

# STRAFER



498th SQUADRON

499th SQUADRON

500th SQUADRON

501st SQUADRON

345th Bomb Group Reunion Association

April, 1985

## Reunion Committee Making Progress

Make your plans NOW! The 1986 Reunion will be held in San Antonio, Texas on November 12-16, 1986. The site will be the beautiful LaMansion Del Norte Hotel.

Members have been asked to serve on various committees. These committee members plan to meet in San Antonio in early April, 1985 to develop a coordinated and budgeted Reunion.

At the present time, the "team" consists of the following: Registration: **Shuler & Mary Elizabeth Gamble**

### Headquarter's Updates

Spring! . . . To all of you out there in the snow belt of the country, and the path of inclement weather across our country, this is indeed a magic word. To those of you who dwell in the warmer soft weather clime, this is still a word to signify a change. A time of awareness, new thinking, planning, and an all around feeling of well being. A time of "awakening" again.

This word 'awakening' is one I would apply to the Headquarters group. We are indeed planning, thinking, and already working toward our goal of making our '86 Reunion the best ever.

Headquarters group now has its new letter *Headquarters Happenings* in circulation, mailed periodically to Headquarters men, to keep us working as a unit. The feeling on this is "enthusiasm", if the amount of phone calls and letters I have received is any indication of its acceptance. We are now working on making corrections, additions and deletions to keep an updated roster of Headquarters men.

Had a very nice letter from **Bruce Hoy** in New Guinea, along with a copy of a beautiful magazine called *Paradise*, in which he had written an article titled "America's Missing Angels".

*Continued on page 4*



**Bob Fain**

Air Port Reception: **John Hamner**  
Site Selection Squadron & Group Parties: **George Musket**

Special Events: (Golf, Aircraft Displays, etc.) **Tommy Gilstrap**

Entertainment: (Group Program & Tours) **Betty Hamner & Dee Musket**  
Hospitality Room: **Melvin Best**

Travel Agency Services: **Debbie Frazier** (UCT Travel Service)

In addition, we are in need of all the help we can get. If you are close by and can attend our planning sessions, you are invited to help on these various committees. Please contact **Bob Fain**, Chairman, P.O. Box 388, Mexia, Texas 76667.

A preliminary agenda has been selected, and the various committees will meet to discuss, plan and prepare a super program for you and your family.

As the plans finalize, we will keep you posted through *The Strafer*.

**Bob Fain**  
1986 Reunion Chairman

## The President's Message

We all owe to Ken McClure, **Ed Bina**, **Jeff Blackmon** and others a sincere and large vote of thanks for an outstanding reunion in Columbus and Dayton, Ohio in 1984. Their efficiency in planning and effectiveness in implementation was indeed an inspiration to all of us and will be hard to top.

**Bob Fain** and his group of Texans have begun work on our Reunion in San Antonio, November 12-16, 1986. The Headquarters hotel has been selected and others are being investigated for those that need space for campers and the like.

The same travel agency that managed our 1984 Reunion will handle transportation, tours, reservations, other matters, and will also be present to manage this one.

I wish to personally thank all of you who have sent to me pictures of the monument and of the trip to the AF Museum in view of the fact that I was a trifle too busy to take my own. Also, it is good to hear from those of you who



**Ben Fridge**  
President

write or call on any subject. We do have quite a fraternity in this organization and there are few outfits, if any, that can claim our comradeship and accomplishments.

To have a better and more frequent *Strafer*, we need more stories. Any ideas? If so, please communicate with me or **Ken McClure**.

**Ben Fridge**

## 499th Has New Vice President

**Charles Lloyd Schell**, newly elected Vice President of the 499th Squadron, was discharged from service at Ft. Sam Houston on September 28, 1945.

Lloyd worked in oil fields in the drilling department for 6½ years, and started his career in law enforcement on April 1, 1952 in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. He served the Bartlesville Police Department, Copan Police and Washington County Law Enforcement for thirty three years. Currently, he is now the Chief of Police in Copan, Oklahoma.



**Charles Lloyd Schell**

Lloyd and his wife Odessa have been married for 44 years. They have 2 daughters living in California and are proud of their 5 grandchildren. They also raised a nephew and a niece, who have 1 child each.

Lloyd is a member of the American Legion and the VFW, while Odessa belongs to the Auxiliaries.

## Rave Reviews Given To "Warpath Across The Pacific"

Glowing reports from 345 BG members have been received by **Larry Hickey**, author of *Warpath Across The Pacific* regarding the historical study of the group. Here are some of the quotes received:

—"It is the most complete, true, down to earth and vivid description of the 345th B.G. that could ever be put between the covers of a book." (Richard Mohlke-500th)

—"It was even greater than I hoped . . . I could not only put myself back to where and when I was but also learned so much more than I was ever aware of before." (Lowell B. Plock-501)

—"Have just finished reading it for the third time . . . this is an outstanding work! I did not believe anyone could accurately present the history without experiencing it. But I have to admit you probably did a better job than (if) you had been emotionally involved. You have done an excellent job; you have extremely accurate information; you have captured the feeling of the men involved." (Harold E. Storm-501st navigator)

—"Warpath (Across the Pacific) is a classic . . . It is undoubtedly the most comprehensive account of an air unit ever published or to be published". (Cliff Hanna-Group Intel. Officer)

—"a magnificent achievement, both in text and in picture reproduction". (Bill Witherell-Group Historical Officer)

—"stunning . . . better than I supposed it could be . . . a thoroughly professional and comprehensive piece of history . . . the language is a kind of triumph . . ." (Dr. William C. Hilton, Ph.D.-499th Historial Officer)

—"an outstanding job". (Maj. Gen. Richard D. Reinbold, 499th C.O.)

—"it is magnificent . . . a blockbuster . . . a completely comprehensive account of the 'Air Apaches'. You have done a great service to a great unit and all of the men of the 345th salute you and your efforts". (Maurice Eppstein-Group Adjutant)

It's still not too late to order your copy of this fine publication. The price per book is \$64.95 plus \$2.00 shipping cost per book. (Colorado residents only add 3½% sales tax). Send your orders to: International Research & Publishing Corp., P.O. Box 3334 - High Mar Station, Boulder, Colorado 80307.

## Individual Squadron Rosters To Be Available

Recently, the mailing list service that was used by the 345th BG announced that they were no longer able to supply our needs for rosters and mailing labels.

The membership lists have been updated to the best of our ability, and copies are being sent to the Squadron Vice Presidents for proofing.

It is expected that the individual Squadron VP's will return their copies to us with necessary corrections, deletions and additions. These changes will then be done on our computer files.

From time to time, members have moved and neglected to advise us of their new address. The post office does not forward third-class mail, and unless we pay an additional fee to the

## Memorial Bench Fund Behind Schedule

Plans to install benches at the memorial site by late summer will not be possible unless contributions increase dramatically. To date checks have been received from 75 members totaling \$2708 which represents only 5.7% of the 1300 members on the roster. With a goal of \$8000, this represents a short fall of approximately \$5300.

It was interesting to note that of our 1300 members, only 23% (or 299 persons) provided the funds to complete our memorial now located at the Air Force Musuem. I know that many personal budgets were extended to attend the last reunion and Memorial Dedication. Also, the hard winter endured by most of us left little time to think of sending our contributions. Now that spring is here, let's open our hearts and send what you can, especially those of you whom we have not heard from.

If you are unable to make a contribution, please understand that you are still a valued member of the 345th Bomb Group and that you have earned and own an equal share of our Memorial.

I hope all can some day visit the Memorial which pays tribute to all those who served with the best Bomb Group ever!

Remember, too, that your contribution is tax deductible. Send all contributions to Ed Bina, 912 W. Main St., Westerville, OH 43081.

**Ed Bina**  
Chairman, Memorial Fund

post office, they will not even advise of any changes.

In addition, if your address label is incorrect in spelling or incorrect in address information, please let us know immediately. We apologize in advance for any errors, but please understand that the people working on these lists do not know us and are unable to correct such mistakes unless we advise them accordingly.

There have been requests for rosters, and they will be available as soon as all the corrections have been entered. If you are interested in a copy, please send your request to American Automotive Publications, Inc., 1906 Fontenay Court, Columbus, OH 43220. The charge is \$3.00 (including shipping) for each Squadron list (\$15.00 for 345th Bomb Group).

## Members Who Are Deceased

As of this issue, we have been informed of a number of former 345th members who have passed away.

(500th Squadron) **John Nicolazzi**, **George Kuter**, **Charles Mahan** (missing in action), **Thomas B. McDaniel**, and **Augustus Elgie**. In addition, mail was returned as undeliverable from **Robert Jenkins**, **George H. Braun**, **Nelson H. Millard** and **Jim Lewis**. Anyone having information on these 4 members should contact **Fred Moore**, 899 Lulu Avenue, Las Vegas, NV 89119.

(Headquarters) **Gus Gurowitz**, Brooklyn, NY; **Thomas Brady**, Stuart, FL; and **Thomas Midland**, Taylorville, IL are reported as deceased.

## Lifetime Memberships Now Available

The following addition to the Constitution and By-Laws was inserted at Article IV, Section 4 by the Officers of the 345th Bombardment Reunion Association at a meeting on September 6, 1984.

*There is established within the Association a class of membership to be called "Life Membership", such membership to be attained by a member paying a one-time fee of \$100.00. Each such \$100.00 is to be deposited in a separate trust fund. The annual proceeds (interest, dividends, etc.) may be used to defray current expenses of the Association.*

*The principal is to remain in the fund until such time as the fund is terminated by action of the Board of Directors. Upon the termination of the fund, or of the Association, the entire amount of the fund shall be donated to Purdue University in the form of a scholarship fund in the name of Major General **Jarred V. Crabb, USAF (Ret)**.*

The funds from dues and Lifetime Memberships are the only source of income to the Association, according to **Ken McClure**, Treasurer. In the past, some members have given donations, which are also tax-deductible. Membership cards have been ordered and will be mailed sometime in April to those members who have already sent in their "Lifetime Membership" dues. Members interested in becoming "Lifetime" members should send their \$100.00 membership fee to the 345th BG, % Ken McClure, Treasurer, 2770 E. Main Street, Columbus, Ohio 43209.

Membership cards will be sent to them for their receipt regarding this tax-deductible contribution.

## HOLDERS OF PHILIPPINE LIBERATION RIBBON Now Authorized A Medal

Many WW2 veterans entitled to the Philippine Liberation Ribbon are unaware that a medal is also authorized.

The medal is awarded by the Philippine Commonwealth and is *not* a U.S. decoration.

## 345 BG Official Travel Agency Selected

The Officers of the 345 BG Reunion Association have selected the UCT Travel Service of Columbus, Ohio as the Official Travel Agency for the 1986 and the following reunion.

Many members remember Debbie Frazier from the 1984 reunion where her talents and abilities were appreciated. Her professionalism and guidance helped the committee in all aspects of their programming.

In addition to working with Bob Fain and his committee for the San Antonio

event, Debbie is planning a proposed South Pacific Tour for the 345th. UCT Travel Service will coordinate the 1986 Registration procedures, provide on-site supervision during the Reunion, design sightseeing tours especially for the 345th based on the events scheduled by the Reunion Committee, arrange special transportation requirements for the Reunion, and will arrange complete air transportation to and from San Antonio for members.

In addition, her company will provide toll-free wats line for all airline and tour reservations, and will provide complete information regarding the Reunion program, events and reservations.

UCT will also provide complete accounting details to the Secretary-Treasurer and the Reunion Chairman. After the Reunion Committee completes their plans for 1986, further information will be in future issues of **The Strafer**, as well as the toll-free telephone number.

UCT will also provide complete accounting details to the Secretary-Treasurer and the Reunion Chairman.

After the Reunion Committee completes their plans for 1986, further information will be in future issues of **The Strafer**, as well as the toll-free telephone number.

## Strafer Editor Selected

In order to establish a more orderly flow of information to the members of the 345th BG, it has been decided to publish **The Strafer** on a regular quarterly basis. To facilitate the preparation and planning of a quarterly publication, it was felt that an experienced editor was needed.

Since August, 1983, the 345th BG has used Phil Rack to help in this regard and he was also responsible for the printing. He currently publishes newsletters for GM and Chrysler dealers who wish to promote their service and parts department.

Phil's firm, American Automotive Publications, Inc., will be responsible for editing, printing and mailing of **The Strafer**, as well as maintenance of the roster and mailing lists.

**Ken McClure** currently coordinates the Group's needs with the editor. Participation by Squadron VP's and by members of the group in submitting stories, story ideas and photos is most welcome.

Also, the various Committee Chairman will channel their news to the editor, who will assist in rewriting if necessary. Letters to the Editor are also welcomed.

Please send all material directly to: Phil Rack, Editor; **The Strafer**, % American Automotive Publications, Inc., 1906 Fontenay Court, Columbus, Ohio 43220.

(All furnished photos will be returned to you if requested).



Debbie Frazier

# Gathering of Eagles Honors Forty Years of Service

William J. Cavoli has forwarded an invitation to all members of the 345th BG to attend the "Gathering Of Eagles, 1986", to be held in the Las Vegas Convention Center from Sun-

## Headquarter's Updates

*Continued from page 1*

This article dealt with unaccounted for flying service men who gave their lives in the defense of New Guinea. Beautiful article . . . and we who were there know we also had our share. Wish you all could read it. Bruce Hoy is curator of the National Museum in Papua, New Guinea.

Ken Gasgeb of Oklahoma has a word he would like to pass on to the 498th Squadron. Ken is in touch with a WWII fighter pilot in Oklahoma City who owns a B-25 complete with Falcon Head and Indian Insignia. This gentleman would be willing to fly this aircraft to our '86 reunion, if cost and particulars could be worked out. If you are interested, I will pass info. on to Ken McClure and Ben Fridge, and you can carry on from there.

Time changes all things, and ironically in this case, it proves itself out. It used to be the Squadrons reported to Headquarters. Now Headquarters is reporting to Squadrons. We are "Awakening".

### Charles Metzler

*Editor's Note: Larry Hickey, author of Warpath Across The Pacific, has also reported a B-25J with the markings of the 345th BG which is owned by the Mid-America Air Group in Frederick, Oklahoma. At this point, it is unknown whether the two reports are in regards to the same aircraft, or whether there are two individual planes with the 345th BG markings in the Oklahoma area.*

day, April 27 through Thursday, May 1, 1986.

Gen. Russell E. Dougherty, Executive Director of the Air Force Association, points out that this will be an "International Event", and marks the 40th Anniversary of the Strategic Air Command, the Tactical Air Command and our former Air Defense Command.

Members of the 345th BG who are interested in further information should contact the Air Force Association,

1501 Lee Highway, Arlington, Virginia 22209.

Promotional material is available describing the 5 day program, including the tentative programs, ceremonies, displays, exhibits and air shows, as well as symposiums pertaining to Aerospace Education.

A toll-free number is also available for this information. Phone 1-800-553-3337 and ask for Dottie Flanagan.

## 40 Years After

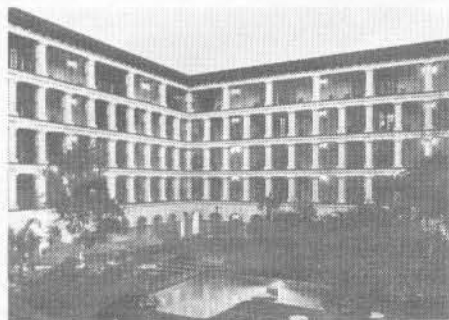
### To The Men Of The 345th Bomb Group

Graced with youth and foolish questions  
He asked, "What was it like there?"  
"It was a long time ago" I said, but  
I knew what he wanted, a story  
Of ancient fire and the faded snarl  
Of a B-25 lugging a belly-full of iron  
Over the endless and patient water;  
A story of ships and cities destroyed  
And gallant planes returning in the dusk.  
"Were they brave?" he asked, but I  
Could give to him no proper answer.  
He wanted a scene from a movie;  
Strutting actors, sneering at their fate,  
Flying down the barrels of alien guns,  
Dying with a brilliant, brittle speech  
Of duty and of honor. Oh, there was  
Enough of both, but I had never heard  
Anyone speak about them. They were carried  
Quietly; worn in silent assurance, and  
I knew that they belonged to those who wore them.  
"I don't remember any more," I said.  
"But, what were they like?" he whined.  
"They were men!" I said, "and I  
Shall not, in this life, see their like again."

**William C. Hilton**  
Prof. Humanistic Studies  
Wayne State University  
Detroit, Michigan  
499th Bomb Squadron

## REUNION

Nov. 12-16, 1986



**La Mansion Del Norte**  
**San Antonio, Texas**

345th B. G. Reunion Committee  
2770 E. Main St.  
Columbus, Ohio 43209

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Kenneth Gastgeb  
1730 W. Robinson  
Norman, OK 73069

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U. S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
COLUMBUS, OH 43200  
PERMIT NO. 2529