> crewman being wounded in combat.

With the end of the war in Europe on 8 May 1945, the 306<sup>th</sup> BG was selected to remain as part of the occupation forces and would be assigned to Project Casey Jones, an ambitious endeavor to map the continent through extensive aerial photography. The "Mighty Eighth" Air Force was re-established in Okinawa on 16 July 1945. During this transitional period the 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group was reassigned to the 9<sup>th</sup> AAF, remaining in England and at Station 111 at Thurleigh. Most of the Project Casey Jones missions were now being flown from airfields in Germany and France and other continental locations with aircraft servicing still performed, but with less frequency, at Thurleigh. On 15 December 1945, the last of the 306<sup>th</sup> ground echelon personnel vacated Station 111 and joined the rest of the Group in continental Europe. The 306<sup>th</sup> completed its participation in "Casey Jones"

in June of 1946 and was finally inactivated 25 December 1946 while stationed at Giebelstadt, Germany. In just over thirty months of flying combat missions, the 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group established some notable milestones:

- Total combat missions - 341
- Total combat sorties - 9614
- Total tonnage of bombs delivered - 22,574.6 tons
- Longest serving operational bombardment group in the 8<sup>th</sup> AAF
- Stationed in England at one station (Thurleigh) longer than any other unit
- First man to complete 25 missions - T/Sgt Michael Roskovitch, 5 April 1943
- First bombardment group to reach 300 missions
- Awarded two Distinguished Unit Commendations

During the period of the war the 306<sup>th</sup> BG, termed a "pioneering" group by noted 8<sup>th</sup> AAF historian Roger A. Freeman, lost 177 aircraft in combat with almost 800 men, both aircrew and ground personnel, giving their lives while serving with the 306<sup>th</sup>. 885 men were taken prisoners of war with another 44 evading capture. An additional 69 men were interned in Sweden and Switzerland. Eleven men who began their combat tours with the 306<sup>th</sup> would go on to command other heavy bombardment groups in the ETO. One of the originally assigned officers, Immanuel Klette, would fly 28 missions as a pilot and copilot with the 306<sup>th</sup> before being severely injured in a crash. After recovering, he would go on to assignment as the Commanding Officer of the 324<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron of the 91<sup>st</sup> BG, and complete a record and legendary total of 91 combat missions.





PORTERSVILLE, O. — Gailard Thomas Ketcham, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry H. Ketcham, Portersville, will leave on June 1, for training in the Army Aviation Cadets. He will report to Fort Thomas, Ky., and from there will go to Amarillo, Texas. Gailard is a member of this year's graduating class of McLuney high school.



**DECEMBER 1946**

Sun.	1	8	15	22	29
Mon.	2	9	16	23	30
Tues.	3	10	17	24	31
Wed.	4	11	18	25	
Thur.	5	12	19	26	
Fri.	6	13	20	27	
Sat.	7	14	21	28	

Sunrise and Sunset.  
Summer Time.  
Dec. 1. Sun rises 8h. 42m. Sun sets 4h. 55m.  
Dec. 15. Sun rises 8h. 58m. Sun sets 4h. 51m.

Moons.  
First Q. Dec. 1. Last Q. Dec. 15.  
Full M. Dec. 8. New M. Dec. 23.  
First Q. Dec. 31.

**FOREIGN AND COLONIAL POSTAL RATES.**—Postcards: In all cases 2d. Foreign Countries. Letters: 3d. first oz., every succeeding oz. 1½d.; United States, 2½d. first oz.; every succeeding oz. 1d.—Commercial Papers: 1d. for every 2½oz.; minimum charge 2½d. *Limit of Size:* 3 ft. in length, breadth and depth combined, the greatest dimension not to exceed 2 ft. *Limit of Weight:* 4 lbs. **BRITISH EMPIRE:** Letters, 2½d. first oz., each additional oz., 1d.

**AIR MAIL AND AIRGRAPH LETTERS.**—Inquiry should be made at a Post Office.

**H.M. FORCES.**—If serving at home or in home waters, ordinary inland postal rates. If serving abroad: Letters, 1½d. first oz., 1d. each succeeding oz.; Postcards, 1d.; Parcels, 3 lb. 9d., 7 lb. 1s. 6d., 11 lb. 2s., 22 lb. 3s. 6d. News-papers, 1d. per 2 oz.

**GENERAL HOLIDAYS.**—Good Friday, April 19th. Easter Monday, April 22nd. Whit Monday, June 10th. Monday, August 6th. Christmas Day, December 25th. Boxing Day, December 26th.



**S/SGT GAILARD T. KETCHAM**  
**1944---1946**  
**306th BOMB GROUP---369th SQUADRON**  
**ENGLAND--FRANCE---GERMANY---N.AFRICA**



7743

MAJ. MCKINNEY  
(THE BULL)  
LT. FORSYTHE

COMMANDING OFFICER  
OF  
FIGHTIN BITIN

3



SITE 7 THROUGH



SITE 7



MP GATE SITE 7 36974







MY GAL SAL  
W. DALPANS  
8013





JAN  
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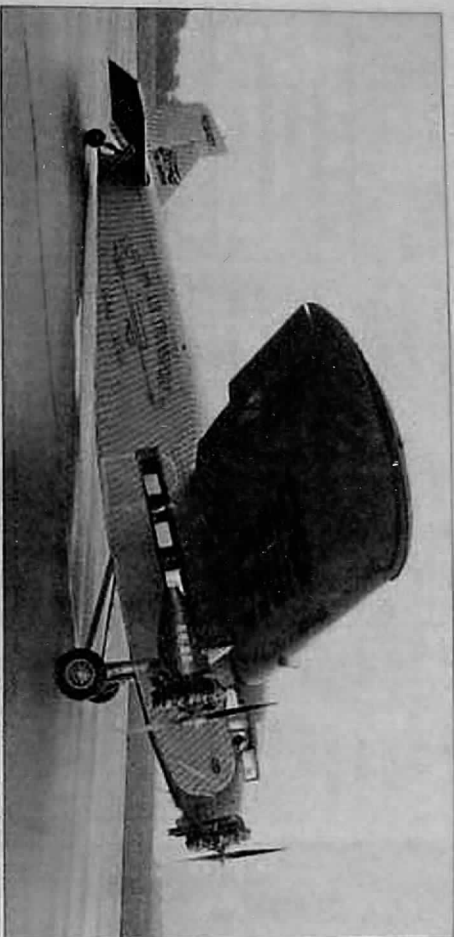






# The 1929 Ford Tri-Motor Flies In Urbana

## Grimes Field Airport played host to the vintage plane on June 20-22



Staff Photo By Casey Matteson

By CASEY MATTESON  
Staff Writer

URBANA-- Have you ever wondered what it was like to see Air Force One? Would you like to take a flight in the most important airplane in the country? Did you ever want to know what happens to an airplane after it serves as Air Force One. Well, the airplane that was guest to Urbana on June 20-22, 2011, the Ford Tri-Motor has quite a story to share.

After being manufactured in 1929, the airplane was moved to Cuba and became the inaugural airplane for Cubana Airlines

in 1930. In 1946, this vessel became Air Force One for the Dominican Republic. Oddly enough, in 1949 the Tri-Motor was imported back to the USA and converted into, of all things, a crop duster. That is correct. An airlines first airplane, which served as a country's Air Force One, is relegated to being a crop duster and smoke jumper for forest fires in the United States.

By 1964, the Tri-Motor was starting in a Jerry Lewis movie and touring the country offering rides to the public. In 1973, the airplane was totaled and broken into three pieces

by a storm. The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) purchased it and performed a 12-year restoration project to get it running again.

The 50 feet long, twelve feet-eight inches tall, nine passenger aluminum aircraft landed in front of a small crowd at 3:28 pm Eastern time at Grimes Field Airport.

Twelve-year Tri-Motor pilot, Gerry Flaughter, landed the aircraft in Urbana which had been grounded by the weather in Columbus, IN. Flaughter said that the gas tank holds 229 gallons of fuel, and costs \$6.00 a gallon for air-

trained pilots, but they are all volunteers," said Betty Darst, Co-Tour Coordinator with Rick Rademacher of EAA Chapter 48. "For training, they all get a pre-flight just like a real flight. It takes several months [to get them ready]."

Darst mentioned that this particular Tri-Motor was number 146 of a total of 199 manufactured. It reaches a maximum speed of 114 mph. This exhibit was a way to show the public what commercial flight was like over 80 years ago. Visitors were able to pay \$60 to take 15-minute flights. EAA members were discounted

to \$50. The weather was not cooperative early on Monday, causing a few one fill-up. Other pilots to fly in Urbana the three days were professional pilots from Cody and Welch and Colin Soucy of Delta Airlines. "All of these pilots are specially

trained pilots, but they are all volunteers," said Betty Darst, Co-Tour Coordinator with Rick Rademacher of EAA Chapter 48. "For training, they all get a pre-flight just like a real flight. It takes several months [to get them ready]."

to \$50. The weather was not cooperative early on Monday, causing a few delays, including the Tri-Motor's scheduled arrival. EAA's Ford Tri-Motor 2011 Midwest Tour Schedule has four more stops remaining: Akron on June 27, dusky from Ju



Clockwise from top left: Gerry Flaughter, pilot of the Ford Tri-Motor

# FLY ON THE Ford

EXPERIENCE THE GOLDEN AGE OF AVIATION

TICKET ISSUED TO:

DATE: 10-4-15

LOCATION: Urbana, OH

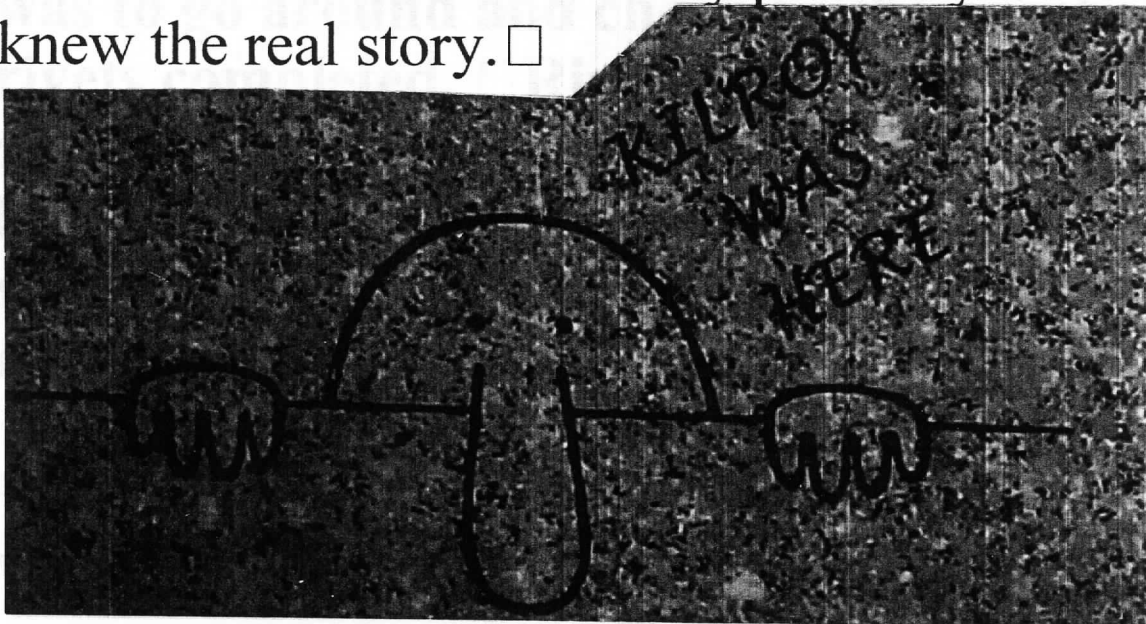
Subj: Remember "Kilroy was here?"  
Date: 4/6/2009 10:42:23 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time  
From: shilar@strato.net  
To: REDKET3069@aol.com

# Good Read !

- 
- 
- 
- 

**Are you old enough to remember Kilroy as in "KILROY WAS HERE"?**

Those who remember Kilroy probably never knew the real story.



In 1946 the American Transit

Association, through its radio program, "Speak to America," sponsored a nationwide contest to find **the REAL Kilroy, offering a prize of a real trolley car to the person who** could prove himself to be the genuine article.

**Almost 40 men stepped forward to make that claim, but only James Kilroy from Halifax, Massachusetts had evidence of his identity.**

**Kilroy was a 46-year old shipyard worker during the war. He worked as a checker at the Fore River Shipyard in Quincy. His job was to go around and check on the number of rivets completed. Riveters were on piecework and got paid by the rivet. Kilroy would count a block of rivets and put a check mark in semi-waxed lumber chalk, so the rivets wouldn't be counted twice.**

□

**When Kilroy went off duty, the riveters would erase the mark. Later on, an off-shift**

inspector would come through and count the rivets a second time, resulting in double pay for the riveters. □

One day Kilroy's boss called him into his office. □ The foreman was upset □

about all the wages being paid to riveters, and asked him to investigate. □

It was then that he realized what had been going on. The tight spaces he had to crawl in to check the rivets didn't lend themselves to lugging around a paint can and brush, so Kilroy decided to stick with the waxy chalk.

□ He continued to put his checkmark on each job he inspected, but added **KILROY WAS HERE** in king-sized letters next to the check, and eventually added the sketch of the chap with the long nose peering over the fence and that became part of the Kilroy message.

□ Once he did that, the riveters stopped trying to wipe away his marks. □

□

Ordinarily the rivets and chalk marks would

have been covered up with paint. □ With war on, however, ships were leaving the Quincy Yard so fast that there wasn't time to paint them. □ As a result, Kilroy's inspection "trademark" was seen by thousands of servicemen who boarded the troopships the yard produced. □ His message apparently rang a bell with the servicemen, because they picked it up and spread it all over Europe □ and the South Pacific. □

□

□ Before the war's end, "Kilroy" had been here, there, and everywhere on the long haul to Berlin and Tokyo. □ To the unfortunate troops outbound in those ships, however, he was a complete mystery; all they knew for sure was that some jerk named Kilroy had "been there first." As a joke, U.S. □ servicemen began placing the graffiti wherever they landed, claiming it was already there when they arrived. □

□

**Kilroy became the U.S. ☐super-GI who had always "already been" wherever GIs went. ☐It became a challenge to place the logo in the most unlikely places imaginable (it is said to be atop Mt. ☐Everest, the Statue of Liberty, the underside of the Arch De Triumphe, and even scrawled in the dust on the moon.)☐**

**And as the war went on, the legend grew. ☐Underwater demolition teams routinely sneaked ashore on Japanese-held islands in the Pacific to map the terrain for the coming invasions by U.S. ☐troops (and thus, presumably, were the first GI's there). ☐On one occasion, however, they reported seeing enemy troops painting over the Kilroy logo!☐**

☐

**In 1945, an outhouse was built for the exclusive use of Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill at the Potsdam conference. ☐The first person inside was Stalin, who emerged and asked his aide (in Russian), "Who is Kilroy?"☐**

**To help prove his authenticity in 1946, James**



Subj: **Fwd: FW: Coins on a fallen comrade's grave. Assumed to be true**  
Date: 4/9/2014 4:53:41 P.M. Eastern Standard Time  
From: [PaulTatman@aol.com](mailto:PaulTatman@aol.com)  
To: [PaulTatman@aol.com](mailto:PaulTatman@aol.com)

I didn't know this.. Did you? Have you ever been in a cemetery and saw coins laying on a tombstone? There is actually a reason behind it. John Anderson, Riverside

## COINS LEFT ON TOMBSTONES

While visiting some cemeteries you may notice that headstones marking certain graves have coins on them, left by previous visitors to the grave.

These coins have distinct meanings when left on the headstones of those who gave their life while serving in America's military, and these meanings vary depending on the denomination of coin.

A coin left on a headstone or at the grave site is meant as a message to the deceased soldier's family that someone else has visited the grave to pay respect. Leaving a penny at the grave means simply that you visited.

A nickel indicates that you and the deceased trained at boot camp together, while a dime means you served with him in some capacity. By leaving a quarter at the grave, you are telling the family that you were with the soldier when he was killed.

According to tradition, the money left at graves in national cemeteries and state veterans cemeteries is eventually collected, and the funds are

put  
toward maintaining the cemetery or paying burial costs for indigent  
veterans.

In the US, this practice became common during the Vietnam war, due  
to the  
political divide in the country over the war; leaving a coin was  
seen as a  
more practical way to communicate that you had visited the grave  
than  
contacting the soldier's family, which could devolve into an  
uncomfortable  
argument over  
politics relating to the war.

Some Vietnam veterans would leave coins as a "down payment" to buy  
their  
fallen comrades a beer or play a hand of cards when they would  
finally be  
reunited.

The tradition of leaving coins on the headstones of military men and  
women  
can be traced to as far back as the Roman Empire.

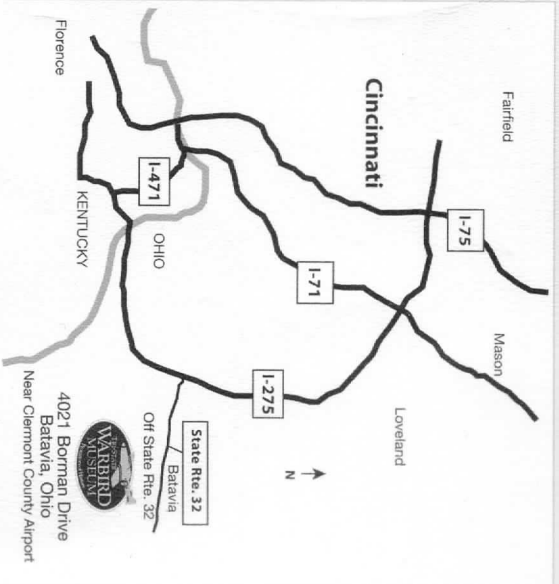
## Directions to the Tri-State Warbird Museum

The Tri-State Warbird Museum is conveniently located on the eastern side of Cincinnati, just minutes off of Interstate 275 and State Route 32, at the end of a set of streets named after heroic aviation and space pioneers Neil Armstrong, John Glenn and Frank Borman.

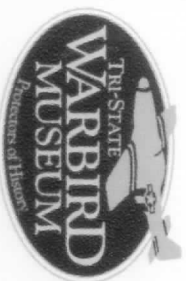
To reach the Museum, take Interstate 275 to State Route 32 East (Exit 63B).

- Follow Route 32 for 3.0 miles to the third traffic light.
- Turn right onto Old State Route 74, and follow Old SR 74 for 1.1 miles.
- Turn right onto Armstrong Blvd.
- Make the next left onto Glenn Parkway.
- Turn right onto Borman Drive.

The Museum is located at the end of Borman Drive, next to the Clermont County Airport.

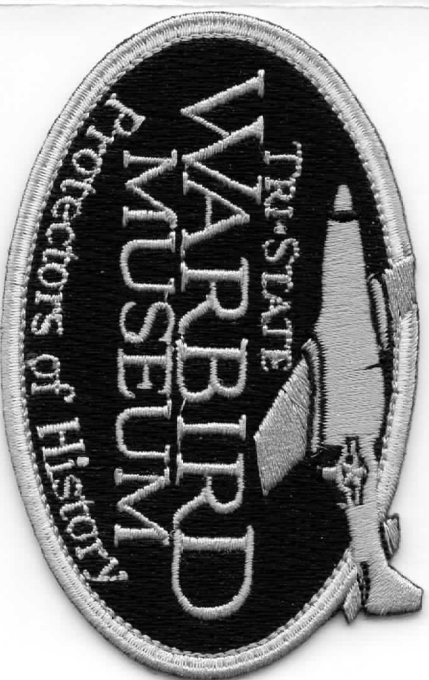


*We invite you to personally experience the Tri-State Warbird Museum.*



4021 Borman Drive  
Batavia, OH 45103  
Telephone: 513.735.4500  
Fax: 513.735.4333

Visit us online at [www.tri-statewarbirdmuseum.org](http://www.tri-statewarbirdmuseum.org)

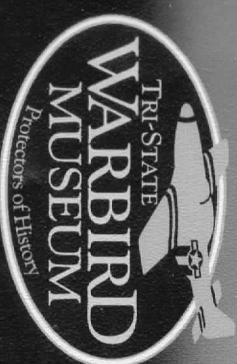


*Affiliated with Northern Kentucky University (NKU) and recognized by the National Air and Space Museum.*

*As a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, the Tri-State Warbird Museum is supported primarily through membership dues and the contributions of individuals and businesses that share in the desire to honor and preserve our country's rich aviation legacy*

Cover photo courtesy of John Fleck. Avenger photo courtesy of James Church/Warbird Digest. Photography reproduction restricted without permission.  
©2010 Tri-State Warbird Museum

## Tri-State Warbird Museum



*A Historic Aviation Museum  
Dedicated to remembering those  
who fought for our freedom,  
and honoring those who made  
the ultimate sacrifice*

## About the Museum

At the Museum you will see exceptionally restored and fully operational historic aircraft. Each aircraft is a time capsule – a testament to the engineering, manufacturing and maintenance necessary to produce these machines that carried brave and skilled airmen into battle. These historic aircraft are few in number and at growing risk of extinction. Through the efforts of the Tri-State Warbird Museum, future generations will continue to appreciate the role of aviation in defending freedom.

## The Tri-State Warbird Museum

At the Museum, visitors will learn about aviation history through forums, classroom and lecture facilities, exhibits and – most importantly – by experiencing vintage aircraft “brought to life” through fully restored and operational aircraft.



## Aircraft Currently on Display (July 2009)

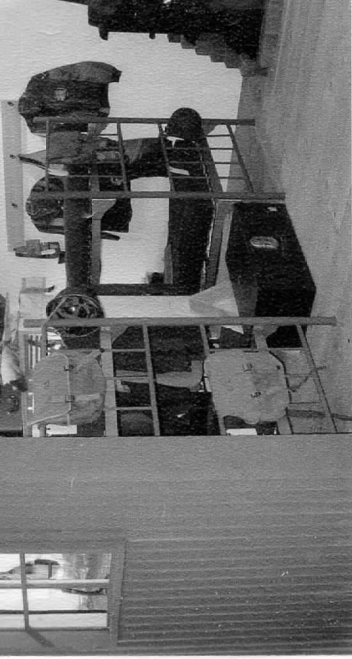
- North American Aviation P-51D Mustang
- Eastern Aircraft (Grumman) TBM-3 Avenger
- Chance-Vought (Goodyear) FG-1D Corsair
- North American Aviation AT-6D Texan
- North American Aviation TB-25J Mitchell
- Link ANT-18 Instrument Flight Trainer
- Boeing PT-17 Stearman
- Curtiss P-40M
- Focke-Wulf Fw-190



Museum Hours:

Wednesday, 4:00-7:00pm

Saturday, 10:00am-3:00pm



## Exhibits on Display

Among the exhibits is a replica of typical World War II barracks used by members of the 353<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Group, Eighth Air Force, while based in Raydon, England.

The Museum collects, preserves and exhibits artifacts related to World War II aviation. Artifacts include personal gear, uniforms and other visual reminders of the historic events and personal sacrifice of the time.

## The Walk of Veterans

The brick “Walk of Veterans” salutes our honored veterans and provides a meaningful way to honor someone special: recognition of service in the military, personal memorial, anniversary, retirement, birthday, graduation. Purchase of bricks is discounted for members of the Tri-State Warbird Museum.



1 4 4



Jan 1942 Over Park 156a



IN THE YANKEY LADY



8/22/2014



8/22/2014

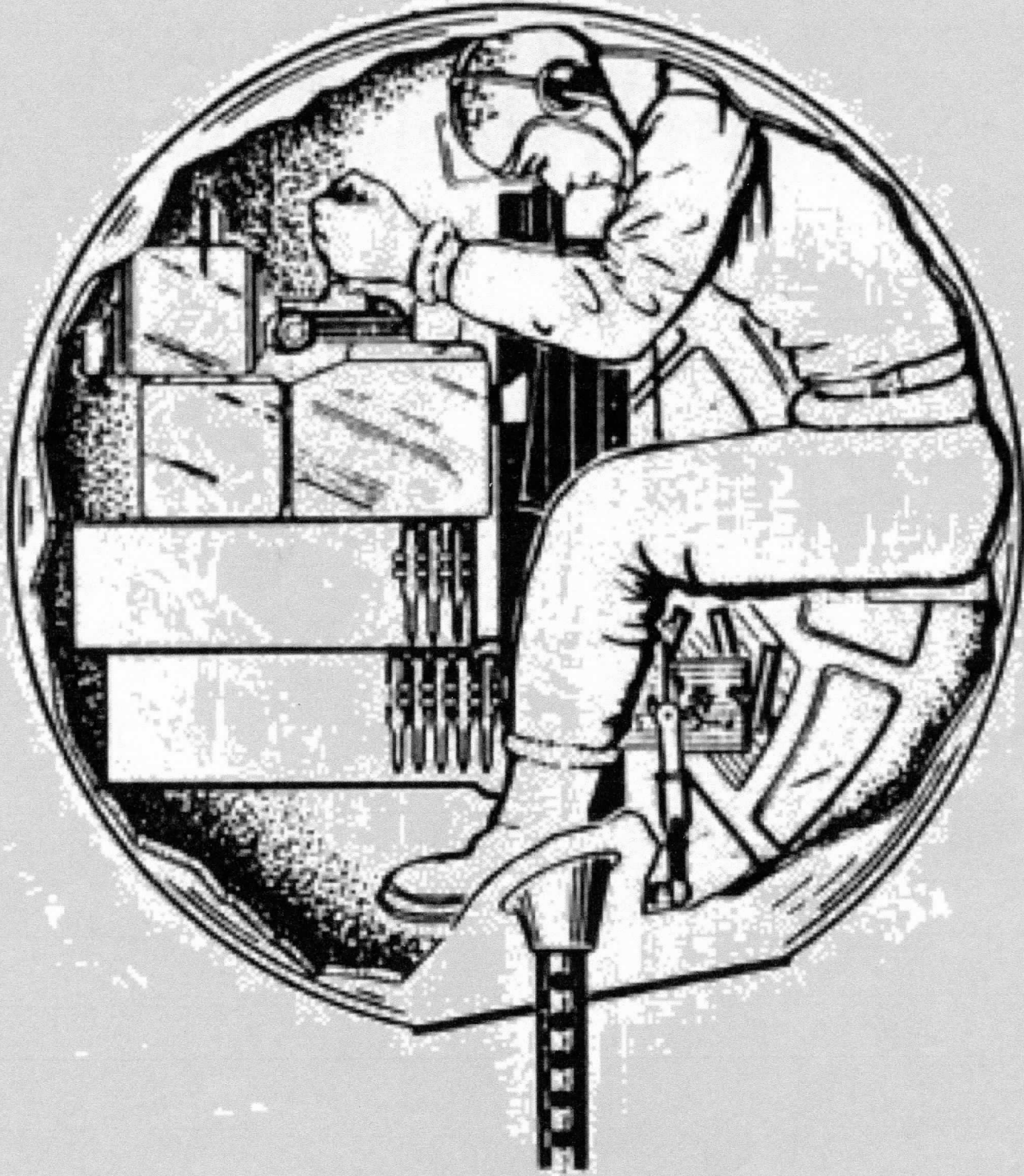














# MECHANIX ILLUSTRATED

A FAWCETT MAGAZINE

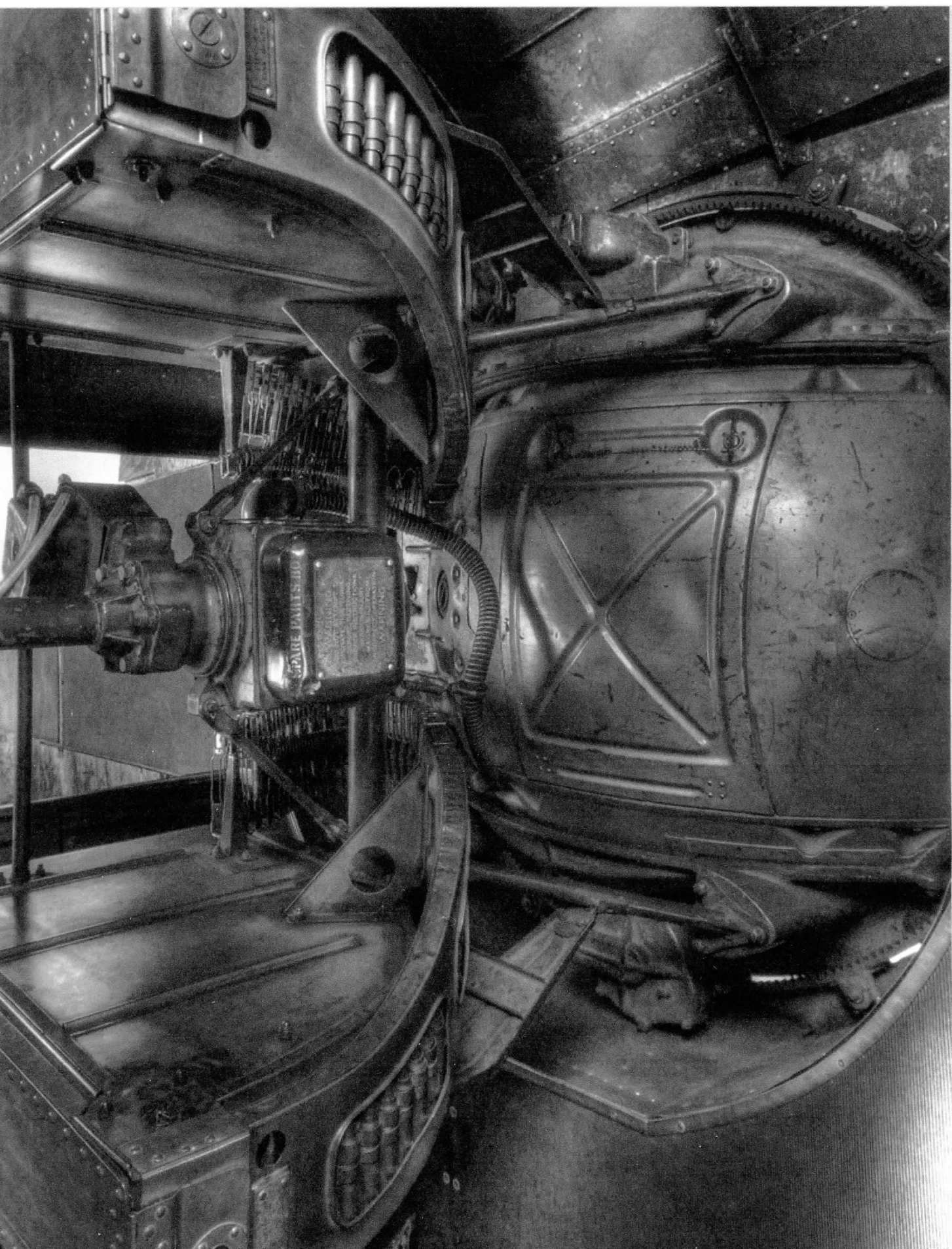
MAY  
15<sup>C</sup>

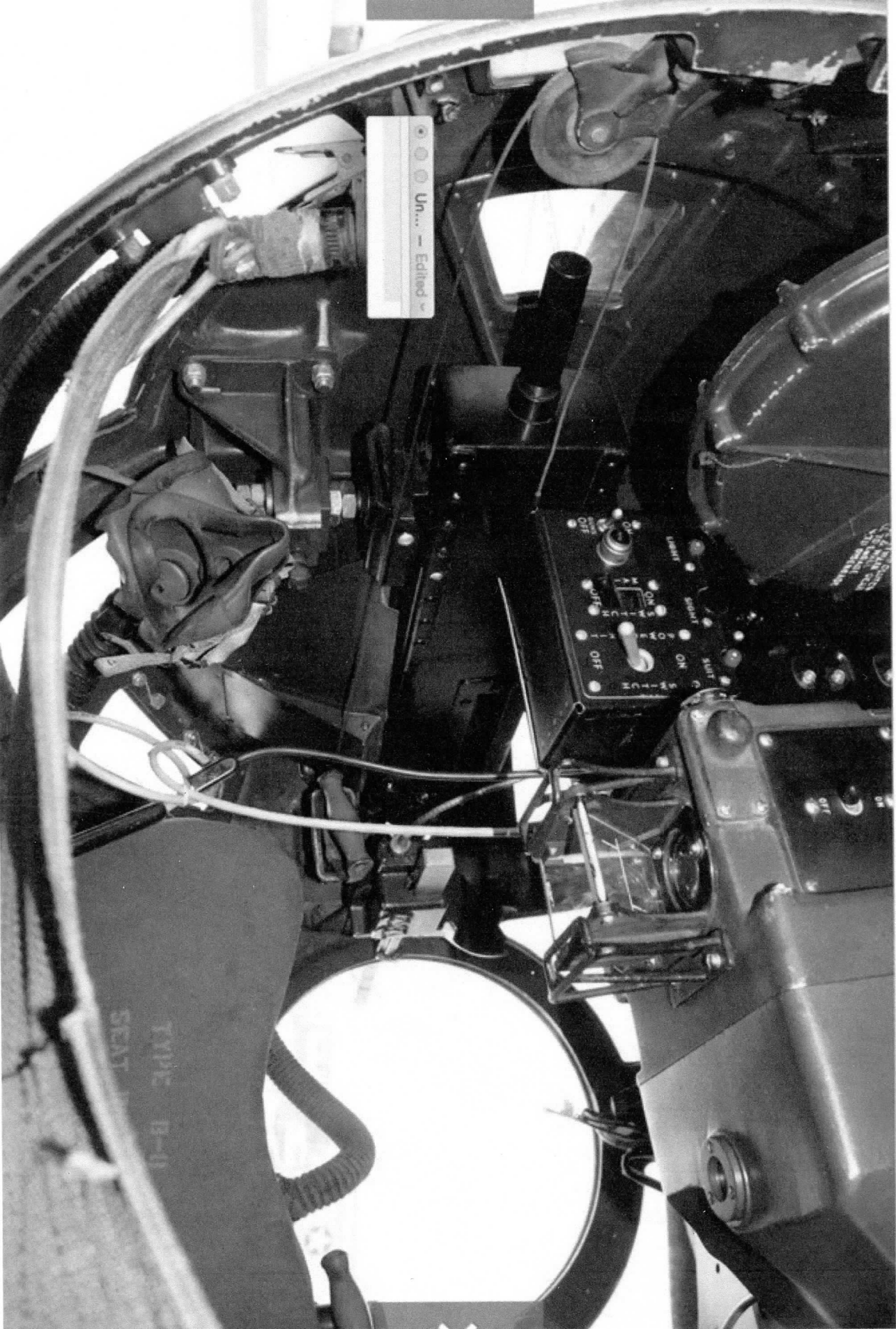
WHEELLOCK & BENSON

B-17 Ball Turret

## HOW HYPNOSIS CURES BATTLE SHOCK

IN FULL COLOR — THE FINE ART  
OF MODEL RAILROADING





Un... - Edited

TYPE B-4  
SEAT





"BABY MINE"



*Ed Boggs*  
*Years of Service*  
*1943-1945*

*Ball Turret Gunner B-17*  
*8th A.F. 388 Bomb Group*  
*560th Squadron 3rd Div*  
*35 Missions*  
*Knetishall England*



**Jean Moriarty**

---

**From:** Gerald Moriarty [gmoriarty1937@comcast.net]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 12, 2016 10:54 PM

**Subject:** A REAL Miracle - from WWII

**Attachments:** mime-attachment.jpg; mime-attachment.jpg; mime-attachment.jpg; mime-attachment.jpg; mime-attachment.jpg; mime-attachment.jpg; mime-attachment.jpg; mime-attachment.jpg

**GOD WAS WITH THEM!!!**

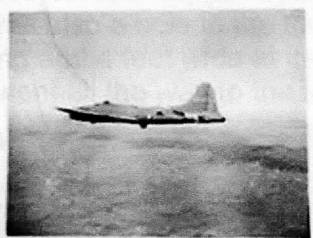
~\*~ A REAL Miracle - from WWII ~\*~

CENSOR

Should there be some law, rule, or regulation against sending the picture below to my wife, please seal the flap above and return → it is an unduplicatable shot and one I should hate to lose.

Thank

H. Nuessle  
1st Lt., A.P.



DAMAGE COURTESY OF  
Little Inhammunk  
A.I.P.  
X the Mark

"PHOTO BY  
"Bob" Cutforth

OLD "ALL-AMERICAN" SOMEWHERE OVER NORTH AFRICA  
FEBRUARY 1, 1943

THE CREW:

PILOT → Ken Bragg Jr.  
COPILOT → G. Boyd Jr.  
NAVIGATOR → Harry C. Nuessle  
BOMBARDIER → Ralph Burbridge  
ENGINEER → Joe C. James  
RADIO OPERATOR → Paul A. Galloway  
BALL TURRET GUNNER → Elton Conda  
WAIST GUNNER → Michael Zuk  
TAIL GUNNER → Sam T. Sarpolus  
GROUND CREW CHIEF → Hank Hyland

B-17 "All American" (414th Squadron, 97BG) Crew

Pilot- Ken Bragg Jr.  
Co-pilot- G. Boyd Jr.  
Navigator- Harry C. Nuessle  
Bombardier- Ralph Burbridge  
Engineer- Joe C. James  
Radio Operator- Paul A. Galloway  
Ball Turret Gunner- Elton Conda  
Waist Gunner- Michael Zuk  
Tail Gunner- Sam T. Sarpolus  
Ground Crew Chief- Hank Hyland

In 1943 a mid-air collision on February 1, 1943,  
Between a B-17 and a German fighter over the

Tunis dock area, Became the subject of one of the most famous photographs of WW II. An enemy fighter attacking a 97th Bomb Group formation went out of control, Probably with a wounded pilot, then continued its crashing descent into the rear of the fuselage of a Flying Fortress named "*All American*", Piloted by Lt. Kendrick R. Bragg, of the 414th Bomb Squadron.

When it struck, the fighter broke apart, but left some pieces in the B-17. The left horizontal stabilizer of the Fortress and left elevator were completely torn away.

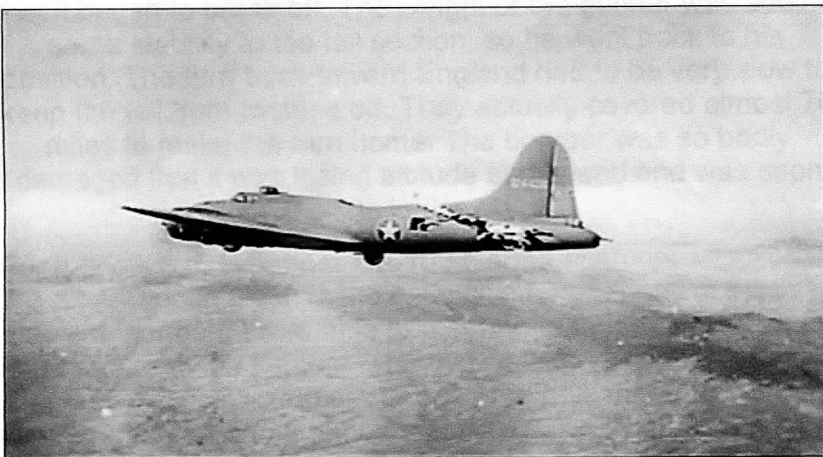
The two right engines were out and one on the left had a serious oil pump leak. The vertical fin and the rudder had been damaged,

The fuselage had been cut almost completely through  
Connected

only at two small parts of the frame,

And the radios, electrical and oxygen systems were damaged.

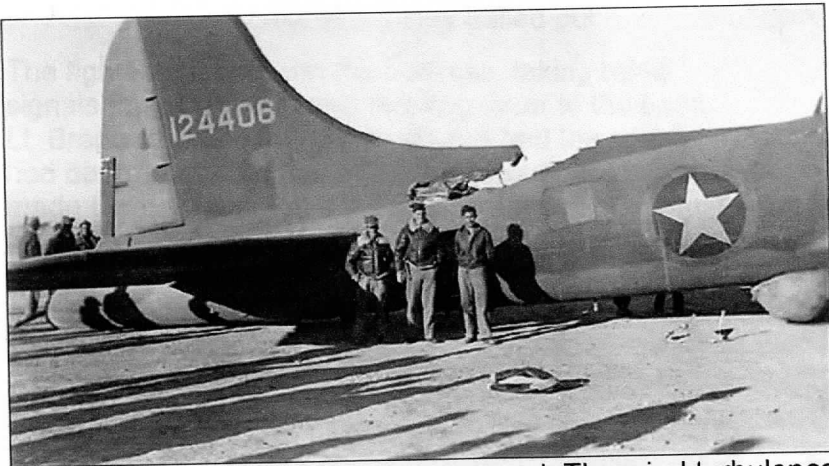
There was also a hole in the top that was over 16-feet long and 4 feet wide at its widest; The split in the fuselage went all the way to the top gunner's turret.



Although the tail actually bounced and swayed in the wind And twisted when the plane turned and all the control cables were severed, except one single elevator cable still worked, and the aircraft miraculously still flew!

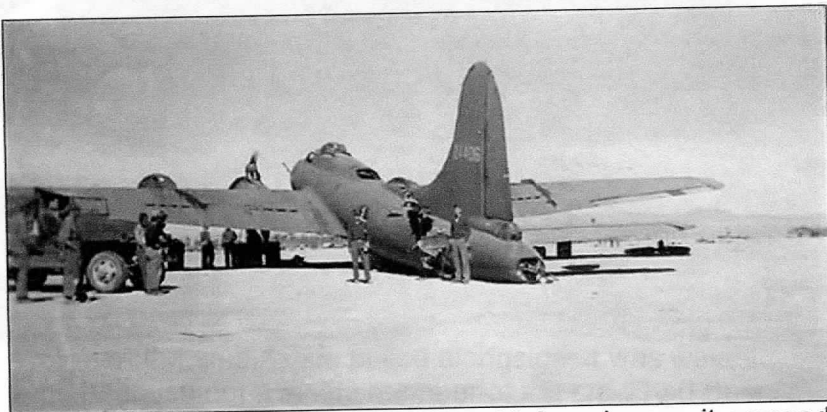
The tail gunner was trapped because there was no floor connecting the tail to the rest of the plane. The waist and tail gunners used parts of the German fighter and their own parachute harnesses In an attempt to keep the tail from ripping off and the two sides of the fuselage from splitting apart.

While the crew was trying to keep the bomber from coming apart, The pilot continued on his bomb run and released his bombs over the target.



When the bomb bay doors were opened, The wind turbulence was so great that it blew one of the waist gunners into the broken tail section. It took several minutes and four crew members to pass him ropes from parachutes And haul him back into the forward part of the plane. When they tried to do the same for the tail gunner, The tail began flapping so hard that it began to break off. The weight of the gunner was adding some stability to the tail section, so he went back to his position. The turn back toward England had to be very slow to keep the tail from twisting off. They actually covered almost 70 miles to make the turn home. The bomber was so badly damaged that it was losing altitude and speed and was soon alone in the sky.

For a brief time, two more Me-109 German fighters attacked the All American. Despite the extensive damage, all of the machine gunners Were able to respond to these attacks and soon drove off the fighters. The two waist gunners stood up with their heads sticking out through the hole in the top of the fuselage To aim and fire their machine guns. The tail gunner had to shoot in short bursts because the recoil was actually causing the plane to turn.



Allied P-51 fighters intercepted the *All American* as it crossed over the Channel And took one of the pictures shown. They also radioed to the base describing that the appendage was waving like a fish tail And that the plane would not make it and to send out boats to rescue the

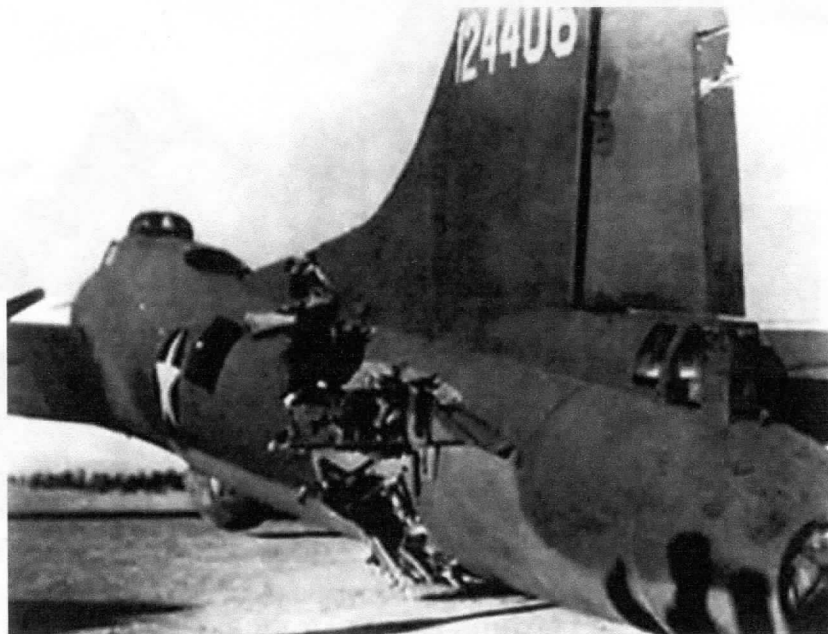
crew when they bailed out.

The fighters stayed with the Fortress, taking hand signals from Lt. Bragg and relaying them to the base. Lt. Bragg signaled that 5 parachutes and the spare had been "used" So five of the crew could not bail out. He made the decision that if they could not bail out safely, then he would stay with the plane to land it.

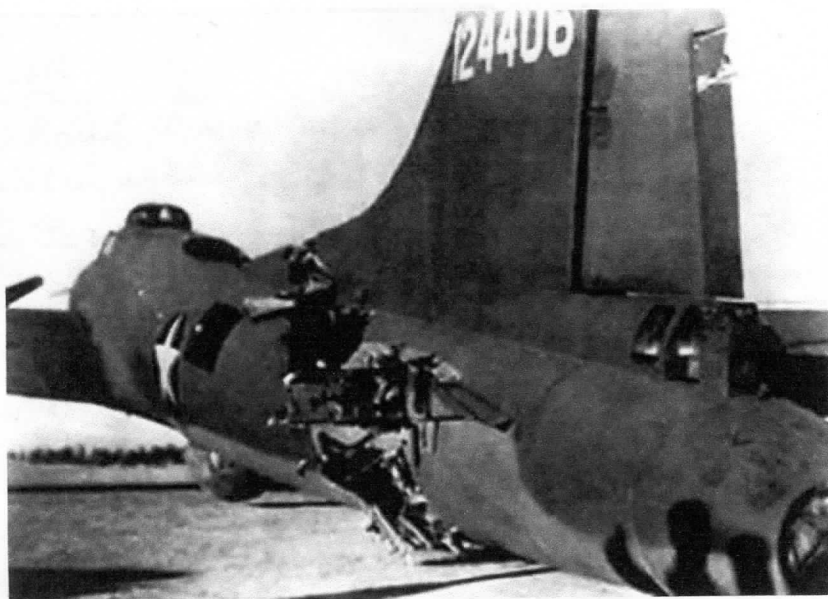


Two and a half hours after being hit, the aircraft made its final turn To line up with the runway while it was still over 40 miles away.

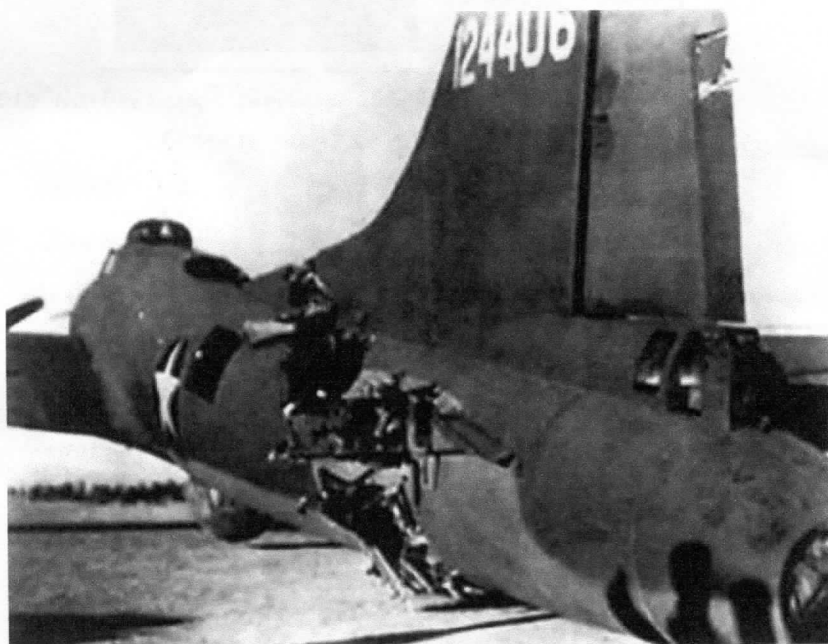
It descended into an emergency landing and a normal roll-out on its landing gear.



When the ambulance pulled alongside, it was waved off because not a single member of the crew had been injured. No one could believe that the aircraft could still fly in such a condition. The Fortress sat placidly until the crew all exited through the door in the fuselage and the tail gunner had climbed down a ladder, at which time the entire rear section of the aircraft collapsed.



This old bird had done its job and brought  
the entire crew home uninjured . . .



Please pass this along to someone else  
who will  
also appreciate this amazing story!

CENSOR

Should there be some law, rule, or regulation against sending the picture below to my wife, please seal the flaps above and return — it is an unduplicateatable shot and one I should hate to lose.

Thank  
Almeida  
1st Lt., A.P.



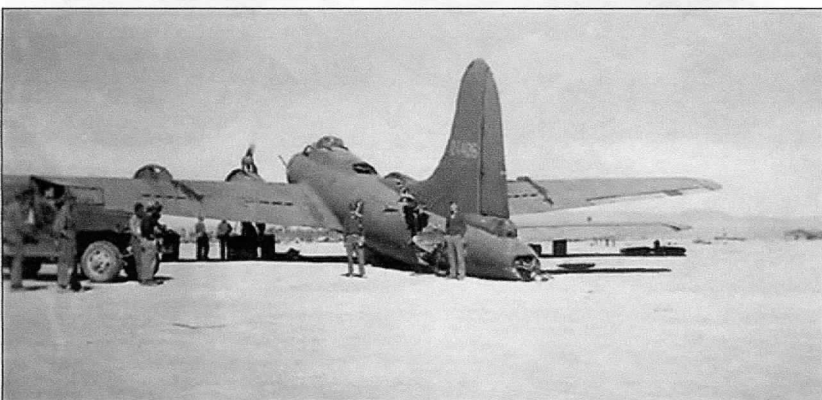
DAMAGE COURTESY OF  
Public Information  
X Mr. Mack  
R.I.P.

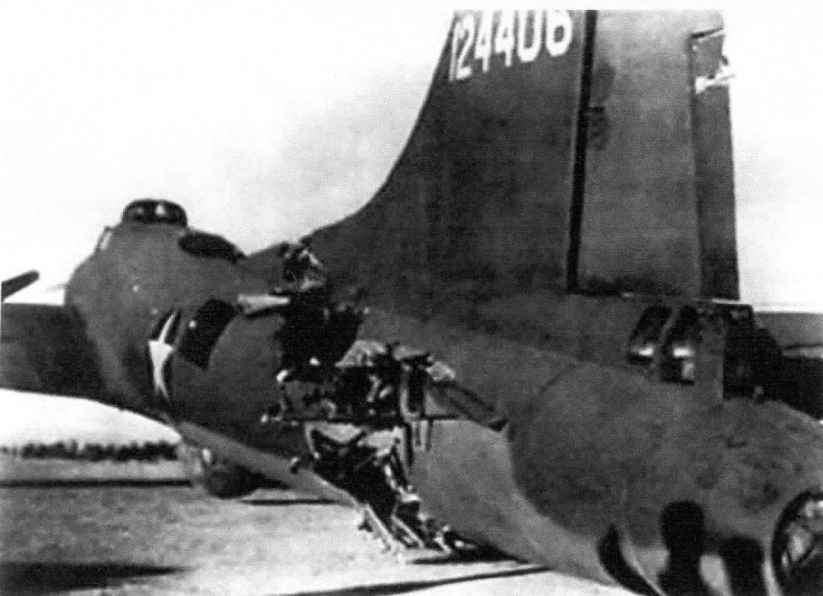
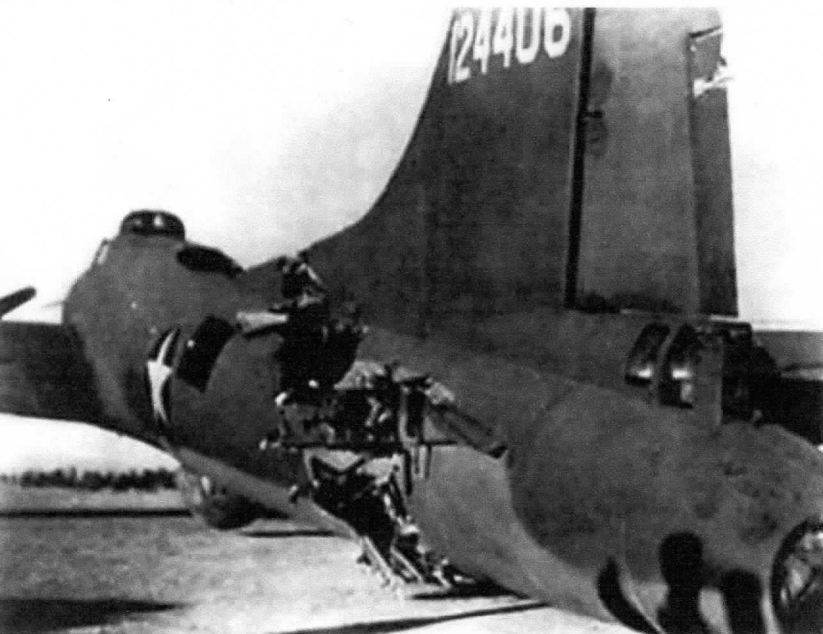
PICTO BY  
"Chief" Burbidge

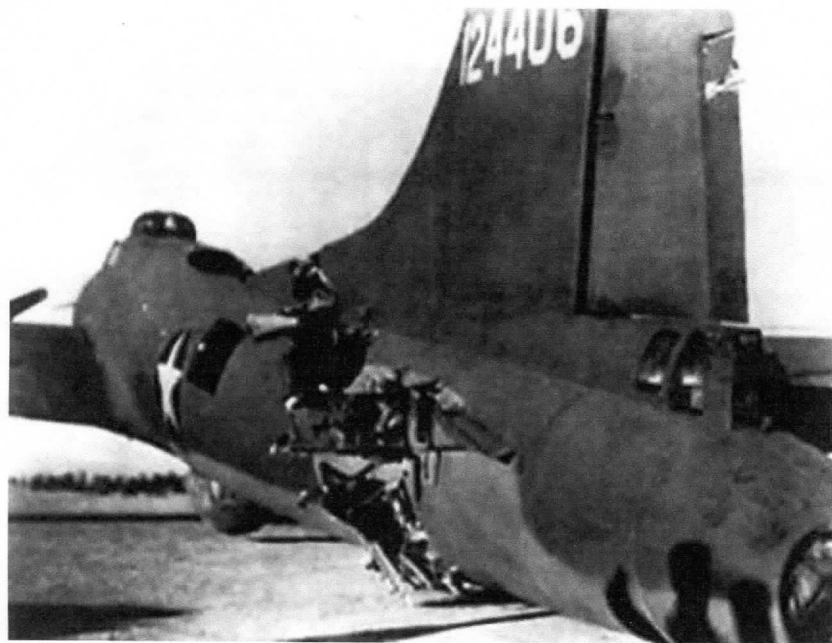
OLD "ALL-AMERICAN" SOMEWHERE OVER NORTH AMERICA  
FEBRUARY 1, 1943

THE CREW:

PILOT — Ken Brass Jr.  
COPILOT — A. [unclear] Jr.  
NAVIGATOR — Harry C. [unclear]  
BOMBARDIER — Ralph Burbidge  
ENGINEER — Joe C. James  
RADIO OPERATOR — Paul A. Dalloway  
BALL TURRET GUNNER — Elton Conda  
WAIST GUNNER — Michael Zuk  
TAIL GUNNER — Sam J. [unclear]  
GROUNDS CREW CHIEF — Hank [unclear]







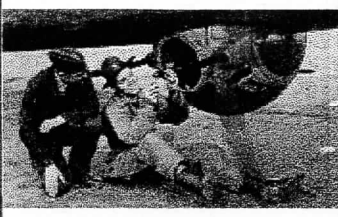
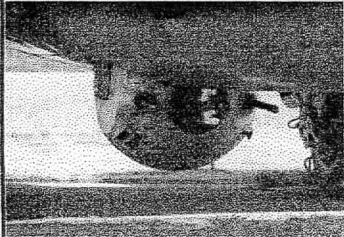
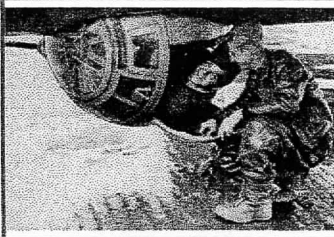


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First Name

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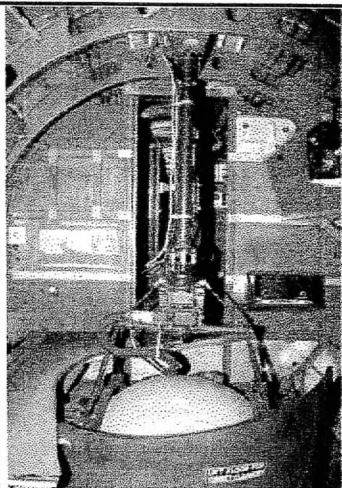
Search

Description	Overview	Gunner
	<i>Sperry Ball Turret</i>	
<p><b>Overview</b></p> <p>It hard to imagine a worse place to go to war in then the ball turret position of the B-17 Flying Fortress. Isolated from the rest of the ten man crew, the ball turret was extremely cramped quarters and required a man with a slight build. In almost every case, there was not enough room for the ball turret gunner to wear a parachute. Ironically, post war analysis of B-17 crew fatality records revealed that the ball turret gunner had the safest job on the plane (with the pilot having the most dangerous).</p> <p>When the RAF first evaluated the B-17 they considered it impossible for a man to remain in the ball turret for an entire mission but 8th AF ball turret gunners routinely spent 10-12 hours in the ball while over enemy territory.</p> <p>Towards the end of the war when fighter attacks became rare, there was a plan to remove all ball turrets from B-17's to save weight (1200 pounds including the gunner) but this was never initiated.</p>		
		
Source: USAAC	Source: Author	Source: USAAC

### Description of the Sperry Ball Turret

The Ball Turret was built by the Sperry Corporation (Model 645473E) and housed two 50 caliber machine guns. The associated ammunition (250 rounds per gun) fed down from boxes mounted on either side of the hoist. Located in the bottom of the fuselage just aft of the radio compartment, the ball turret was electrically powered. Unlike the ball turret installation on the B-24, the B-17 ball turret could not be retracted into the fuselage although it could be rotated manually using a hand crank to allow entry and exit without power. The whole unit was suspended on a gimbal with the central tube of the structure attached to the ceiling of the fuselage. For elevation the ball hinged on the frame on each side of the guns while the yoke of the gimbal pivoted giving the turret free movement in azimuth. On the backside was an entry hatch which also contained armor plate to protect the gunner from aircraft fire (backside only). Inside the ball was a small radio, a

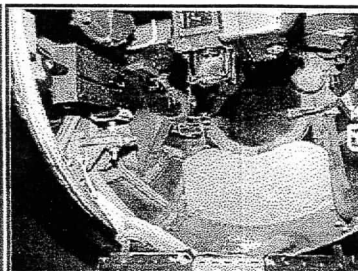
**K-4 type computing gunsight, a breathing oxygen regulator, interior lighting, a first aid kit and the gun turret controls. The temperature in the tail section when the side ports were open was quite frigid at high altitudes, especially in the wintertime. A plug-in point for a electrically-heated flight suit was also located in the ball.**



Special Credit to Aero Detail Books

**The gunner entered the ball turret via a door at its rear, which also served as an emergency exit in case of trouble. The gunner could enter the turret from inside the plane by having the turret rotated until the door opening faced the interior of the plane. However, since this required that the ball turret be positioned so that the guns were pointed downward, this meant that the turret could not be entered from inside the plane while it was on the ground. It was possible for the gunner to enter the turret from outside the plane while it was on the ground by having it rotated so that its door faced outside the plane. However, once he did this, he would**

**have to stay inside the turret during the takeoff. Since the turret was only 15 inches off the ground, it would take a bold soul to ride inside the belly turret during take off or landing, and most ball turret gunners chose to enter the turret while the plane was in the air. Normally, the guns were stowed facing rearward with the barrels horizontal for takeoffs and landings.**



Special Credit to Aero Detail Books

### **The Gunner**

**Once inside the ball, the gunner sat all curled up in the fetal position, swiveling the entire turret as he aimed the two guns. The turret had a full 360 degrees of motion horizontally and 90 degrees of motion vertically. The gunner could be in any attitude from laying on his back to standing on his feet. The gunner sat between the guns with his feet in stirrups positioned on either side of the 13" diameter window in front. An optical gunsight hung in front of his face, his knees up around his ears and his flight suit his only padding. A pedal under the gunner's left foot adjusted a reticle on the gunsight glass. When the target was framed therein, the gunner knew the range was correct. Two post handles, pointing rearward above the sight worked valves in the self contained electro-hydraulic system to control the movement of the ball. A firing button located at the end of each handle would fire both guns. Empty shell casings were ejected through a port just below the gun barrel.**

## Percent casualties by crew position

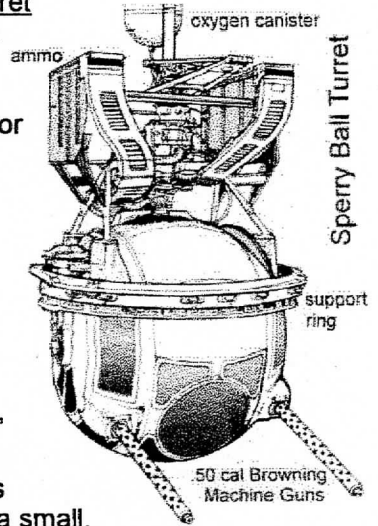
Bombardier	17.6
Tail Gunner	12.5
Navigator	12.2
Waist Gunner	10.45
Top Turret	8.5
Radio Operator	8.5
Pilot	7.4
Co-Pilot	6.6
Ball Turret	5.9

# The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner

The effectively gruesome The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner by Randall Jarrell conveys the personal horror of a single man involved in World War II combat. This short narration does not commit to the global horrors of war, or even conflict at a group level, but the isolated singular horror one man could experience.

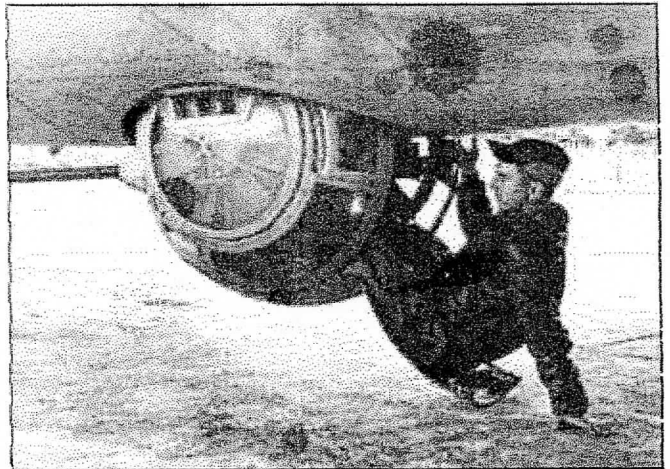
1. From my mother's sleep I fell into the State
2. And I hunched in its belly till my wet fur froze.
3. Six miles from the earth, loosed from its dream of life,
4. I woke to black flack and the nightmare fighters.
5. When I died they washed me out of the turret with a hose.

During World War II both the B-17 "Flying Fortress" and B-24 "Liberator" bombers employed ball turrets on the bottom of the aircraft to defend against enemy interceptors approaching from below the aircraft. In both cases it was a small, cramped ball composed mostly of Plexiglas.



The setting and situation of the poem is important because it takes place during a war, bringing to mind the horrors and bloodshed that are associated with it, and specifically that it takes place in the cramped confines of a ball turret.

The ball turret was an incredibly lonely place to be. Since it was mostly Plexiglas the gunner had a perfect view straight down approximately 31,000 feet "Six miles from the earth" (3). This placed the gunner in a very vulnerable position. Through battle damage, the turret often jammed in place and was not able to rotate back to a position where the gunner was able to get out, requiring him to remain



for the duration of the mission, including landing. If the landing gear was also damaged, the ball turret gunner had to be sacrificed as the plane landed on its belly. Due to technology advances in radar, United States bombers flew night missions exclusively while the British forces flew daylight raids. Being in the position the ball turret gunner was in would be worse at night. With little hope of spotting attacking night fighters before they began firing it would be a terrifying waiting for the end of the mission.

Jarrell's use of images constantly brings detailed imagery to mind without requiring supporting details. The reader can envision what it was like for the gunner in

William B Chmura, July 2003

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both his physical and mental situation. "And I hunched in its belly..."(2), referring to the turret located on the bottom of the aircraft and the fact that ball turret gunners were forced into a sort of fetal position inside the turret. "When I died they washed me out of the turret with a hose."(5) illustrates the incredibly gruesome remains the exploding shells of intercepting fighters would leave behind. So little remained intact that it required the use of a steam hose to remove what was left of the ball turret gunner. By using images in this manner more of the story is left to the readers imagination, making them feel more involved with.

Symbolism is used heavily by Jarrell. The first line "From my mother's sleep I fell into the State"(1) describes the transition the crew went through during a mission. In this first stages of a mission escort fighters would remain with the bombers providing protection. The crew could read, relax or even sleep. When the bombers reached the coast of France or Germany they would go into a combat ready mode for the next seven to ten hours. Soon the range of the escort fighters would be exhausted leaving them to defend themselves. This would involve the ball turret gunner descending into the ball turret for the duration of the mission. In this case, the "mother's sleep" is represented by the aircraft's crew in a non-combat mode, and "fell into the State" is a state of combat readiness.

"I woke to black flack and the nightmare fighters"(4) refers to the anti-aircraft rounds exploding around the aircraft and the night fighters tasked with destroying the bombers in the darkness. This line is somewhat contradictory when taken literally. Flack (from the German word Fliegerabwehrkanone) would simply explode at a predetermined altitude damaging everything in the area of the explosion. Having your own aircraft engaging the enemy at the same time you are firing flack is not a very good tactic. Also, assuming "nightmare" fighters represent night attack aircraft, the black smoke from the flack would seem grey at night due to the light from below illuminating the black clouds of smoke.

Some rhythm and meter are evident in the poem through lines 1, 2, and 4. Line 3 seems to be slightly off in this respect, but it adds a nice touch to the poem. In these lines the author has used a falling meter where the first segments of each line are stressed more than the latter. The first segment contains the primary thought, while the second segment supports or qualifies it.

Jarrell relates the poem from the gunner's point of view. By doing this, we are more in touch with the feelings that the gunner experiences. We are hearing directly from him that the sweat on his coat's fur liner freezes in the -50 degree ball turret and the isolation he must feel. This only becomes more effective on the last line, where the gunner relates his own demise.

## Works Cited

Jarrell, Randall. The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner. The Compact Bedford Introduction To Literature. Boston, Massachusetts: Bedford / St. Martins, 2003. 540

*Author unknown* The B-17 Flying Fortress. Dec 1998. Softwhale.com  
< <http://www.softwhale.com/history/b-17/ball-turret.html> > illustration

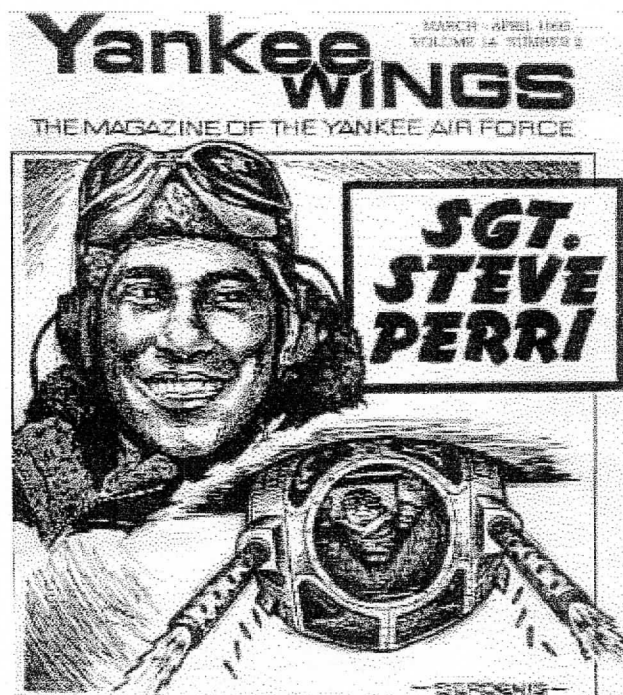


# Biography of Steve Perri

**Ball Turret Gunner, B17 Delta Reb #2, 323rd Bmb Sqdn, 91st Bomb Group, 8th AF, U.S.A.A.F.**

I flew 25 missions in the ball turret, on the B-17, call the Delta Rebel #2. My first mission was on the 7th of Nov. 1942.

The following was written by Jim Handford, a retired Navy Commander, he is the Editor of the YANKEE AIR FORCE Magazine.



## "IN THE BALL"

### Experiences of Ball Gunner Steve Perri

Ask any man who went to war in a Fortress which was the worst crew position on the aircraft and the chances are he will immediately reply "The ball turret". Indeed, this tight little glazed sphere buttoned to the underside of the fuselage needed a stout-hearted occupant, immune from claustrophobia and bolstered against the thought of being without a parachute if the aircraft was suddenly stricken. So cramped was the gunner's position that an early British assessment of the turret considered it quite untenable for long flights - there were many American airmen who would have agreed." So noted Eighth Air Force historian, Roger Freeman, in his book, B-17 Fortress at War. But Steve Perri is not just any man. Almost from the moment he was introduced to the Sperry ball turret he decided that was where he wanted to fly. "I loved it - I felt like I was flying my own airplane. It was unbelievable! I could move it straight down and 360 degrees around." Of course his small (5'6" 138 pound) frame was certainly a factor. (Translation: You had better like it, because you're one of the few gunners who can fit inside one.

Perri was born on January 19, 1922 in Asbury Park, NJ and moved to neighboring Long Branch when eleven months old. He attended elementary and high schools there and played on the school golf and tennis teams. After high school he attended the Casey Jones School of Aeronautics in Newark, NJ from which he was inducted into the Army. He started mechanics school just a week before Pearl Harbor. There was a need for flight engineers when he completed the course, so he was sent to gunnery school in Texas where he became acquainted with the ball turret. After completing the gunnery course, he went to Walla Walla, Washington for crew training with the 323rd Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) was activated a month later at MacDill Field, FL. In late June the squadron transferred to Walla Walla where combat crews were formed. Perri's crew was headed by 2Lt. George Birdsong. He recalled there were only three aircraft available for each of the four squadrons. "Those airplanes were in the air 24 hours a day," he said. On August 24th, the squadron divided into air and ground echelons. The latter (17 officers, 257 enlisted men left immediately by train for the East Coast where they boarded a ship for England. The air echelon (38 officers and 47 enlisted) proceeded to Boise, Idaho and turned in the training airplanes, then proceeded by rail to the B-17 Modification Center at Bangor, Maine where they drew brand-new B-17F models to take overseas. (In order to minimize disruption to the aircraft production lines, it was common to move completed ships to a modification center for installation of late design changes and field changes.) One field change was the installation of stowage racks for six .30 caliber carbines, ostensibly for the crew's use if brought down in enemy territory. While at Bangor the crew had the name Delta Rebel #2 painted on their ship. Unfortunately, the original Delta Rebel never left the United States. They had taken it out on a fuel consumption flight with an intermediate stop at Mitchell Field, Long Island. While they were absent from the aircraft, an unauthorized ground crewman tried to move it, lost control, and taxied it into three other airplanes wrecking them all before he stopped.

The air echelon ferried their aircraft to England via Gander, Newfoundland and Prestwick,

Scotland. The runway at Gander was so wide that the B-17s took off three abreast. It also had a significant hump in the middle. "Once you got over that, you picked up speed like crazy," recalls Perri. Shortly after take-off they encountered icing and Birdsong climbed above it. Their aircraft was followed by an echelon of the 303rd BG. Although most of the B-17s elected to fly beneath the weather. When they arrived at Prestwick, the 303rd BG Commander, a full Colonel was noticeably irritated when he realized that he had followed a "lowly second Lieutenant" into severe icing conditions while the majority of his group had taken a more prudent altitude.

The ground echelon arrived in Great Britain on September 11, 1942 and spent a month at Kimbolton Air Base before moving to their permanent station at Bassingbourne, where they flew three practice missions before the group's first combat mission on Nov. 7th. Although the 323rd was "stood down" that day, Perri and a navigator as replacement crewmen, earned the distinction of beating their squadron-mates into battle. Perri completed 25 missions as a ball turret gunner and 23 of those were made in the Delta Rebel #2 piloted by Lt. Birdsong. During his tour, he was officially credited with four enemy aircraft destroyed including two Me-109's an Me-110 and an FW-190. "I actually claimed seven but four of them were confirmed." For his contributions he received the Air Medal with three oak leaf clusters and a Distinguished Flying Cross. All airmen received the Air Medal upon completion of five combat missions. He was awarded the DFC for the third kill and clusters to the Air Medal for the others. The passage of time has dimmed some of those aerial encounters. Unit records show that he got his first kill, an FW-190 on December 30, 1942 on a mission to bomb the submarine pens at Lorient, France. His third and fourth kills were Me-109s on April 18th-Bremen and May 19th-Keil respectively.

He remembers with vivid clarity however, the mission to Hamm, Germany on March 4, 1943. Five times previously the fledgling Eight Air Force had set out to make a reasonably deep penetration into Northwest Germany, only to be frustrated by the weather. This day they took off into a gray dawn although the weather over the target for forecast to be fair. As the formation crossed the occupied coast however, there seemed to be little improvement and three groups turned back. Perri's own crew had already experienced an omen of what lay ahead when they lost an engine during take-off. The crew of Delta Rebel #2 jumped into a spare ship appropriately named Stormy Weather and rejoined their group. The fifteen B-17s of the 91st stayed above the "soup" and lost contact with the other groups. As they approached the target, the weather cleared and it became apparent that they were alone. Major Paul Fishburne, a 22 year old leading the group, elected to press on and subsequently made an excellent bomb run.

Approaching Hamm at 22,000 feet, Pilot Birdsong asked Perri whether he could see another B-17 group. What Perri saw was 60 enemy day fighters which had initially been confused by the diverging bomber tracks but were now determined to exact a price. They pressed their attacks from all directions. Perri's bullets sawed the canopy off an Me-110 forcing the pilot and gunner to bail out. It was his second confirmed kill. "He was coming up from hitting us in the rear and he started to go back down. He was really close to us, must have been 80 to 100 yards. I was tracking him and firing, trying to stay in front of him -

leading and leading and leading him - until the turret stopped at dead zero, so I just held my finger on the trigger and he went through the fire and I raked the back of him. I spun around and saw they were shot up. They were close enough that I could see the pilot and gunner fighting to get out - there were two of them in a 110. It was the first time I actually saw a German. Then I saw them bail out." "Then we really caught it." he said. "A Focke Wulf came after us - they have 20 millimeter cannons synchronized to fire through their props and we took a 20 mm shell right through the windshield hitting our co-pilot and our pilot had bits of glass in his right eye. Another shell knocked out our number three engine." When the bombardier hit the salvo switch, nothing happened. Battle damage had sheared the wires to the bomb bay, hence the bombs had not released. With two engines out, Birdsong dropped to the deck to avoid enemy fighters. A crew member crawled into the bomb bay and replaced the arming pins, but Birdsong still had to land the plane with only two engines, three wounded men and a load of bombs on board and no brakes. As our pilot set the wheels down on the runway, he hit the brakes and the pedals went right to the floor. The main brakes were out and the end of the runway was coming up fast. We went through the perimeter fencing, across the main road, over a ditch and between two telephone poles, through a farm full of Brussel sprouts, over a plow which ripped off the ball turret and then we crashed into a haystack and ....stopped.

Perri's experiences refute the British claim that the ball turret was "quite untenable for long missions" He estimated that his longest missions involved 6 ½ to 7 hours actually inside the turret. However, he had completed his tour before the really deep penetrations into Germany. For Perri the mission preparations began the day before take-off. Each gunner was assigned his own .50 caliber machine guns which were stored in the base armament show between missions. He cleaned and oiled them the day after each mission and covered the breech mechanism with an athletic sock. When alerted for a mission, he stopped by the armament shop and thoroughly removed the oil lest it freeze at altitude and cause the gun to jam. After briefing, the gunners drew their guns and were transported to their aircraft. From outside the turret, Perri removed a small cover on each side of the entrance door and inserted the guns into their rigid mounts. After pre-flighting the turret, he helped the pilot and flight engineer pre-flight the aircraft.

The turret was not manned for take-offs and landings. Perri entered and exited while the aircraft was over the English Channel. Before entering however, it was time to load the guns. While the turret was stowed in take-off position i.e.guns horizontal and facing rearward. The two covers were removable from inside the fuselage. Through the openings he fed belted ammunition into the turret boxes until full (approximately 400 rounds each). With a hand crank he depressed the turret straight down, which moved the entry door inside the fuselage. One of the waist gunners helped him get into and out of the turret. Inside the ball turret there was neither room for a parachute nor for the heavy fleece-lined flying suit that waist gunners wore. Perri wore coveralls, a light-weight flight jacket and English flying boots, depending primarily upon the electrically-heated undergarment to keep him warm in temperatures as low as - 30 degrees F. One hazard was burns in the groin, resulting from crimped wires in the electric suit. Once inside, he connected his throat mike, earphones and oxygen hose and fastened his safety belt. He was curled up with his back resting against the

armored door, his legs bent and his feet resting on each side of the 13-inch diameter armored glass panel which was his main window on the world. The two 50s were just inches away from his head with the ammo boxes above them. His face was about 30 inches from the armored glass panel and suspended in between was the optical display glass for the computing gun sight. With his left foot he could adjust the lighted reticles projected onto this glass. When a target was framed by them, the range was correct. Two post handles projected rearward above the sight and flexing then moved the turret in azimuth and elevation. The firing buttons for the guns were in the ends of these handles, hence, to move the turret and fire the guns, Perri's arms were bent with his hands above his head. As cramped as it sounds, it was actually quite comfortable "if I was firing straight out, it was like an easy chair". Perri also refuted the common belief that the ball was the most dangerous crew position. Although he wore his parachute harness, the chest pack itself was stowed in the fuselage by the radio room bulkhead. A waist gunner was assigned to latch and unlatch the turret door and help him in and out. We were able to get out in 30 seconds. As far as danger, the pilots and the crewmen in the nose had it worse because the Luftwaffes preferred to attack from ahead (12 o'clock high).

The B-17F had less defensive machine guns forward and the fighters had a better chance of hitting the pilots and/or the bombardier thus breaking up the attack. The "REEL" Air Gunner One famous person who need not have exposed himself to the hazards of aerial combat and did so anyway, was movie actor, Clark Gable. In January 1942, his wife, actress Carol Lombard, was killed in an airline crash. Gable grieved so much that he couldn't resume acting, and joined the Air Force. There are conflicting accounts, however, about his military service. Whether it was his idea to enlist or General Arnold's is unclear, but the 41 year old actor, did not go in with the rank of captain, as an MGM press agent suggested. Private Gable's first assignment was to Officers' Candidate School, graduating in 1943 as a second lieutenant. It was no coincidence that an MGM cameraman, Andrew McIntyre, took OCS training with him. On completion, he reported to General Arnold for a special assignment- to make movies of AAF activities for public relations purposes, beginning with one about aerial gunners. Gable and McIntyre dutifully entered gunnery training at Tyndall Field, Florida, where the former made first lieutenant. In April 1943 Gable, now a captain just six months out of OCS, and McIntyre went overseas with the 351st BG.

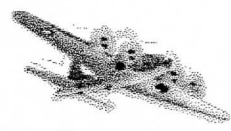
While in England, he is credited with having flown five combat missions, including at least one in Delta Rebel #2. By the fall of 1943 Gable's crew had exposed 50,000 feet of film and the team returned home. From the footage, he produced a 63 minute feature entitled "Combat America" but it was released at the same time as William Wyler's "Memphis Belle", which far overshadowed the former. Subsequently, however, at least five films used the combat footage shot by the Gable team. Perri remembers him as "a great friend of the enlisted men as well as a great all-around guy.

----- Steve Perri

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## The Memphis Belle Crew: Ball Turret Gunner

Deceased 1979 Cecil Scott Ball Turret Gunner From Altoona, PA. "From down there I could see everything." He fired at a great many German fighters and achieved one "Damaged" credit. Retired from Ford Motor Company after 30 years. Before going into the Army January 12, 1942, Sergeant Scott was a pressman for a rubber company at Rahway, N. J. He is 27, oldest member of the crew, wants to be a gunnery officer. HIS STORY The ball turret is the best position on the airplane. You see a lot of action in that position, you know what's going on, and you are always busy. If the plane catches on fire you know it first because you can see all four engines, and you can get out as quickly as anybody else. It isn't too uncomfortable. Of course, a big man shouldn't have the ball turret. I'm small, and I get along all right. I was in it seven hours one time, and didn't get very tired. You should get as much practice in the ball turret as possible. Practice using the sight, operating the turret, and getting in and out. The Germans have some tricks that you'll soon know if you are alert. When they attack and come under the ball turret, they turn sideways or clear upside down. They go into a slow roll and they are awfully hard to hit. Sometimes they!! shoot out smoke to make you think they are hit. I have seen ME 109s come out of the clouds and hang on the prop under our ship, probably to try to hit our bombs. Before the attack, you are usually scared, but when the planes start coming up and attacking you are all right. I have known fighters to follow us for 15 minutes before attacking. They seem to be looking us over while they circle around, trying to decide where to attack. When you see them start to peel off, you'd better start shooting. If you cant get a good shot, you might be able to figure out a way to change the position enough to make it possible. For instance, if you get a plane at the right wing where you can't hit it, you can ask the pilot to lift the wing. On the Rommily - Sur - Seine raid, about 300 fighters attacked us in relays. The fight lasted a couple of hours, the

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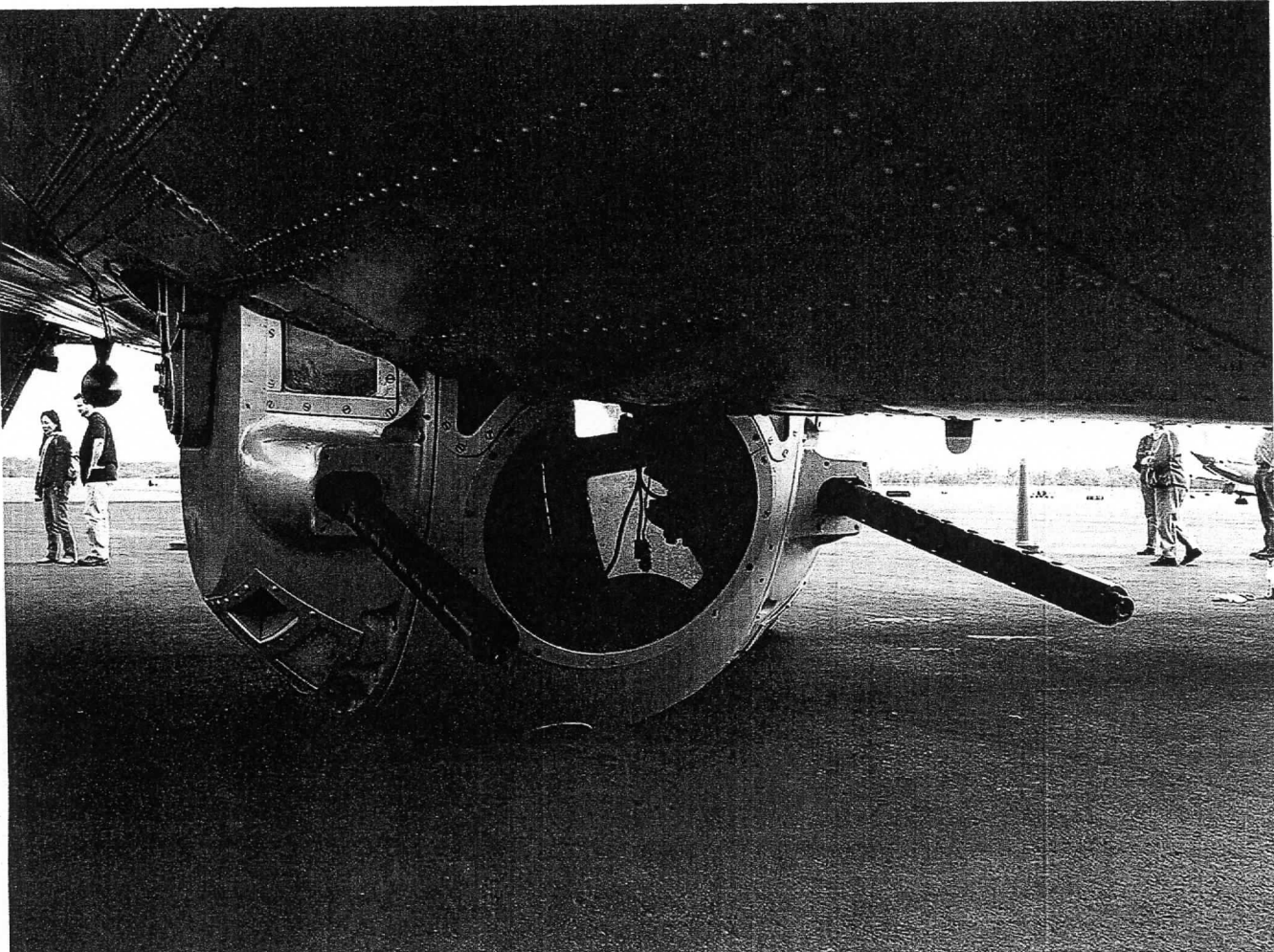
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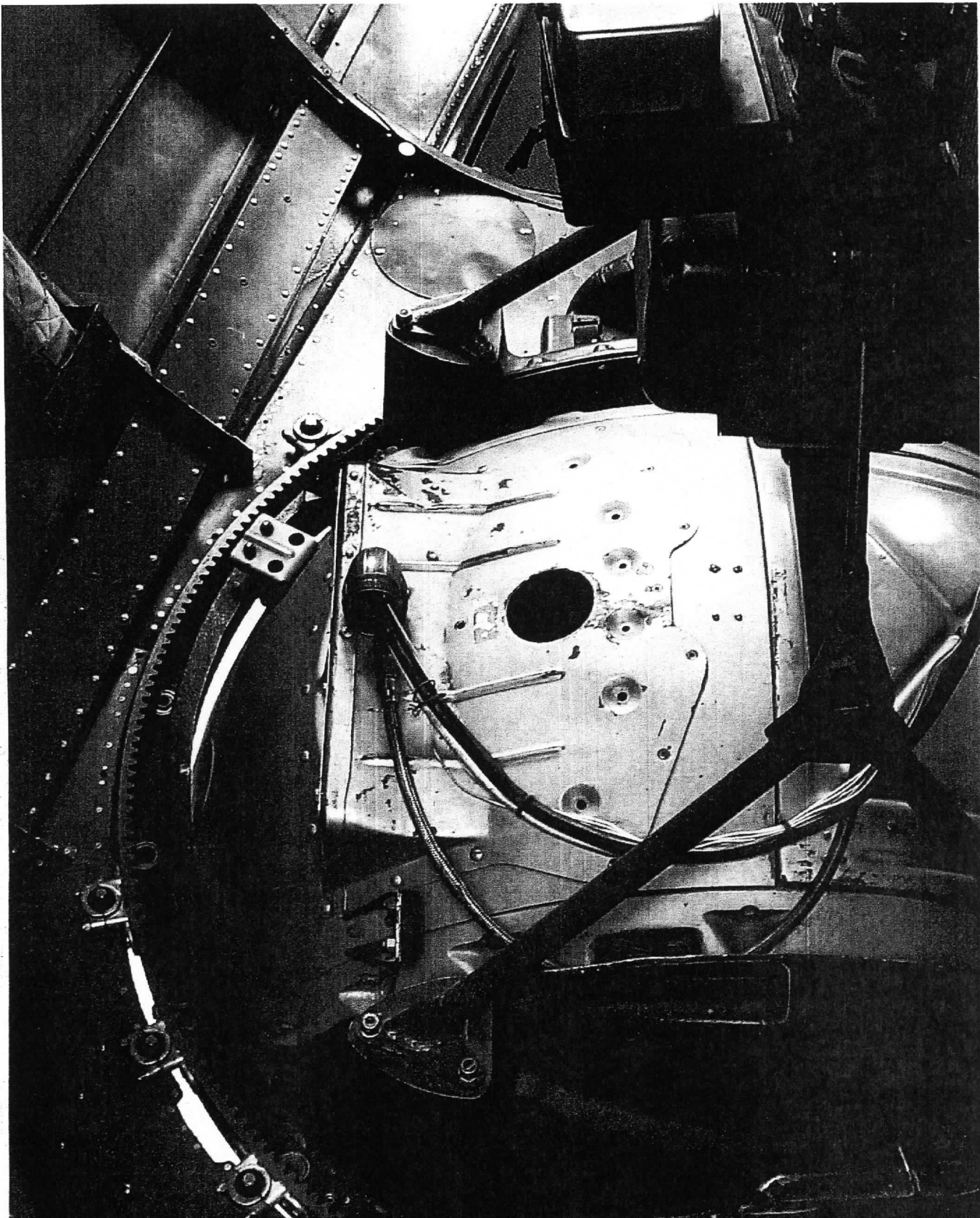
### WWII Stories

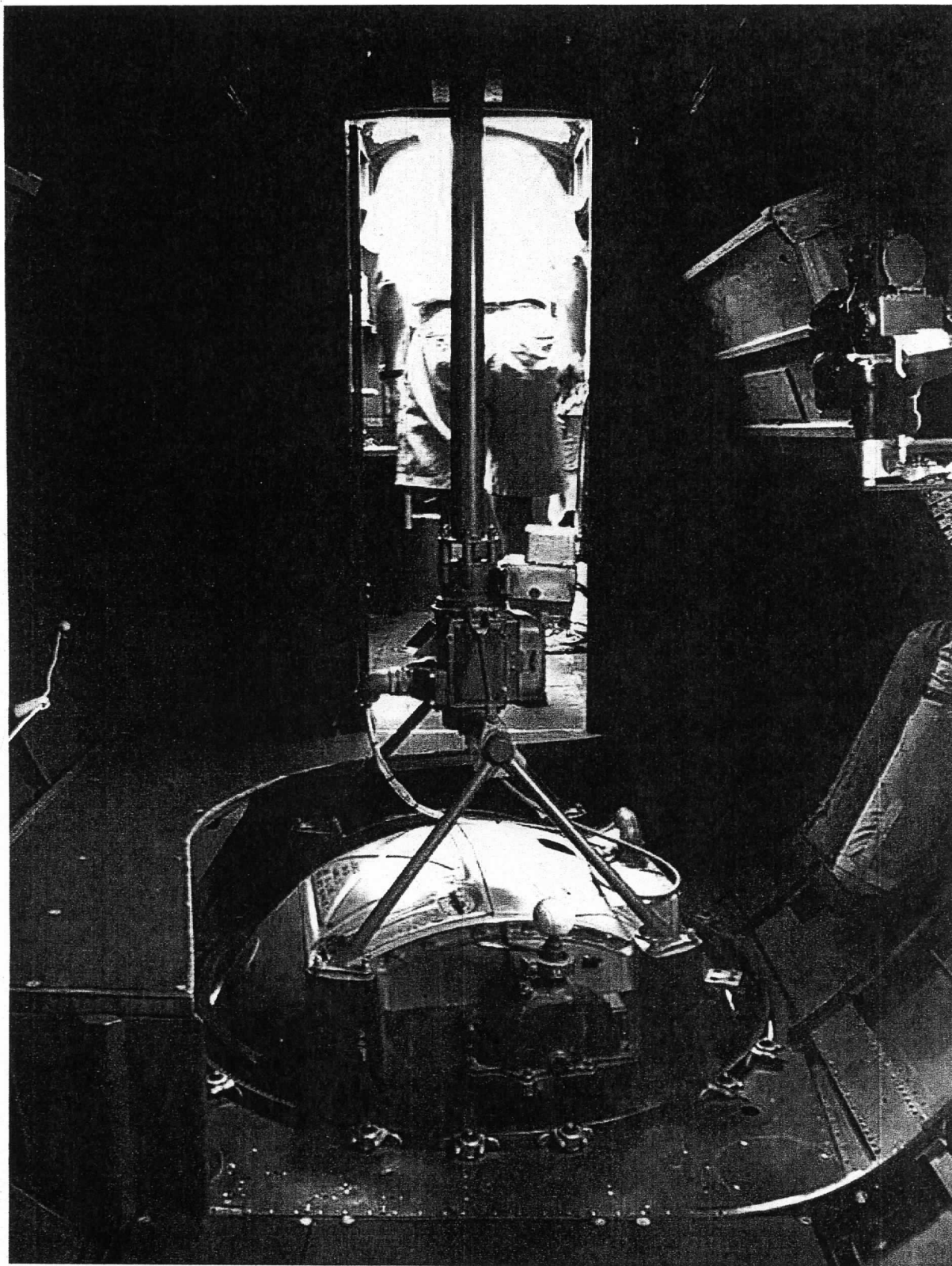
On the morning of July 18th Flight Officer John C. Morgan was just another Co-Pilot in the 92nd Bomb Group. That mission earned him our nations highest award for valor, the Medal of Honor. Read his story in Accounts of WW II.

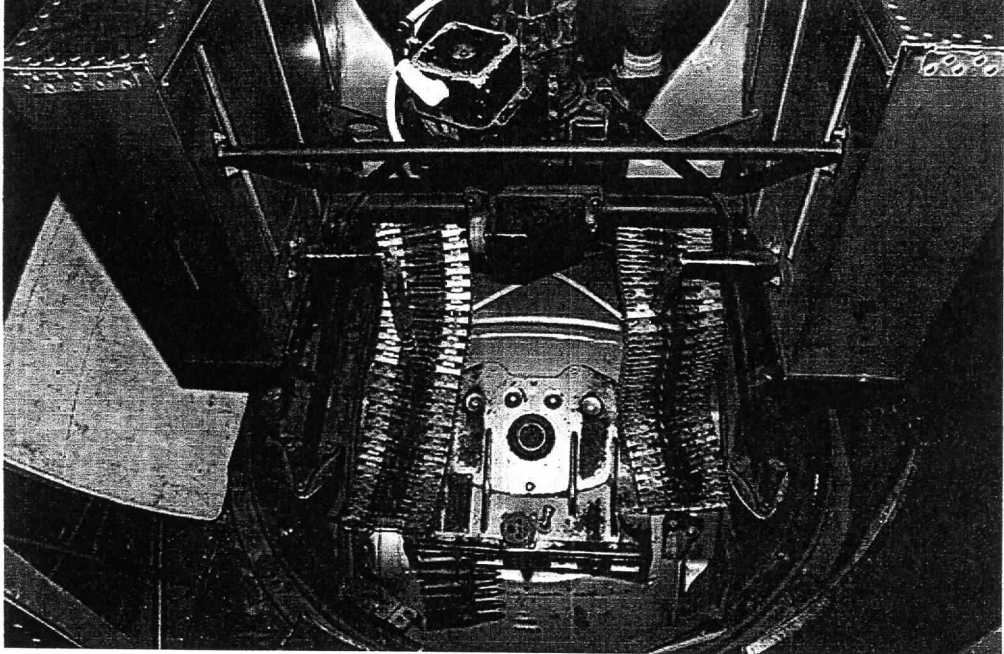
longest one we had been in. They attacked us as soon as we crossed the coast and circled around us like Indians. Then they started attacking from all, directions at once. I thought I got two, but I didn't get credit for them. We kept plugging away at them and somehow got by Practically all our ammunition was gone when we got back. As many times as they shot at us, we didn't get a single bullet hole in the plane. Last winter American morale in England got pretty close to the breaking point because we weren't getting any reinforcements. It's good now.

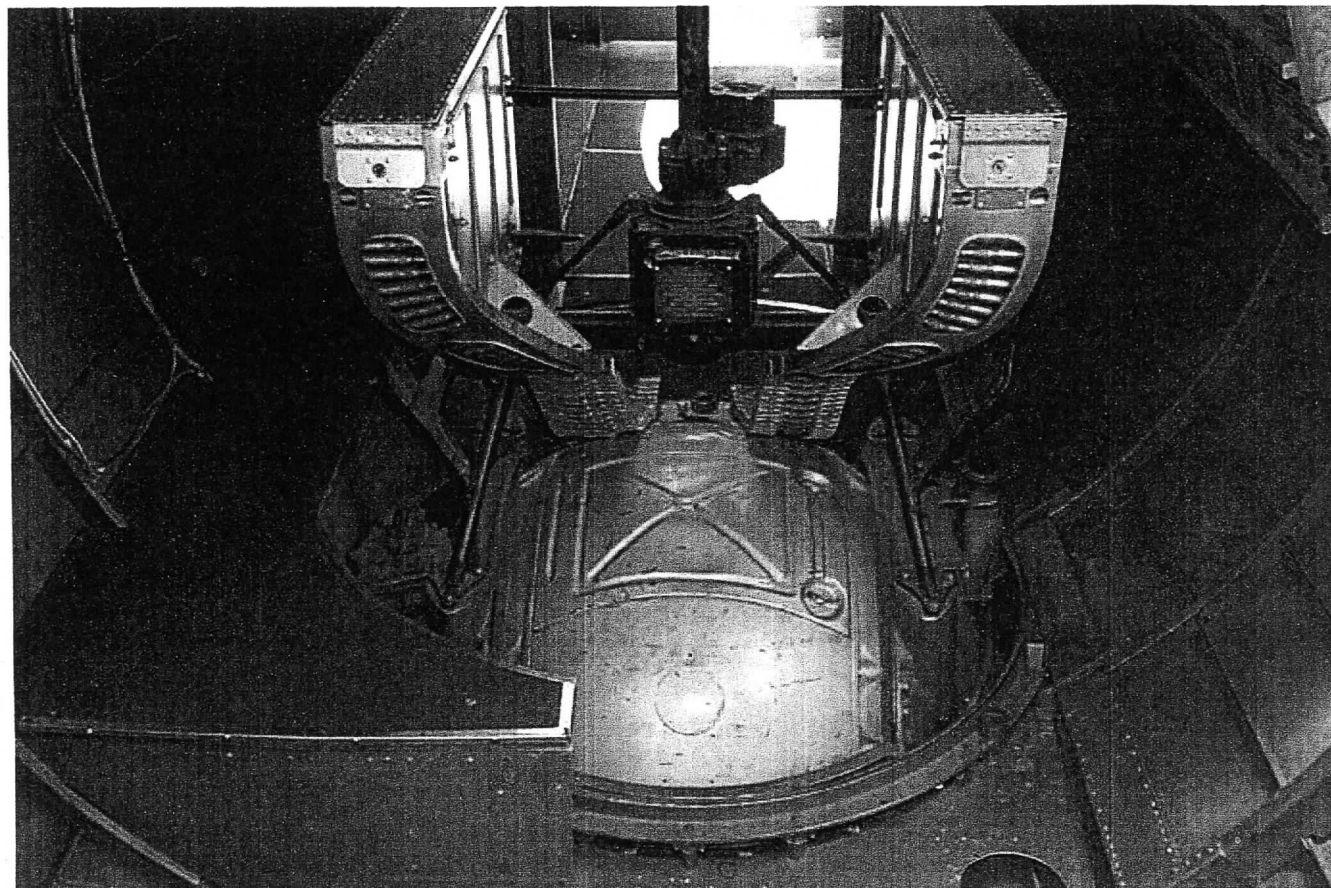














**BALL TURRET**

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Thank  
our cow  
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for our M  
like you.

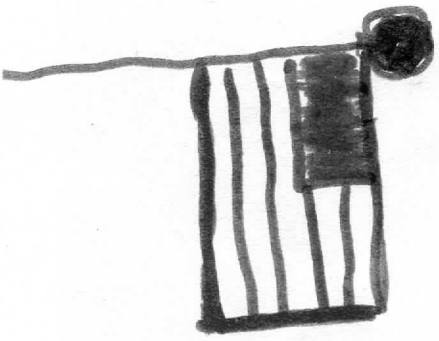


Dear Veteran,

Thank you for serving  
our country. Before I was  
even born you made sacrifices  
for our Nation, I look up to people  
like you.

Happy Memorial Day,

Lance Corporal Tobin  
P. Foster



## **MEMORIAL DAY SPEECH BY HARRY KETCHAM CIRCA 1970**

**WE ARE ASSEMBLED HERE TODAY ON THIS MEMORIAL DAY TO SHOW OUR RESPECT TO THE DEAD WHOM MADE THE SUPREME SACRIFICE FOR THIS GREAT COUNTRY.**

**I THINK IT IS VERY FITTING THAT WE SHOULD PAUSE FOR A BREIF TIME FROM OUT DAILY ROUTINE OF LIFE AND THINK BACK FOR A LITTLE WHILE ON THE THINGS THAT HAS BROUGHT US TO WHERE WE ARE THIS MORNING HERE IN AMERICA.**

**THER HAS BEEN A STRUGGLE BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG IN THE WORLD SINCE THE CREATION OF MAN AND WOMAN IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN, WHERE GOD CREATED MANKIND AND GAVE HIM THE POWER TO DETERMINE FOR HIMSELF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG AND THE PRIVILIGE OF FOLLOWING HIS OWN COURSE OF DECISION, THERE HAS BEEN DIFFERENCES OF OPINION AND STRIFE UP TO THE PRESENT TIME IN WHICH WE LIVE.**

**IN THE STUDY OF OUR BIBLES [ AND I AM VERY SURE OF THE FACT THAT WE NEED TO STUDY THEM MORE THOROUGHLY THAN WE DO ] WE FIND FROM AWAY BACK THERE HAS BEEN A TENDENCY FOR ONE MAN OR ONE FAMILY OR ONE NATION TO APPRESS THE OTHER AND AS I SEE IT THIS MORNING IT WAS THE OPPRESSION OF ONE PART OF THE PEOPLE AGAINST THE OTHER THAT LED TO THE DECISION OF THE FIRST IMMIGRANTS OF THIS OUR AMERICA TO SEEK A PLACE WHERE THEY MIGHT ENJOY MORE FREEDOM. AND ABOVE ALL ELSE THE RIGHT TO SERVE GOD ACCORDING TO THE DICTATES OF THEIR OWN CONSCIENCE.**

**WE FIND THAT THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF OUR NATION THE RECOGNITION OF A LIVING GOD HAS BEEN VERY PROMINEMT AND THAT THE GREAT LEADERS OF THIS OUR GREAT CONTRY HAVE BEEN MEN WHO WHEN CONFRONTED WITH GREAT DECISIONS HAVE TURNED TO GOD FOR GUIDENCE**

**WHILE WE HAVE HAD OUR WARS AND OUR TIMES WHEN WE WONDERED WHITCH WAY THE TIDE OF THE BATTLE MIGHT TURN**

**GOD HAS PROSPERED US MOST BOUNTIFULLE AND WE HAVE GROWN TO BE ONE OF THE GREATEST NATIONS IN THE WORLD.**

**BUT READING OUR BIBLES AND LOOKING AT IT FROM BOTH A HISTORICAL POINT OF VIEW AS WELL AS IT BEING THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD,WE MUST REALIZE THE FACT THERE HAS BEEN MANY GREAT NATIONS THAT HAVE GROWN AND PROSPERED AND FALLEN AND THAT WE MUST NOT GLORY IN OUR VICTORYS AND BOAST OF OUR MIGHT AND SPEND ALL OF OUR TIME AND RECOURSES TO BUILD GREAT WAR MACHINE WITH WHITCH TO DESTROY THOSE WHOM WE DISAGREE.**

**DONT GET ME WRONG, IAM PROUD THAT I LIVE IN AMERICA AND HOPE THAT I AM CLASSSED IN YOUR MIND AS AN AMERICAN.**

**I BELIEVE THAT WE HAVE FOUGHT WARS THAT ARE ENTIRELY JUSTIFIABLE AND HOPE WE ARE NOT FIGHTING ONE NOW THAT DOES NOT HAVE A JUSTIFICATION FOR DOING SO BUT WE SHOULD PROCEED WITH CAUTION IN OUR CONDUCT AND STUDY VERY SERIOUSLY WHEN AND WHERE WE SHOULD START AND HOW FAR WE SHOULD GO AND WHEN WE SHOULD GIVE ASSISTANCE , AND TO WHOM WE SHOULD GIVE IT .**

**IF YOU ARE A LITTLR AGED TODAY AND LOOK BACK A FEW YEARS TO WORLD WAR 1 & 2 YOU CAN RECALL HOW OUR NATION WENT TO THE ASSISTANCE OF FRANCE AND SAVED THEM AS A NATION WHEN THEY WERE ALL BUT DOWN AND OUT. WHAT DO WE HAVE TODAY? REJECTION- ASKING AMERICANS TO GET OUT, THEY DO HAVE A PLACE FOR YOU. THE SAD PART IS THAT TODAY THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF AMERICANS IN FRANCE THAT HAVE RETURNED TO DUST OF THE EARTH FROM WHICH THEY WERE MADE THAT WILL NEVER LEAVE FRANCE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES**

**COMING DOWN TO THIS MORNING AS WE ARE ASSEMBLED HERE IN A MEMORIAL SERVICE, OUR BOYS ARE IN CONFLICT OF BATTLE IN A COUNTRY ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD WHILE WE HERE AT HOME ARE BOASTING OF THE HIGHEST STATE OF ECONOMY THAT THE NATION HAS EXPERIENCED FOR QUITE SOME TIME.**

**DOES IT TAKE A WAR TO MAKE A NATION PROSPEROUS? WAR TIMES ARE TIMES OF PLENTY OF EMPLOYMENT AND HIGH WAGES. BUT IT IS ALSO A TIME OF HIGH PRICES AND HIGH TAXES, TAXES THAT NOT ONLY DURING THE TIME OF WAR BUT FOR A LONG TIME AFTER SO IS IT PROSPARITY?**

**IN MAKING THESE REMARKS I AM FULLY AWARE THAT THERE ARE THOSE OF YOU THAT DO NOT AGREE, I DO NOT ASK YOU TO AGREE, BUT HOPE THAT I CAN AROUSE YOU TO THE PLACE WHERE YOU WILL DO YOUR OWN THINKING, FOR ONLY WHEN PEOPLE ARE THINKING FOR THEM SELVES AND THE BETTERMENT OF OUR NATION WILL WE PROCEED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AND DO THE THINGS THAT WILL MAKE US PROSPEROUS AND STAY STRONG NOT ONLY IN OUR OWN NATION BUT IN THE SIGHT OF THE REST OF THE WORLD.**

**AS A NATION I TRULY BELIEVE THAT WE ARE GOING TO PLAY A BIG PART IN THE READJUSTMENTS OF THE WORLDLY DISAGREEMENTS OF HE PRESENT TIMES, AS INDIVIDUALS WE ARE GOING TO SHOLDER SOME OF THE RESPONSIBILITYYS THAT CONFRONT THE NATION**

**WE HAVE A DEMOCRATIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT WHICH GIVES US THE RIGHT BY BALLOT TO CHOSE OUR LEADERS BUT AS LONG AS ONLY A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF OUR PEOPLE EXERCISE THIS RIGHT WE ARE NOT ALWAYS GOING TO GET THE RIGHT LEADERS.**

**BUT ONCE A PRESIDENT OF OUR COUNTRY IS ELECTED HE APPOINTS HIS CABINET AND GOOD OR BAD WE ARE RULED BY THEM UNTIL THE END OF THEIR TERM, FOR ONCE A PRESIDENT GETS INTO OFFICE HE MORE OFTEN GETS WHAT HE WANTS THAN HE IS REFUSED.**

**SO LET US TODAY MAKE UP OUR MINDS THAT WE ARE GOING TO DO MORE FOR OUR COUNTRY AND EXPECT LESS THAT WE CAN GET ALONG WITHOUT.**

**COMING NOW TO THE MEMORIAL SERVICES WE TRULY DO OWE A**

**DEBT OF GRATITUDE AND RESPECT TO THOSE OF OUR BOYS WHOM HAVE GIVEN THERE ALL FOR OUR NATION AND THE MANY PRIVILEGES WE ENJOY THIS MORNING**

**AND THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN OF THEIR TIME AND ENERGY BUT WERE FORTUNATE AND PERMITTED SURVIVE THE BATTLE, WE ALSO GIVE OUR HARTY THANKS AND RESPECT FOR THEIR SERVICES.**

**AND TO THOSE WHO AT THIS TIME ARE ENGAGED IN THE CONFLICT OF BATTLE. WE OFFER A PRAYER FOR THEIR SAFTY AND PROTECTION AND ASK THAT GOD WILL HASTEN THE DAY WHEN THE DIFFERENCES CAUSING THE WAR WILL BE SETTLED AND THE WAR WILL CEASE.**

**IN CLOSING, MYOWN PERSOLAL REMARKS I HOPE I HAVE OFFENDED NO ONE FOR THEY WERE NOT MENT THAT WAY, BUT I DO HOPE I HAVE GIVEN YOU SOMETING TO THINK ABOUT AND MEDITATE ON.**

**I WOULD LIKE TO LEAVE A FEW QUESTIONS WITH YOU**

**WHAT DOES MEMORIAL DAY MEAN TO ME IN A PERSONEL WAY?**

**AM I HELPING TO MAKE MY COUNTRY WHAT I WOULD LIKE FOR IT TO BE ?**

**WHERE ARE WE HEADED?----AS INDIVIDUALS?-----AS A NATION ?**

**ARE WE ON THE RIGHT TRACK ?**

**DO WE GIVE GOD THE CONSIDERATION IN MAKING PERSONAL AND NATIONAL DECISIONS?**

**DO WE BELIVE IN THE BIBLE ENOUGH TO LISTEN TO ITS WARNINGS?**

**DO YOU THINK THAT DISRESPECT OF GODLY THINGS AND IMMORAL CONDUCT CAN LEAD TO THE DOWNFALL OF OUR NATIONS?**

**THANK YOU AND**

**I ASK THAT GOD WILL BLESS YOU--AND MAY GOD BLESS AMERICA**