



NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 24

AUGUST 1992

The Ninety Fifth's 50th Anniversary Bash at Tyndall AFB

by Audrey Barr

During our *Spring Fling* we journeyed to Panama City's Tyndall AFB for the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the 95th Squadron. The Squadron is still active, only now the planes are those fantastic jets - one of which (an F-15 Eagle) was demonstrated to us by a wonderfully apt pilot whose name is Matt Donovan. He took the plane through rolls and acrobatics that were breathtaking - including a full burn straight up to heaven and out of sight! Afterwards, he slowly cruised passed those of us on the ground with a "thumbs up" to us all - to which all the "old boys" there returned the long ago used signal for "Mission Accomplished" or maybe for "Yea, I made it!"

We were also treated to an evening called "Sounds of Freedom" which included a "Military Tattoo" - a ceremony started 300 years ago when King William the 3rd's troops were first sent through the streets to call home the soldiers from the inns where they were enjoying their evening's entertainment. The drummers would signal innkeepers that "beer call" was over. The Dutch words were *Doeden Taptoe* - "Turn off the Taps" - but the troops only heard "taptoe" and in time the phrase was Anglicized to "tattoo". As the custom grew, drums were joined by fifes, pipes and other instruments. Soon, full bands played for the garrison. The military tattoo was born! The bagpipes and kilted Scots uniforms and the drum major's high fur hat and baton made for a colorful and stirring sight and sound that always makes me thrill!

Then the Command Band of the Air Force Reserves played wonderful BIG BAND music for dancers and "Sounds of America" - an armed forces medley. A retreat ceremony was done with *spit & polish* and reverence as the flag was lowered and folded to a backdrop of the sun setting in a peach Florida sky. After that we were shown the "Silent Drill" by the Tyndall Drill Team. The men were in control of every muscle - it seemed - with a foot sometimes stopped in midair in synchronized motion. Bayoneted rifles clacked and were slapped and flew through the air as well as tapped on the ground and these were the only sounds heard. At one point they threw the guns to each other crosswise without a hitch. *So impressive!*

After the Drill Team there was a Memorial Ceremony for four fallen men. They were honored with a dramatic tableau and flag bearers. An F-15 did another fly-by with yet another full burn straight up and then Taps were sounded - there was not a dry eye in the place but lots of lumps in throats. Finally, the "Stars and Stripes Forever" was played by the band and the "Tattoo Finale". Truly a wonderful and meaningful evening.

The next day we toured the Base and saw the fantastic computerized Operations Room where the pilots are taught how to do missile battle on two big screens. It was all the world like huge video games our young folks play in the malls! But this is a serious business and the cost of the room and equipment is in the millions. We were shown a scramble by 3 pilots who are at Tyndall in our National Guard - they were out and up in two minutes and 40 seconds! Amazing!

On Saturday evening we were bussed to the Base again for a Banquet honoring both the 325th Checkertail Clan and the 95th Boneheads 50th Reunions. They are the heritage units for the 325th Fighter Wing and the 95th Squadron at Tyndall. The dinner was replete with special bottles of wine with Bonehead labels and Mr. Bones - a real skeleton - in full array with top hat, monocle and baton - seated at the head table. The C.O. said Mr. Bones had already been fed - and it went *right through him!*

Dancing was arranged for after dinner to the big band sounds and, of course, the bar was open too. The Peter Kennedys were at the Reunion and we had a fine visit with them as usual. Both Peter and Bill were delighted to find a picture of old chums on the Officer's Club Bar walls - including their own. Bill looked like a boyish 16 year old and Peter looked so dashing - he should have had a white scarf to complete the picture. What beautiful young men they all were - and the new ones, too! **The Cream of the Crop!**

We should be grateful to have such fine young men ready to defend our country should the need arise; but I pray it will never be necessary again.

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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Ye Olde Editorial

July 4, 1992

I can't think of a better way to spend a great holiday than to celebrate it by chatting with 500 heroes. My only regret is that all who walked in and out of, or flew in and out of, our vaunted 82nd Fighter Group cannot share with us the same memory. Our super outfit pounded a big nail into the preservation of a monumental event in the History of Mankind. Ah, what a sweet luxury it is to bask in the Freedom of American Independence!

And speaking about the History of Ladykind - how about our Audrey Barr? We've seen a myriad of military unit newsletters and we don't recall seeing any mention of the POWER behind the throttle featured on a front page - much less of its authorship. Thanks Audrey.

We would have liked to have celebrated with Mr. Bones and the Boneheads but my little proofreader was recovering from a total knee replacement operation on April 15. She's fine now.

Fiftieth Anniversaries are nice to enjoy now and then but longevity is an ephemeral thing and already this year the 96th has bitten the dust and the fate of an active 82nd is now badly tarnished; so we keep in mind the gains and laurels of the past. Whatever befalls the present - Our History will always glorify the future.

Ellis P. Roy (96th) called one day to suggest the Newsletter feature a recognition of the many 50th Wedding Anniversaries that will be enjoyed by 82nd members during this year - since so many of us tied the knot before going overseas (i.e. Jo Ann & I - July 7). This idea was bounced off the Executive Committee and they felt that those who have lost precious spouses would be unnecessarily saddened.

We all revel in and enjoy the day to day happinesses as the 82nd Association enjoys its closeness but we are mindful of the yesterdays and of those who made them memorable for the warmth of our present times together.

WE DON'T FORGET!

-rl

~ Proclamation ~

WHEREAS, The 95th Fighter Squadron, "Home of Mr. Bones", assigned to the 82nd Fighter Group, World War II, will celebrate its 50th reunion on 1 - 3 May, 1992; and

WHEREAS, The 95th "Boneheads" served in Algeria, Tunisia, and in Italy during World War II flying the P-38 Lightning, participated in attacks on the Ploesti oil refineries, and finished the war with over 400 ground and aerial victories and seven aces; and

WHEREAS, Since 1974, the 95th Fighter Squadron has been stationed at Tyndall Air Force Base in Panama City, home of the World's Most Beautiful Beaches; and

WHEREAS, The 95th Fighter Squadron is still serving our country admirably in instructing young aviators to become the world's finest air superiority pilots.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Gerry Clemons, Mayor of the City of Panama City, Florida, in recognition thereof, do hereby proclaim May 2, 1992, as

"95th FIGHTER SQUADRON ASSOCIATION DAY"

in Panama City and urge all citizens of this area to pay tribute to these men who have served our country in such an outstanding manner and wish to "Mr. Bones" a happy 50th birthday.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Official Seal of the City of Panama City, Florida to be affixed this 23rd day of April, 1992.

APO 82

(Ed's note: We usually print letters alphabetically, but - with the exception of Olen's letter - this arrangement just happens)

FROM OLEN MEDLEY

Hope all is well. Betty is still having lots of trouble with the sciatic nerve thing in her right leg. She has two doctors working on it. It kept her from going to Tyndall with me. We're hoping both of us can make it to St. Louis.

(Ed's note: I've had a lot of correspondence from Olen over the past year. He has really been trying to crank his 95th guys up. He most recently sent a report of the Bonehead Reunion at Tyndall AFB the 1st part of May. It was the occasion of the 50th Anniversary celebration of the formation of the 95th. Following is some of what he said about that)

I'm happy to say there were 26 of us attending from the 'old' 95th plus 16 wives, 2 daughters, 3 from the 96th and 97th plus 89 alumni from the 95th down through the years since its reactivation in '47. By the way, 'Tactical' and 'Training' have been dropped from the name and is now back to the 95th Fighter Squadron.

(Continued on page 5)

1942 - 1945

Harding Field, LA; Muroc, CA;
Mines Field, CA; Northern Ireland;
Tafaraoui, Algeria; Telergma, Algeria;
Berteaux, Algeria; Souk-El-Arba, Algeria;
Grombaila, Tunisia; San Pancrazio, Italy;
Lecce, Italy; Vincenzo Airfield, Italy;
Lesina, Italy;



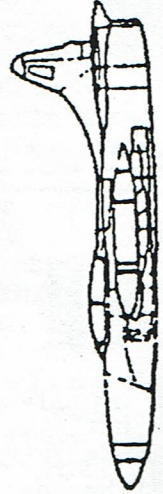
Lockheed P-38 Lightning



North American P-51 Mustang

1947 - 1949

Grenier Field, NH



F-94 Starfire

1952 - 1953

Andrews AFB, MD

95th FIGHTER SQUADRON COMMANDERS

Commander	Assumed Command
1Lt (later, Maj) Robert E. Kirtley	1 May 1942
1Lt Alex Hamric	1 Apr 1943
1Lt William J. Schildt	11 Apr 1943
Capt T.H. McArthur	12 Apr 1943
Capt (later, Maj) Ernest K. Osher	5 May 1943
Capt (later, Maj) Hugh M. Muse, Jr.	25 Jul 1943
Maj Lawrence H. Bell, Jr.	25 Dec 1943
Maj Herbert L. Phillips	21 Mar 1944
Maj Warner F. Gardner	12 Aug 1944
Lt Col Robert M. Wray	Oct 1944
Maj Charles D. Nicolas	17 Jul 1945
(Inactivated 9 Sep 1945, Activated 12 Apr 1947)	
Maj Leland R. Raphun	11 Jun 1947
Capt Charles L. McMillin	19 Sep 1947
Maj William J. O'Donnell	26 Sep 1948
(Inactivated 2 Oct 1949, Activated 1 Nov 1952)	
Lt Col Benjamin H. King	1 Nov 1952
Maj Leopoldo V. Rodriguez	6 Jan 1953
Maj James T. Winkler	4 Apr 1953
Lt Col Floyd B. Whitlow, Jr.	20 May 1954
Lt Col Edward C. Fletcher	5 Jul 1955
Maj William W. Scroggins, Jr.	5 Dec 1956
Lt Col Joel D. Thorvaldson	18 Jan 1957
Lt Col Raymond A. Poerschke	Mar 1959
Lt Col Alvin J. Chesser	1 Jul 1961
Maj Elmer E. Herron	Jun 1963
Lt Col Franklin C. Craln	1 Jul 1963
Maj Elmer E. Herron	24 Jul 1964
Lt Col Maurice D. Surratt	2 Sep 1964
Lt Col Reginald L. Hays	Mar 1966
Col Robert L. Sowers	24 Sep 1967
Lt Col Roy L. White	Jun 1969
Lt Col Walter C. Newton	26 Jan 1970
Lt Col (later, Col) Eugene P. Cunneely	4 May 1970
Lt Col James A. MacDougald	21 Jan 1972
(Inactivated 31 Jan 1973, Activated 1 Sep 1974)	
Lt Col Harold D. Neeley	1 Sep 1974
Lt Col George A. Kersey	1 Aug 1975
Lt Col (later, Col) Richard R. Roehm, Jr.	3 Mar 1977
Lt Col James P. Wymann	5 Oct 1979
Lt Col Raymond E. Trusz	14 Aug 1981
Lt Col Stephen A. Wayne	23 Jul 1982
Lt Col Tommy B. Almquist	15 Jan 1984
Lt Col Thomas W. Dobson, Jr.	25 Nov 1985
Lt Col Peter E. Brennan	27 May 1986
Lt Col William C. Yantiss	17 Dec 1987
Lt Col Richard D. White	4 Jan 1989
Lt Col James F. Miller	4 Feb 1991

(Continued from page 3)

Then:

I received a call from Bernise & Carmen Craft telling me of John Rogers' recent kidney transplant. My information is scant but they said he was in Portland, OR where he had the operation and he will be in dialysis some 14 days to get the kidney working. He should get back to Boise about the middle of May.

Thought you would like to include this in your "Band Aid" department.

(Ed's note: I have been following John's health since Lee Thompson flagged me in San Antonio in '85. Although he only lives about a mile and a half from me John and Billie always seem to be out when I drop by. It seems strange then to get the news of the kidney transplant clear from Florida 500,000 miles away. I had a nice phone chat with John a couple of weeks ago and he's doing fine. Billie's fine, too)

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FROM BOB & VYSTA ADAMS

Vysta and I are here at Tyndall AFB enjoying the fine weather and the 50th Anniversary of the 95th.

I am sure Olen will send you a better report on all the activities that have taken place. I am sending some items that were given us and you may use them as you see fit.

We talked to our daughter the other night, Jo Ann, and she told us of your knee replacement. We hope you are healing well and that it won't keep Dick away from his computer.

Thank you for the service you share with the 82nd Group.

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FROM OLD RUTHLESS (Routhier)

May I recommend to all 82nd members a source for patches, A-2 jackets, emblems and other pertinent military gewgaws:

A D V A N C E D G R A F I X
1030 East Michigan Ave.
PHOENIX, AZ 85032

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FROM LOGAN ELLIS

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks for printing the poem I composed and for your kind remarks accompanying it.

Since I wrote this poem, I have found much success competitively on the local, state, and national levels as a high school debater and member of the Future Business Leaders of America. These awards and honors have brought me great satisfaction; however, no award or honor could possibly bring more pride than the recognition I have received from you and the other members of the 82nd Fighter Group Association.

Over the years, I have listened intently to my grandfather's stories from World War II and my father's stories from the Vietnam War. Their bravery and patriotism were and still are awe-inspiring, and they and all the veterans such as yourself who deserve the most recognition; for without all of you my poem would not have even been possible. I only hope that I can inspire the members of the 82nd Fighter Group Association half as much as you have inspired me.

In the coming weeks I will be traveling all across the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex, the State of Texas, and, in July - even to Chicago for academic competition. Regardless of what comes from these endeavors, I will always remember the pride that my poem has evoked in my grandfather, you and the Association's other members as one of my crowning achievements.

Sincerely,

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FROM B.A. STROZIER

In yesterday's mail there was a letter to me from Czechoslovakia. I wondered what fund raising outfit from over there had found my address. But it turned out to be a different type of request. Enclosed is a copy of the letter.

Of course the first action I took was to look for an Allen Jacob Wisner on the 82nd Assn. Roster and it wasn't there. So then I called Olen Medley to learn he had just returned from Panama City where the 95th had a gathering. He told me to send him a copy of the letter and he would ask around to see if anyone could furnish any info.

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

(Ed's note: Juraj Rajnynec's letter to Strozier - which I am paraphrasing - noted that on June 26, 1944 the 82nd lost two planes in a "gigantic" dogfight over the southwest territory of Slovakia. In this dogfight the 82nd lost two planes and both planes belonged to the 95th.

According to Juraj one plane piloted by 2nd Lt. Ray Wallace Allen was shot down by an Me 109 and it crashed into a peat bog about 10 miles NE of Bratislava and exploded. The Germans tried to recover the pilot from the wreckage but gave up because of the very soft earth. The plane, with its dead pilot, lay in the earth for 46 years until Sept. 3, 1990 when our group recovered the plane and its pilot.

A few moments after Allen's plane crashed the other 95th plane was shot down in the same area. This plane was piloted by Lt. Allen Jacob Wisner who successfully parachuted onto the roof of a house in the city of Pezinok about 3 miles north of where Wisner's plane exploded. Wisner spent several months in a Bratislava hospital, survived the war and returned to the U.S.

Jaraj wanted Bud to furnish certain info regarding group code letters and the whereabouts of Wisner. Bud had no idea how to respond so he forwarded a copy of the letter to Olen Medley and one to Boise.

Olen contacted Manuel F. van Eyck - also a Czechoslovakian - who has had some experience locating missing Allied crewmen. Van Eyck lives in No. Hollywood, CA., he answered Olen's inquiry very quickly and he had nothing good to say about Jaraj's letter.

Whatever may or may not be the real facts in the case, the whole thing sounded to me like it should be something to pass on to you readers for your interest. We will keep you up to date with this mystery. Steve Blake recalls the mission and remembers the names of the two pilots. There is probably some reference made to the two pilots in the 82nd History)

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Please Keep Us

INFORMED

About Your Aches & Pains

FROM RUTHIE DONOHOO

Again, another super newsletter. You can include me in the outing to the Union Station - was there last year but want to go back - plus have lunch by the lake there - it was great.

Thanks for the up-date on Emma Ireland. I had a call last week from the Lattas but they didn't mention her progress. I will send another card to Emma & Bruce. Will also send one to Pat Loewenberg. I didn't know of her current ailment - but with us "old 'young' folks" each day brings another surprise.

My son Daniel is now living in Richland, Washington - working with Battelle, Pacific Northwest Labs. So I may surprise you one of these days and come a-knocking at your door.

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FROM FRED SELLE

I found another 96th pilot!

I participated in the Western Gun Show at the Salt Palace in Salt Lake City on April 10. During a discussion with a young fellow he stated his dad had flown P-38s in Italy. I asked him what group and he didn't know. However, he said, "Dad was always talking about the 'Bunnies'." You can guess that rang my bell.

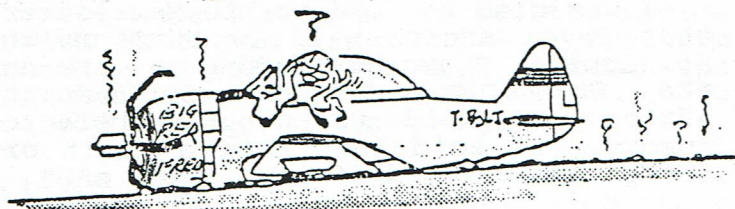


His name is Richard Person and he said he would like a roster and have his name put on the mailing list. He has an invalid wife and can't travel so reunions are out. Ammo officer Lt. Sloan was his tent mate. I told him about you and he said he loved that Link Trainer.

He joined the 96th the latter part of '44 and served as Mess Officer as well as Transportation Officer.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)



My shoulder is all healed and is as good as new. Can't keep an old Idaho cowpoke down for long. I sent Lute and Leo Fisher some "SPAM" coupons recently. Shirley is fine, too! Hope all is tops with you and a Howdy & and a Hug for Jo Ann.

P.S. I did a tour - Central Pacific - in T-Bolts in late '44 & 5.

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FROM TED PAPERMASTER

The mention of Dick Willsie's name in the March Newsletter reminded me of a little known - but not trivial - episode of our group. One day we discovered that there was an astonishing deficiency of beer at Foggia 11 so we sent the work horse B-25 (AKA the "Worry Bird") to a favorite brewery in Algiers where they had an amazing 26 barrel excess. The crew was Dick Willsie, pilot; Mickey Ellis, co-pilot; Mike Hormel, crew chief; and me, passenger at large.

After proper international and mutually affable trade negotiations, we stashed the beer in the bomb bay and assorted other areas and took off. In a few minutes we noticed that the oil pressure in the left engine was dropping and oil and smoke was issuing forth. As we were losing altitude and total disaster appeared imminent I guiltily suggested to Mike that he and I get back to the hold and jettison the beer. He gave me a withering "are you crazy" look with appropriate expletives. Well, at that moment, we spotted a British landing field (I think it was near Telergma). We headed for the landing and I could see emergency vehicles racing toward the runway. Willsie made the best landing he ever made in his life - even counting the one he made in Rumania.

Well, the U.S. taxpayers generously paid for a new engine and in a few days the 26 barrels were delivered, intact, to a grateful 82nd.

How come we never even got a D.F.C. ???

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FROM BILL GLOWACKI (phone call)

Bill called to report Fred Baucom's death. He said he had called Fred's home to see if the Baucoms would like to accompany the Glowackis to the Reunion, as they had done in the past, and when Margaret answered she said Fred had died that morning.

(Ed's note: We applaud Bill's thoughtfulness in reporting Fred's death right away. We hope others will do the same when sad news of one of our 82nd Family comes to their attention)

FROM JOHN BLUMER

Please note my new address: 116 Crescent Dr., MANCHESTER, IA 52057
Phone (319) 927-4029.

I'm in need of some suggestions as to the disposition of some of the memorabilia I have retained over the years. For instance, copies of transfer orders & similar documents which list personnel (name, rank, SN. & sometimes home addresses). Do these have any historical value to the organization? I also have items such as the sectional charts of south central Europe (which rode with me on every mission) and which might have some curiosity value to persons other than myself. Is there an 82nd Museum or another repository of WWII material?

(Ed's note: I haven't the slightest idea, John. Can anyone out there help John?)

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FROM BOB RANDALL

The March edition of the 82nd Newsletter was just great. There, in black and white, was the nose art - created by a real nose art artist - of the "Roamin' Candle". Here comes my check for a lifetime membership! The name "Candle" stems from a fraternity (U of Washington) moniker of "Candle Randall" and when I was in Italy the "Roamin'" part seemed to fit.

In case any of you 82nd birds didn't know it, the "Roamin' Candle" of the 97th was the finest, quickest, most reliable, hardest hitting, fastest shooting, highest flying and generally the GRANDEST P-38L on anyone's line! No exceptions! Everyone who flew her agreed. I flew RC on almost every mission (flew CQ on two - the P-38J that everyone in the 97th flew).

(Continued on page 8)

What's more, Jesse Miles was the most outstanding of the outstanding cadre of Crew Chiefs the 82nd was blessed to have. One time Jesse asked me to take a flight and check the turbo performance after he had fine tuned it. At 30,000 feet I decided to go the limit - so - up it went to 42,000! That was it for the "Roamin' Candle" - and I had reached my non-pressurized limit too. But a great tune-up!

I missed the '91 Reunion due to a small complication. The doc wouldn't let me go - but it was nothing serious. I had a double by-pass on Sept. 1 and I was up and at 'em after six weeks.

I'm delighted that the '93 Reunion will be in Seattle. Chuck Luke has taken on a big job but all of us in the area will pitch in.

I'm trying for St. Louis this year and hope to see you there.

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FROM PAUL JORGENSEN

Thought you might be able to use the enclosed pic. The aircraft is C-3, the Betty May in the 97th. The date is probably about Dec. '43. From left to right: ?, ?, Jorgensen, Sattler and Weinbar.

We now have 2 great grandchildren but we're not old enough! See you in St. Louis.

<> <> <>



The Betty May

FROM JOHN KOSTYO

I was glad to read in the Newsletter that Dave Suddeth will be with us in St. Louis. I remember when we were on the Franconia, heading for North Africa, he told us not to believe rumors. He said they have a habit of being completely different later on.

Sure as heck, a rumor was started at the back of the ship and in about three hours it sounded really different at the front of the ship. When it got back to us at the stern we didn't recognize it. Suddeth was right.

The report from the Executive Committee that targeted Seattle as the location for our 1993 Reunion was good news to us - this will give us a chance to see more of our wonderful country.

I'm sure Amos Turner is really proud of his grandson whose poem was great. In fact, I plan to take the poem to my VFW meeting and read it to the guys.

Would you believe the other day I was rummaging around in the attic and found the old addresses of a few of the guys. So I wrote a short note to each address with info about the Association and the Reunion in St. Louis. The names were:

Bob Dickason, Hollywood, Ca
Robert Dobson, Coalgate, OK
Bob Goodwin, St. Louis, Mo
Jess Hensley, Lubbock, TX
Bill Kanger, Los Angeles, CA
Walter Lords, Waynesboro, VA
Benny Richards, Gross Point, MI
Bob Schrock, Miami, FL
Carl Thoma, Wilkes Barre, PA
Walter Wydra, Chicago, IL
Lee Woodward, Burbank, CA
John Zegarelli, Yonkers, NY

Just think, I had put these addresses away so I wouldn't lose them and it took me fifty years to find them!

The letter from Tillapaugh sure brought back memories. I figured those "young whippersnappers" we had for pilots must have had X-Ray eyes while we were at Souk el Arba. They would take off in pairs and after the first pair was just ready for lift off, the second pair was already rolling; and by the time the third pair was moving it was "Hi ho, Silver!" in a cloud of dust. Why one pair wouldn't run into another was a mystery to me.

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

Do you remember how hot it was in Souk el Arba? So many of the plane crews were coming in to see the medics with blistered hands that a directive came out prohibiting any work on the planes from 11 AM until 3 PM. You could fry eggs on the wings!

(Ed's note: I called to see if the Kostyos had struck any gold with their letters. Sarah said all but one had been returned with the Post Office "Undeliverable" stamp on them. A lady at Bob Goodwin's address had replied saying she had not heard of a Bob Goodwin living at her address but that there were three Robert Goodwins in the St. Louis phone book.

Incidentally, John, maybe I'm wrong but it seems to me the Lightnings took off three abreast at Souk el Arba?)

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~~FROM BEN MASON~~

I just came across a letter I started in December soon after receiving the November Newsletter. It seems I wanted to tell you how great it was and that I was sending a check to Roy for "Ol' Dick's Folly".

Things began to happen. We went to Phoenix for Christmas with my brother-in-law who is very ill with cancer. Then on 7 Jan. I had arthroscopic surgery on my left wrist and shoulder. I think I am in pretty good shape now - considering I had my 80th B.D. in December.

Betty broke her wrist on Feb. 13 and I'm happy to say she is well on the mend now (27th of April).

I'm enclosing a picture of my crew. I couldn't agree more with Jack Duncan's remarks about the enlisted men of the 82nd. It got me to thinking about my crew again. This is the only picture of them I know of. I wish I could have gotten it to Steve Blake soon enough to be included in the history.

Hey!
Dewz R
Voluntary BUT
NO Pay
NO Passes to Town

They did a super job for me. I never had an abort in about 250 hours in combat and the engine, guns and radio always worked. I came home on one engine a couple of times but it wasn't the crew's fault. I also picked up a few holes from time to time but they always got them patched up in time for the next mission.

I have never seen or heard anything of them at our Reunions. If you have time and space perhaps you could include this picture in one of the newsletters.

Hopefully, someone will know something about them and then perhaps locate them. I would very much like to see one or all of them.



As I said at the beginning of this letter I had planned on sending Roy \$5 but I have just fined myself \$15 for taking so long. Thanks again for doing such a super job.

<> <> <>

YEAR		AIRCRAFT		PILOT, OR 1ST PILOT	2ND PILOT, PUPIL OR PASSENGER	DUTY (INCLUDING RESULTS A
MONTH	DATE	Type	No.			
1943				JOSEPH C. SOLKO 6307 MARTINS TERRACE LANHAM, MD 20706		TOTALS BROU
Aug	19	P-38 1510	A-6	SELF		ESCORTED 48 B-250 TO S MODERATE HEAVY FLAK ESCORTED CATALINA RESCUE. NO RESCUES GROUP PRACTICE STRAFIN Sousse Tunisia, 72 PLANE STRAFE PRACTICE 1ST FIGHTER GROUP STRAFE AIRFIELD ITALY. SHOT UP APO LANDED AT COMISO REFUEL ME 1096 ESCORTED B-250 TO CAPUA ITALY WITH 96TH ESCORTED B-250 TO SHOT AT 7 1096. SAW AB
"	21	"	"	"		
"	23	"	"	"		
"	24	"	"	"		
"	25	"	"	"		
"	26	"	"	"		
"	27	"	"	"		
SEPT	1	"	A-P	"		STARTED ON MISSION- ESCORTED B-250 TO CH
"	2	"	"	"		ENGAGED COMBAT V THINK SHOT ONE DOWN DOWN 24 AND LOST 1 ESCORTED B-250 TO GR
"	5	" F-1510	A-S	"		SAW ABOUT 6 FIGHTERS ESCORTED B-250 TO C
"	6	"	"	"		LANDED GERBINI #
"	8	"	"	"		GERBINI #2 TO TERM VOLUME CONTROL & RET
"	9	"	"	"		PATROL PISCIO TA ITALY. NO ENEMY
"	9	"	"	"		PATROL AGROPOLI ITALY. STIFF FIGHT
"	10	"	"	"		PATROL SALERNO T CAPRI. NO ENEM
"	11	"	"	"		PATROL AGROPOLI T LANDED AFTER
"	12	"	AS	"		PATROL PISCIO TA NO ENEMY ACTION
"	12	"	AS	"		PATROL AGROPOLI LANDED AFTER
"	14	"	AS	"		DIVE BOMBED HIO NEAR RULETTA ITAL
"	15	"	AU	"		DIVE BOMBED RAILR EBOLI ITALY. BOMB
"	16	"	AS	"		DIVE BOMBED EBOL 500 LB BOMBS, STA

GRAND TOTAL [Cols. (1) to (10)]

557 Hrs. 20 Mins.

TOTALS C

FROM BILL EDWARDS

(Ed's note: Bill is the Newsletter Editor for the Cadet Class 42-B Association. His address is P.O. Box 1272, Litchfield Park, AZ 85340)

Your name as a contact for the 82nd Bomb Group was obtained from the Air Force Museum at Wright-Paterson AFB. Our Association is attempting to determine the current status of all members of the pilot class of 42-B. Can you assist me with any information?

(Ed's note: I wrote to Bill and told him I had never heard of the 82nd Bomb Group. I didn't tell him about the 82nd Fighter-Bomber-Slammer-Banger-Danger Group. Just kidding. I did send him a copy of the latest Newsletter which was the best I could do. If any of you guys were in 42-B please drop Bill a note)

<> <> <>

FROM JOHN HENDRIX

(Ed's note: Please refer to Ted Paper-master's letter on page 10 of March '92 Newsletter regarding the death of Oscar Martin in a well at Foggia 11)

I keep hearing various versions of Oscar Martin's mishap at Foggia. I know our memories are not what they once were but the reference by a contributor to the March '92 Newsletter gave me temporary shock since I saw no name that I remember as being present and the real heroes were not even mentioned.

I tried to call Doc Gerber but he wasn't home so I called Guy Bourgeois whose memory was very close to mine. Guy filled me in on some things I was not aware of.

Since Oscar was performing his assigned duty and three men who tried to save him almost lost their lives I feel the full story should be told.

A water pump (driven by a gasoline engine) - used to furnish water to the showers in the building behind the Link Trainer - had been placed on a platform near water level approximately 20 feet below ground level. From there it could push water up to the showers.

Due to the accumulation of carbon monoxide at the bottom of the well the pump's engine would periodically die. The regular keeper of the pump was on a pass and Oscar was filling in. When the pump stopped, the men in the showers called for water. Oscar went

down the ladder before the air cleared and was overcome by the fumes.

Someone heard his screams and dropped an extension cord for him to hang onto. The man then ran to 95th Transportation (only a few feet away) to get assistance. When he returned, Oscar had lost his grip on the cord and was no longer visible.

Doc Gerber, Guy Bourgeois and Curtis (?), all 95th medical people, went down into the well in an attempt to rescue Oscar - only to fall victim to the carbon monoxide. According to Guy, Doc immediately called for oxygen and some was close by in Transportation. More fast thinking brought the oxygen, a blower and a hoist to move the men from the well. Doc sent up his two semi-conscious medics and then he came out in a very unstable condition.

When Oscar's body was retrieved from the well there was no chance to revive him. As horrible as it was to lose one life, a very dedicated group went all out to save three others. This is the type of dedication that was always present in the best outfit that could be found anywhere and I will always be proud to say "I was a member of that group".

(Ed's note: Someone sent me a copy of an excerpt from Group History [Gr. HQ] for August, 1944:

"Three members of the Medical Department were awarded the Soldier's Medal during the period - S/Sgt. Guy Bourgeois, T/Sgt. Fred Gelonek, and Capt. J.H. Gerber. S/Sgt. Guy Bourgeois has, in addition, been awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service."

The excerpt adds a paragraph for each man that describes the effort taken by each to rescue Oscar. Further, the Group Newsletter also notes the courageous action taken by the three men.)

<> <> <>

FROM JACK DUNCAN

One of our good members borrowed a video tape from me a year or so ago and promised to return it to me. This tape was made at one of our reunions and it has great sentimental value to me.

Unfortunately (because of the pounding the old memory bank has taken over the last 70 or so years) I have forgotten his name. I hope he reads this note and responds with haste.

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

Am also enclosing some other info you might wish to include in the Newsletter.

(Ed's note: Thanks Jack for the info. It is interesting stuff and I may be able to use all or portions of it. To all of you out there who send in material you think might be appropriate to include in the Newsletter please know that I always read and appreciate the material. However, unless it relates specifically to the 82nd F.G. and/or the Association, I will probably not use it. I do keep it though because - now and then - I will need something to fill out a page, and - I never throw anything away. So keep sending things you think 82nd members will enjoy and/or appreciate)

<> <> <>

FROM STUMPY HOLLINGER (Phone Call)

Thanks for sending me the March Newsletter (Stumpy had pulled stakes in Yuma, Colorado and moved back to So. Calif. without leaving a forwarding address so his newsletter came back to us. Dick Willsie found him for us), it was another good one.

Now I have to tell you the story of how Col. Edwinston got to be my tentmate. You see, when I got back to Foggia from Russia there was a directive from 15th AF HQ to report to Bari immediately to relieve Ed Packard (another Lockheed Tech type) who was being rotated back to the States. Being the good soldier that I am I obeyed the orders and drove my jeep south.

After a couple of days it looked like there was nothing for me to do but sit around and that ain't for me Buddy. So I buttonholed a light colonel down there who looked like he had a little authority and I told him, "Hey, Joe, this place is driving batty how about a transfer back to Foggia 11?" All he said was, "You got it!"

So me and my jeep headed north and before long (about supper time) I was reporting to Col. Edwinston at his tent. After the usual protocol I said, "Well, I guess I better go find a place to bunk." He said, "No you don't." "How do you figure that?" "Because you can use that cot right there." He was pointing to an extra cot that was in his tent. I said, "Oh no, Colonel, I can't do that for heaven's sakes." "Whatsa matter - I'm not good enough for you?" I began to think the man was

serious so I said, "Is that an order, Sir?" He said, "You may consider it that."

So that was the way it was, Dickie!

<> <> <>

FROM VYSTA ADAMS

Dear Jo Ann (see - someone knows who's the boss around here),

We just arrived home on July 6 after a long long trip which included the 50th Anniversary of the 95th.

Read your card about your knee replacement. All my friends around here are pleased with theirs and I hope yours is as successful.

Hope you both will be at St. Louis.

Love!

<> <> <>

FROM CHARLEY & BETTE PINSON

Everything is on schedule at the present time. We are now checking with Williams and Tyndall people to see if they can come.

We received a letter from Darlene Thomas that her husband Joe Thomas had passed away Feb. 20 and she will not be able to attend the Reunion (Ed's note: Joe was a post-war member of the 95th at Grenier AFB in New Hampshire. We had some nice correspondence with him there for a while. We hadn't known Joe was planning to make it to St. Louis. Our condolences to Darlene).

The Days Inn at the Arch is a privately owned Hotel using the Days Inn registration system only. It was formerly the Bel Air Hilton. Though small, it is a first class hotel with a good reputation for service. It is not owned by the Days Inn Corp. We will be their only group that week. We have just been informed we have already filled up our allotted 150 rooms but we still have 50 rooms at the Drury Inn across the street. Their price includes a continental breakfast, a complimentary cocktail and free parking.

Please state in the Newsletter that we would appreciate registrations sent in ASAP so we can get a final count as early as possible (Ed's note: Charley's a dreamer. Let's hope Bette isn't!).

FROM TED KAUFMAN

I received your newsletter of March '92 in the mail. They always transport me back to the days of yore. I relive every incident as though I was still there. When I was there I wanted "To be home by Christmas". Well Christmas finally came so now I can look back to then. Dear Diary:

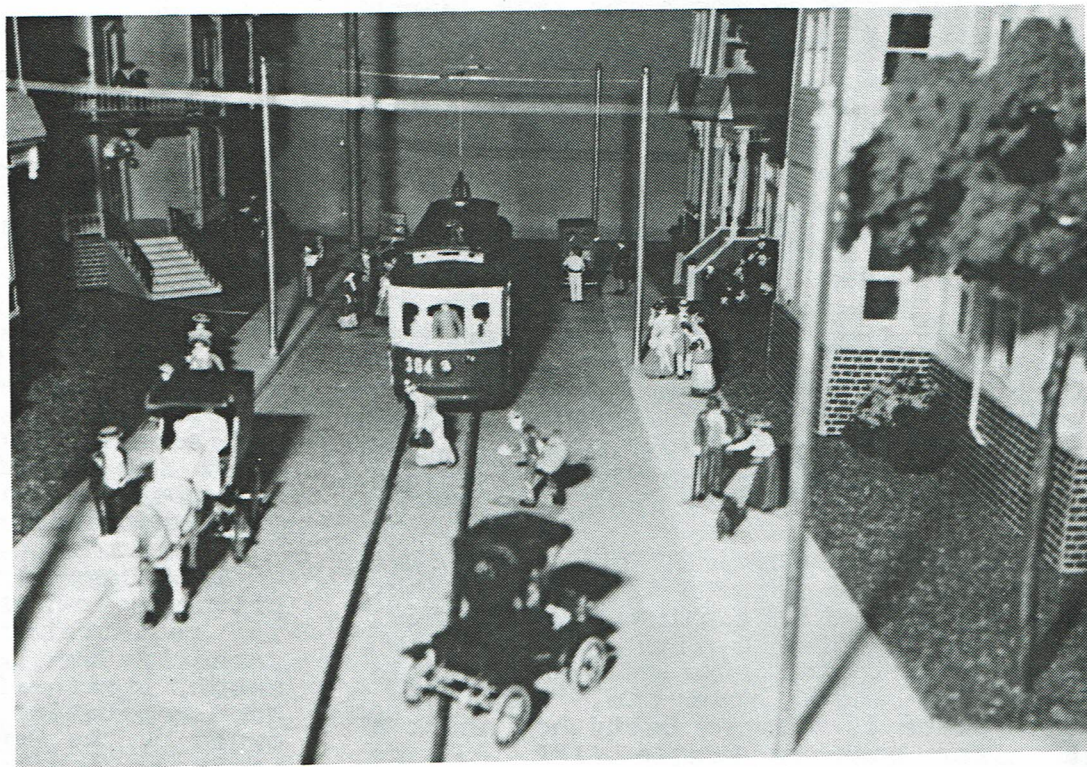
This issue is really special. The drawing of the P-38 on the back of the issue is exactly the same as I painted on the back of so many flight jackets. The photos of the nose art displayed throughout the newsletter was my piece of cake as I did a lot of that also.

I remember one incident. A new pilot asked me to paint a Varga Girl on his P-38 and the crew chief told me not to because it was bad luck. As a buck private I told him I was going to do it.

I started the painting and when I was only half through the plane had to go on a mission. I was surprised the brass would order a plane on a mission with only half of my nose art done. It must have been an awfully important mission.

Anyway, I waited for the mission to end so I could finish the painting. I knew he would be back - what Axis pilot would shoot down a plane with only half the nose art finished? Sure enough, the plane came back with telephone wires 82 miles long trailing from its tail. The crew chief was wild with me!

I had time to finish the painting because it took a while for the crew to repair the damage to the tail.



The P-38 finally made its start on another mission. I waited for its return because I wanted to show the crew chief that being so suspicious was nonsense. The plane never did return and the crew chief always blamed me for its loss.

On page 8 you printed a letter from John Kostyo. He mentioned getting excited over a new hobby of mine. I build miniature models of Victorian mansions (1/8th inch to a foot - they

(Continued from page 14)

fit into the palm of your hand). I go through magazines and books to find photos of mansions and then draw plans to my scale. From the plans I build the models from scratch. The time frame is 1914 - the year of my birth (Actually, though, I was never born. My mother said I was "unbearable"!).

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FROM BILL BRIDGEMAN

Do you think the guys will be ready for me in St. Louis? I've waited 40 years for this:

"The Sacramento Bee"

Mar. 27, 1992

Holes in One:

Bill Bridgeman, 92-yard
first hole at Bradshaw
Ranch, 8-iron.

(Ed's note: I will be, Bill, I'll steal your eight iron)

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FROM AMOS & MARY TURNER

We were pleasantly surprised to find Logan's poem on the front page of the Newsletter. Logan and his parents were also pleased. Your comments were also appreciated.

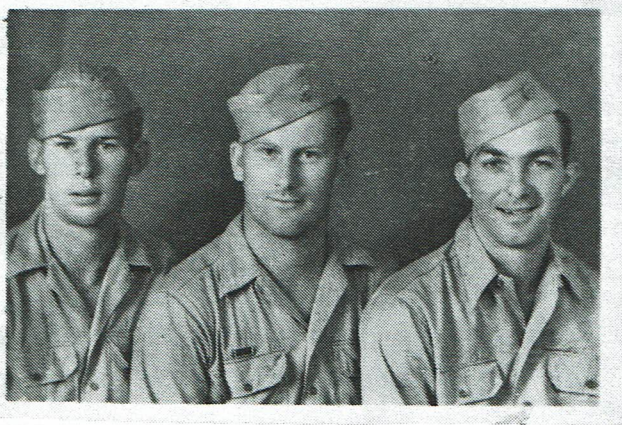
We received a very nice letter from Ralph Embrey.

<> <> <>

FROM ROBERT O. BROWER

Thanks for sending Joe Puetz' address. I'll try to contact him as soon as I can.

<> <> <>



R.O., Olaf Omlid & Walt Carlson

FROM BOB SPITLER

1st Fighter Group Assn. Reunion

(Ed's note: Since I'm a member of the 1st F.G. Association I get their newsletters and invitations to their reunions. Usually, over the years, we have been duplicating reunion dates so they haven't gotten space in our N.L. simply because we don't want our guys cutting out to go their reunions)

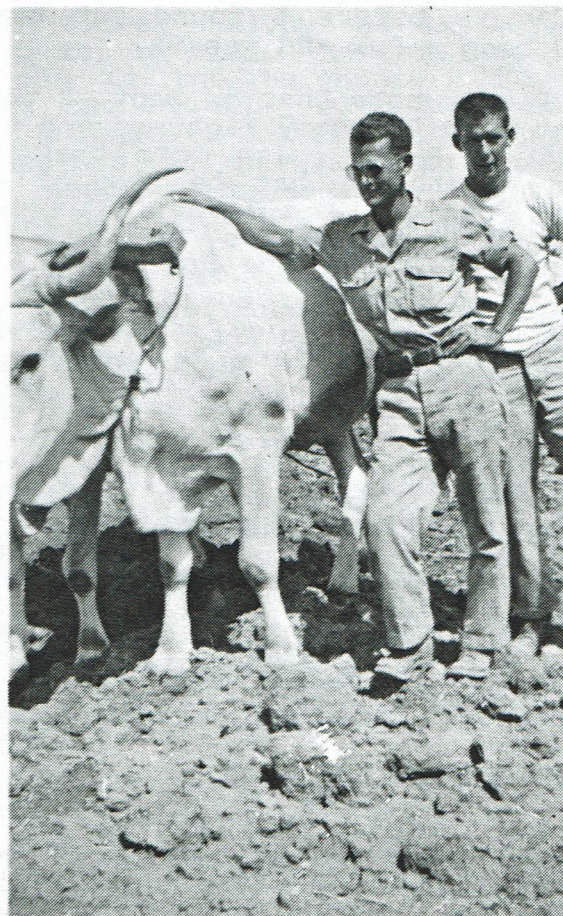
Place: Holiday Inn, Riverwalk, San Antonio (Ph 1-800 288-3927)

Dates: Sept. 17 thru 20 (Th-Sun AM)

Fees : Registration \$25
Golf (Fri) - \$18, Squadron
Banquets (Fri) - \$20, Sat
Banquet - \$20
Sunday Brunch - \$8
Room rates - \$65 Sngl&Doubl

Contact: Robert Spitler
850 Oliver St.
FILLMORE, CA 93015
(805) 524-2131

<> <> <>



Joe Puetz & R.O. Brower

Photos courtesy of Robert O.

FROM JOE SOLKO

(Ed's note: I met Joe in Asheville and learned there that he had been on the mission on Sept. 5, 1943 when my college pal, Lee Ragland (95th pilot), had been lost. I asked him if he could furnish any information that would shed any light on Lee's loss - thus his note to me. Because I think it would be interesting to many of you I am enclosing an enlarged copy of the page from his log book)

Enclosed is a page out of my log book. My remarks about the mission are very brief and apply primarily to the 95th Squadron.

The pilots I noted who were lost on a mission are listed as lost because we had no way of knowing just what happened. This was the case of Lee Ragland.

Please note that on Aug. 25th we strafed Foggia and I indicate we lost Rudy. Jim Rudy and I were classmates in Class of '42-K - graduating in Dec. of '42 - and we were tentmates in combat. After we lost Rudy on that mission (plus others) it was a couple of years before I found out that Jim had been a POW and was OK.

Please note that on Sept. 2 the 82nd shot down 24 enemy fighters and that we lost 10 P-38s (also note that in his log Joe notes that he thought he had shot down one). This aerial combat was against German F-190s, Me 109s, Italian Macchi 202s and some Fiats.

I'm sorry about your good friend Lee. I wish I could tell you more. Keep up the very good work you are doing.

UP AND AT 'EM

(Ed's note: Thanks Joe, I really appreciate the info and the thought that went into it. Also, I think that many folks who read the page from your log book will be able to bring the reality of our air war a lot closer to them and from a more intimate perspective)

<> <> <>

FROM CHARLIE CHARLTON

I'm writing this at the Air Force Museum Cafeteria over a cup of coffee. Ginny and I are visiting our daughter for a long weekend in Dayton. She (Libby) and "Red" the Asheville bartender will be joining us in St. Louis for our Annual Reunion.

I have made reservations for the 95th's 50th Reunion at Tyndall AFB for the 1st of May. Hope to see a lot of the guys there.

Last October Ginny and I had a two week trip to Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands! Wild! In February we spent two weeks in South Florida visiting friends and relatives and also spent three weeks in Los Angeles for Xmas with Patti and Guy.

Ah! The Joys of Retirement!

The enclosed may be of interest to the guys - especially the statement about the 82nd's many victories over the Japanese in the South Pacific! I know we had some long missions but I don't recall flying from Foggia to Fujii! Maybe Hattendorf can write to them and set the record straight.

See you in St. Louis.

(Ed's note: The clip Charlie sent is from "Sport PILOT - Hot Kits & Home Builts", May 1992. It contains an Ad for a Video entitled "FIGHTING LIGHT-NINGS - The P-38 Remembered" The "hype" for this video includes this statement: "Ace Joe Forsten describes the exploits of the 82nd Fighter Group that shot down 522 Japanese planes -- --."

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PHONE CALL FROM LEN KUCZMARSKI

Dick, old buddy, I'm calling from Louisiana. Eloise and I have been on a trip and while driving south and west of Cincinnati we found ourselves cruising through Carrollton, KY. "Hey," I said to myself, "This is the town my old tentmate in the 96th was from. I wonder if he still lives here?" Eloise said, "What on earth are you talking about, Leonard?"

I told her I was going to stop and look in a phone book. I did and I found his name, called him, and then stopped for a visit. I will give you his address so please send him extra copies of the Jackrabbits and the 82nd Newsletters.

By the way, do you remember Pearl Miller? "Sure do." Well, I think he was from Kokomo, IN but I also think he moved to Terre Haute, IN.

You send that stuff to Shepherd, hear!

(Continued on page 17)

(Continued from page 16)

(Ed's note: Frankly, though I did send some materials to Robert, I plumb forget about poor old Pearl Miller. Then, one day I picked up the Boise paper and there was an obit for Pearl Miller! Can you believe that? There couldn't be two Pearl Millers in this entire country, right? There it was, though, "Pearl Miller, 93, died of heart failure."

Well, our Pearl Miller certainly hadn't aged that much. I decided, though, to give Terre Haute a try and called directory assistance. I asked for Pearl Miller AND GOT A NUMBER !! Zounds! The phone rang and a lady answered and I asked, "Is Mr. Miller at home?" She said, "Why do you want to talk to him?" I said, "I'm calling long distance from Boise, Idaho and I was in the service with a Pearl Miller during WWII." "Oh," she said, "I'm the Pearl Miller here!"

Well knock me over with a pitot tube! She did say, though, that she had known of a man by the name of Pearl Miller in Terre Haute but she thought he had moved to Ohio.

So, Len, old buddy, we gave it the old Foggia 11 try, anyhow)

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FROM ROCKY JANASIK

During the recent 95th Fighter Squadron's 50th Anniversary held at Tyndall AFB, several old-timers of the 95th - including Olen Medley and John Hendrix - were discussing the recent deaths of Fred Baucom, John Bral, "Hank" Ford and other departed personnel of the 95th. It was suggested by Olen if I had any information relative to John Bral's death I should forward it directly to you. Therefore the following is provided for your consideration: John Bral (95th) died March 4 (Ash Wednesday) in North Plains, OR. John had suffered a severe stroke in 1985 which limited his activities including his attendance at 82nd Reunions. The fatal stroke on Sunday, March 1 - along with other complications, resulted in his death.

Catholic Church services were held on March 7 in North Plains along with Military Honors by Oregon National Guard members at the grave site.

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FROM ROBERT E. SHEPHERD

Received your publications. You fellows have done an outstanding (almost unbelievable) job putting all the stuff together.

I was in the 96th (an armorer) all the way from Muroc to Foggia and was a tentmate of Len Kuczmarski. Len missed the wonderful Mojave Desert as he joined us at Glendale.

There was one beautiful sight at Muroc - the jackrabbits frolicking in the moonlight on Muroc's dry lake. They had to be tough to exist in those conditions.

It's nice to know so many of you are still alive.

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FROM MRS. MARGARET BAUCOM

Sorry it has taken me so long to write. I am still a long way from catching up on my correspondence.

Fred seemed healthy the day he went hunting for rabbits. He came home and took one to the neighbors. He was sitting and chatting with them and - all of a sudden - no voice. He started for home and fell backwards on our back porch, hitting the side of the house and then the ground.

He had damaged his spinal chord and was paralyzed from the neck down and couldn't breathe on his own. He knew the score and it was too much for him to take. I know he is better off now but it is still hurts.

It was eerie that Bill Glowacki should call from New Jersey the day Fred passed away.

We have always enjoyed the Reunions with the 82nd Fighter Group Association. Keep up the good work.

(Ed's note: The Fred Baucoms have attended five out of the last eight Reunions)

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**Please Send Change
of Address to Roy Norris**

FROM BOB FACTEAU (To Jerry Loewenberg)

This may come as a surprise to you but I need some help. On the front page of the Aug. '91 Newsletter I saw John O'Niell's picture. I wonder if you could give me his address? After all these years, I remember that I became his Godfather when Father Madore baptized him into the Catholic faith in Foggia. John and I worked together in the mailroom and I was Father Madore's assistant until he was rotated stateside.

You may remember that Father Madore designed and we built the theater and chapel at Foggia 11. There are many good memories. Thank you for any help you can give.

(Ed's note: We called Bob to tell him we had no information as to O'Niell's whereabouts. Perhaps one of you out there can remember O'Niell's home town. With information like that we can often track down a long-lost brother in arms)

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FROM JERRY LOEWENBERG

Find the enclosed letter from Bob Facteau. Although I remember both Bob and Father Madore I have neither record nor recollection of John O'Niell.

I've written to Facteau telling him of my reference of his letter to you - the source of all our news. If you can help Bob - I know you will.

My Pat's in the hospital with stomach ulcers so I'm too preoccupied to do much research on anybody. Her medical problems have induced my complete exhaustion.

<> <> <>

Don't Forget

To Notify Bette
and Charley of Any
Changes
in Your Plans

FROM SHERIL D. HUFF

(Ed's note: Sheril is the Newsletter Editor for the 14th Fighter Group Association. They meet every other year as a Group and alternate years as a Squadron - I think. The 1st FG does somewhat the same thing. Harley Vaughn fought against 82nd Squadrons doing the same thing.

Be that as it may, Sheril is on our mailing list and I - his. He went ga ga over the nose art in our March Newsletter and I have sent him copies. He also sent me - as a gift - a beautiful silver dollar sized, gold P-38 coin. It has an engraving of a P-38 in flight and on the flip side there are 3 views in plan with specs engraved around the perimeter. The coins are made of a nickle-silver alloy by the Franklin Mint. It is a very classy commemorative coin and a very limited number were cast before the mold was destroyed)

About the P-38 coin. I have 50 of them that I would like to move at \$10 each. I hope you can put a notice in your N.L. as well as display yours at your St. Louis Reunion. I don't want to ship just one as the expense would be too great. Each one requires a shipping envelope, postage and insurance. If you would take orders before your Reunion then I could ship all to your address & that way I could pay postage & insurance.

(Ed's Note: If you wish a coin and you plan to attend the Reunion, send your check or money order for \$10 to:

SHERIL D. HUFF

3200 Chetwood Dr.

DELL CITY, OK 73115-1933

and he will relay them to me in St. Louis c/o Charley Pinson. If you do not plan to attend the Reunion but still wish a coin, send \$12 to Sheril to cover insurance and postage)

<> <> <>



FROM MELVA FORD

Thank you for your remembrance. In recent years Hank has won some battles with serious health problems. However, pancreatic cancer was one he couldn't.

There has been a wonderful outpouring of love and affection from our "82nd Family" and they would be pleased to know that Hank received full Military Honors at Arlington National. We wanted to have a "Fly By" but this hasn't been done near the Nation's capital for quite some time. Such involves closing down Dulles International and Washington National for one hour.

I am currently living at my daughter Claudia's house: 10005 E. Bexhill Dr., Kensington, MD 20895. I have our Pinehurst, N.C. house on the market and when that sells I will find a condo in the D.C. area to be near three of our children and our six grandchildren.

<> <> <>

FROM JACK NEWMAN

Thanks so much for your recent note.

I think you should know that I have good and unforgettable memories of my brief tenure with the 95th and the 82nd. Regrettably, I was not one of those who played a lasting role and formed some of what have obviously emerged as Lifetime friendships over an extended period of time. A fairly early course change removed me from my first "Air Corps" home.

As a consequence I am, in effect, an outsider. My loss, of course, and I cannot help but envy all of you who have so wonderfully kept your bonds of comradeship alive and warm over what - for many - amounts to an extraordinary half century.

With very best wishes.

(Ed's note: What a terrific letter!)

<> <> <>

Let's Get Behind Chuck

Luke for a Great

Reunion in Seattle

PICTURE, IF YOU WILL, THIS SCENARIO:

It is 11:30 PM, July 17 and I have just turned off the tube after watching Ted Koppel and I've retreated to Heinz Hall to commune for a while with my 82nd FG comrades.

This is the best time in this house to get any work done. There are no "Honeydos", no telephones ringing, no news programs, and no other urgent tasks to attend to. So now I can focus on the nostalgic needs of 500 assorted heroes and do what I must to try to keep tightened those marvelous bonds which hold our 82nd family warm and close.

It's almost an unbelievable phenomenon - this vibrant, pulsating mass of just folks that call themselves the 82nd Fighter Group Association. What is it that makes its heart keep beating today just as hard as it did in Corpus, in Snow Mass, in New Orleans, in Orlando, in Denver, in Boise, in Asheville, in Dayton, on the Queen, in Atlanta and soon in St. Louis? In Mojave, Eglington, Telergma, Souk El Arba, Grombalia, Lecce and Foggia 11! Big big question.

What has turned you guys and gals on?

Rarely does a week go by in which I don't get a pulse beat from one of you in the form of a letter or a phone call. Today, for instance, a long letter from Jerry Loewenberg. Clue me in somebody!

-rl

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FROM MAR-JO SPENCE

June 23, '92

Enclosed is a recent article from the Memphis Commercial Appeal about the "MEMPHIS BELLE". I thought maybe you Air Force guys would be interested. It's a good love story. I kept up with it during WWII and since then I've read a lot about the plane (and seen it in disrepair on a vacant lot until about a year ago) since that time.

We are doing fine - Spence is celebrating his 74th birthday today. We appreciate every day given to us.

We'll "Meet You In St. Louis"!

(Ed's note: #1 - Mar-Jo, it's a neat story and I'll try to fit it in.* #2 - T.O. Spence beat me into this old world by two years and ONE day!)

Sorry guys, I couldn't squeeze the "Belle" in.

<> <> <>

BRUCE & EMMA IRELAND

A LOVE STORY

Emma and Bruce haven't missed an 82nd Reunion since I met them at my first one in Denver in 1984. Bruce and I were pals in the 96th back in the Africa days while we were trying to dodge Duty Sergeants so it was great to pick up right where we left off with an old friendship. Emma immediately impressed me with her cheery disposition and her "down home" sense of humor. When Jo Ann was able to join me for the Atlanta Reunion she and Emma hit it off like a couple of old bidd (oops) buddies. And like many of you have done with newly found old friends - the Irelands and the Lings have visited each other's homes.

It was a great shock, then, when we learned last November that Emma had suffered a very serious stroke and that her doctors told Bruce her chances of coming out of her coma were little to none.

In the March Newsletter, four months later, I was able to report to you that Emma was able to say, "Hello Bruce!" Would you believe that on Saturday, July 18, Jo Ann and I chatted briefly with Emma - courtesy of Ma Bell?

On July 1, Bruce was able to bring Emma home where she can enjoy familiar surroundings. One is tempted to say Emma's recovery to date is miraculous but Bruce and the doctors know better. The doctors say her progress isn't due to their care or to the drugs but to some inward strength. Bruce has spent as much time as he possibly could at her bedside just talking and touching. In our view that's the principal source of Emma's recovery. Bruce says the outpouring of good wishes from the 82nd Family has buoyed him up and he feels significant healing has flowed Emma's way in that manner. We will continue to pray for Emma and Bruce.

THIS & THAT

The big question in the "What Else Is New" department is "WHAT'S WITH THE HISTORY?" The latest date for delivery is Sept. 13! The last bit of copy should be at the printers on July 28. If you will be at St. Louis we hope to have your copy ready there for you - otherwise it will be mailed to you. We had a nice long letter from Jerry Loewenberg. His back hurts and his doctor said surgery so he is opting for acupuncture instead. Pat is home now after her bout with ulcers. If you didn't read the bit about Bill Edwards in this issue, go back and read it again. I sent Bill our last newsletter and when he read the names of our Assn. officers he fired off a letter to Jerry with the question "Did you practice law in Long Island?" The answer, of course, was "Yes" and Jerry and Bill's father were friends. Again, when I was setting up the letter about the 1st Fighter's Reunion I took a second look at Bob Spitler's address: Fillmore, Calif. I spent some time there in the 30s so I called Bob and learned he had known my sister who lived there for a couple of years. It's a small world out there.

You will note there is no "Band Aid" Department in this issue. I simply can't keep track of all of your aches and pains. I hear about most of them second hand and I really need someone in each Squadron to keep track of the ill and lame in their units. PLEASE HELP! I did have a long talk with John Rogers (kidney replacement) and he's doing as well as expected. I had a note from Lee Thompson along with an Italy addition of the Stars & Stripes. As I am writing this note (1 AM, July 27) we have somehow "lost" Dixie Sloan. He was supposed to show up for a Gala in Garden Grove but didn't. Willsie called here 1st and we have alerted other folks. We haven't yet called Pinkertons but we ARE worried. Look, friends, we ain't what we used to be so please watch your step.

- rl

MEDITERRANEAN ALLIED AIR FORCES

Public Relations Section

SPECIAL HANDOUT FOR RELEASE WITH AIR COMMUNIQUE MAY 12

The 82nd Fighter Group, a veteran 15th AAF P-38 Lightning outfit, was awarded two Presidential citations for distinguished merit Thursday in a ceremony at the unit's base. The 82nd leads Mediterranean fighter groups with over 440 aerial victories.

The first citation was for leading a mass Lightning low-level attack on German air bases in the Foggia area August 25, 1943. Lt. Col. George M. MacNicol, Memphis, Tenn., later killed in an accident in England, led the strafing mission as the commander of the 82nd. Over 150 JU-88's and fighters were destroyed or damaged on the ground.

The attack was designed to neutralize large forces of enemy bombers which might have been used against Allied forces which subsequently landed at Salerno.

The second citation was for a battle Sept. 2 with enemy fighters attempting to intercept a formation of B-25 Mitchells attacking railroad yards in the Naples area. The Lightnings encountered 70 aircraft in a battle which carried them 100 miles to sea.

The 82nd shot down 24 and destroyed and damaged others for its most successful single day's combat. Not a single Mitchell was lost.

The citations were read by the Group's wing commander, who also presented one silver star, five DFC's, one soldier's medal and 10 air medals. Present at the ceremony was Madeleine Carroll, former film star, now a Red Cross worker. Maj. Gen. Nathan F. Twining, commanding the 15th AAF, sent the following congratulatory message:

"The ingenious and daring attacks carried out by the 82nd Fighter Group on the 25th of August and the 2nd of September, 1943, are being justly recorded in the air force history today. In the years to come every member of the 82nd fighter group may look back with pride upon this recognition of a job well done. To those who made the supreme sacrifice and to all of you today, I give my heartiest congratulations."

The Unit is now commanded by Lt. Col. William P. Litton, Shaw, Miss., and 623 Mulberry st., San Antonio, Tex. Previous commanders have included Lt. Col. John W. Weltman, 706 North Milton avenue, Baltimore, Md., who pioneered Lightning bomber tactics in North Africa; Lt. Col. Ernest C. Young, Stillwater, Okla., who skip-bombed the Pantelleria underground hangars; and Col. MacNicol.

Members of the group have been awarded 12 silver stars, 120 distinguished flying crosses plus two oak leaf clusters; five soldiers medals, and 350 air medals. The group has flown nearly 700 combat missions.

First operating in the Mediterranean in December 1942, the 82nd has participated in all the major aerial campaigns since then. For the last five months its Lightnings have escorted 15th AAF heavy bombers in missions throughout southern Europe.

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Margaret Baucom found this 1944 15th AAF release among Fred's things.

A LATE BULLETIN FROM THE NEWS ROOM
(No Pictures)

It is 12:30 AM, Sat. August 1, '92 and I have a cable from Roy Norris that came in by Pony Express at high noon yesterday and it concerns that old P-38 cowboy Dixie Sloan. Roy found Dixie in the Veteran's Hospital in Dayton. He had been transferred from the hospital at Wright Pat where he had had a hernia operation on June 4. On June 14 complications set in because of bad circulation in his right leg and foot.

Now Roy told me one thing and Willsie told me another and what I got was that the crew chief had to replace a bad super charger. This wasn't working too well so they called the Group Engineering Officer in and he looked things over and was about to tell operations to haul the old bird to the boneyard when the salty old line chief (I think they called him "Buck" - probably another cowboy) came by and said, "Hell, that old crate can still pull a lot of mercury. T.D., hand me your water pumps!"

Now I won't stake my stripes on the veracity of the above but I do know the old cat (actually a pussycat) just about gave up #9. You will be pleased to learn Dix plans to exercise his reservation at Days Inn in St. Louie.

Here's another bit of information that may tickle your innards a little:

THE HISTORY BOOK IS
NOW IN PRODUCTION IN
MISSOURI.

Yesterday I talked to Ms. Laurie Lawrence at Walsworth Press Co. in Marceline, MO. She told me that all copy had been received from Steve Blake and they have now begun the "Stripping Process." I asked her about that and she said (and this is the truth) that all of Steve's copy is cut into vertical strips which the History Board can then take to Honolulu with them. I thought she said they were used to make Hula Hula skirts.

That doesn't sound much different than all the other dog and pony stories that have come out of Boise about the history over the last three years does it?

In any case, we have been given a Sept. 15 date by the printers and they will strive to better it. AND, my friends, there's not much else I can say.

Back To This Newsletter

It's now 1:15 AM and I've got to find some way to bring this newsletter to a roaring close. It's the one thing about being editor that I really don't like. The thing is, I have the feeling I've left something out. That I've maybe offended somebody. That I've made too many errors.

Noticeably absent from this issue are the special departments of the "Obits" and "Band Aids". We certainly don't wish to pass over lightly our losses of Claud E. (Hank) Ford, Fred Baucom, John Bral and Mrs. Betty Perrone (Betty passed away in June. Our sincere condolences are extended to their families and friends.

I fear, too, that there are many many hurts out there among our 82nd Family. Please, please let us know. It is important to us to be able to share your pains, illnesses and yes - your frailties. Write or call your Squadron Representative or a buddy who can pass the info on to us.

I had a sad note from Mary Ann Koman that Charles (97th) is in a nursing home and strokes have limited his memory. She said we should discontinue his newsletters.

To the many of you who just drop me notes (which I try to acknowledge but I have a good forgetter) with sometimes e interesting clippings and/or pictures - please know they are much appreciated and enjoyed.

And now (2:27 AM) we're calling it a night and another newsletter. See you in St. Louis!

- that's 30