

# STRAFER



498th SQUADRON

499th SQUADRON

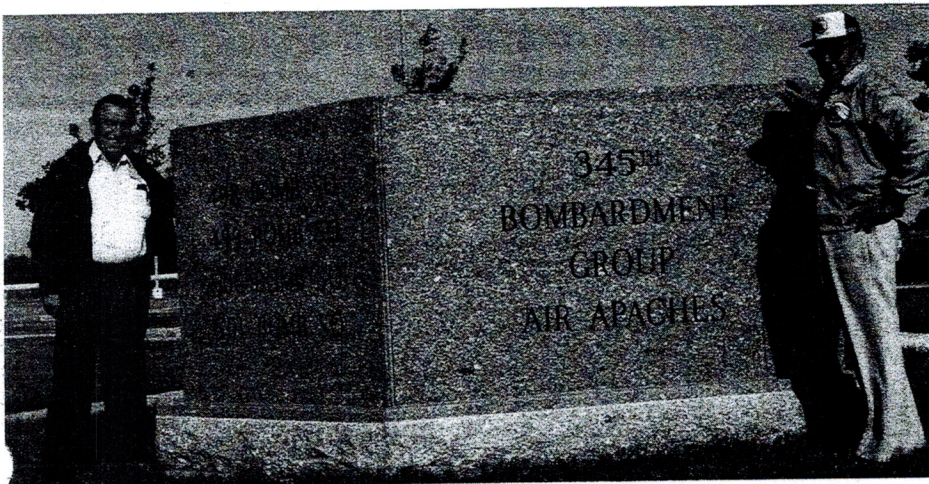
500th SQUADRON

501st SQUADRON

345th Bomb Group Reunion Association

July 1986

## They Said It Couldn't Be Done!



Ed Bina and Jeff Blackmon proving it was done!

## Share the Mystery of New Guinea's 'Missing Plane'

Some good reading in a top-level magazine — and book — await members of the 345th and others who remember Papua in World War II. **Susan Sheehan**, who spoke at the Women's Breakfast during the Columbus Reunion, is the author of *A Missing Plane*, a gripping true story that involves some connections to the 345th. The story began its three installments in mid-May in *The New Yorker Magazine*. It also is scheduled to come out later in book form.

Ms. Sheehan is married to Neil Sheehan, also an author and a Pulitzer-Prize winning reporter for the New York Times who covered the Vietnam War.

Ms. Sheehan's book is being published by Putnams.

Her true story involves the finding of the wreckage of a World War II U.S. military plane in the New Guinea jungle. Such a finding is not uncommon, and a special U.S. team has been locating planes and identifying the

dead for some years. The suspense and mystery lie in who was on the plane and what was their mission.

The story, in 3 installments, can be found in the *New Yorker Magazine* issues of May 12, 19 & 26, 1986.

### Can You Beat This Record?

Sending his best regards "to any of the 498th B.S. that might remember old "Cross Bob" in the New Guinea campaign," Bob Cross reports flying a total of 128 missions with 743 combat hours.

He says he walked out of four cracks, out of the top of the aircraft twice.

His missions included 56 from Port Moresby to Biak Island, 26 under General Chenault and 46 missions from Yokota Air Force Base, Japan. He was wounded at Kavieng, New Ireland.

Bob Cross sends his best to all who might remember "The Inpatient Virgin," Major Kilgore and crew. "Good health and happy happy to all."

When **Ed Bina** came up with the idea of building a 345th Memorial at the Air Force Museum, many told him it couldn't be done. Most felt contributions received would not be sufficient to meet the goal. As usual the 345th came through funding the Memorial and the benches that are now in place.

As of 15 May 1986, a total of \$20,553 was received. Of 1,315 members on the rolls, about 10.1% contributed. There were 266 donations of \$100 or less and 71 of \$100 or more. Of those larger donations, 6 came from HQ, 16 from the 498th, 11 from the 499th, 8 from the 500th and 30 from the 501st.

Of donations under \$100, 12 came from HQ, 44 from the 498th, 75 from the 499th, 59 from the 500th and 76 from the 501st.

Also, \$250 was received from a 38th Bomb Group member.

Among the first to respond to the call were **Colonel True** from HQ, **John K. Zollinger** from the 498th, **C. L. Shell** from the 499th, **Robert T. Henderson** from the 500th and **Stanley J. Roberts** from the 501st.

Although the Memorial and benches are paid for, additional funds could be used to maintain the site. In addition a tree planted on our site would be an outstanding addition and would add shade and beauty to our Memorial. Any amount would help.

If you haven't contributed as yet, and would like to be included as a contributor to the 345th Memorial, any amount, however small, would still be welcomed.

**REUNION  
REGISTRATION  
FORMS ENCLOSED  
PLEASE MAIL  
IMMEDIATELY!**



# Chaplain Ed Karnis Retires with a Footlocker of Medals

Col. Edward J. Karnis thinks he may have been "the last Air Apache Bat outa Hell on Active Duty."

Ed retired last fall from the U.S. Army, where he was the oldest Chaplain on duty and the senior colonel on active duty in the Chaplain Corps.

He was a navigator with the 345th Bomb Group, 499th Squadron, flying 48 combat missions. And his decorations from World War II and later fill nearly half a page of single-spaced type:

Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Department of Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Army Meritorious Service

Medal (2), Purple Heart, Armed Forces Reserve Medal (3), Atlantic Theater Ribbon, Southwest Pacific Theater (7 stars), Vietnam Ribbon (4 stars), Viet Nam Service Ribbon, Army Overseas Ribbon (2), Humanitarian Service Medal (2), Republic of China Defense Medal, U.S. Presidential Unit Citation, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, Philippine Liberation Medal (1 star).

Plus: World War II Victory Medal, National Defense Medal (2), State of Delaware Service Medal and Air Medal (4).

Ed had attended Annapolis just before World War II service. He left the

service — for a time — with the rank of Captain in the Air Corps in 1946.

He got a college degree and attended the FBI Academy, later serving as a Special Agent in Detroit, Miami and New York.

But that wasn't enough, by any means. Ed entered St. Mary Seminary and University in Baltimore in 1956 and in 1960 he was ordained a Roman Catholic priest. Ed returned to active duty as Chaplain and Major in the U.S. Army at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

In 1967 Ed was Brigade Chaplain for the First Air Cavalry Division in Vietnam. He later served as Chaplain at Fort Dix, New Jersey, as Command Chaplain for the U.S. Army Security Agency in Europe and as Division Chaplain of the Third Infantry Division, Europe.

Ed also served at Fort Benning, Georgia, Fort Wadsworth, New York, Fort Meade, Maryland and in the Republic of Korea.

Just before retirement, Ed was Chaplain at HQ, Frankfurt Military Community in Germany.

## Former Lt. Madson Gets DFC, 40 Years Late

Last fall, **Richard P. Madson** of Fort Dodge, Iowa — formerly with the 499th Squadron's — received the Distinguished Flying Cross for extraordinary achievement in taking part in aerial flight at Saigon, Vietnam (then Indochina), April 25, 1945.

The honor came only about 40 years late.

According to the *Fort Dodge Messenger*, Madson explained that the records probably were lost because his outfit moved quite a bit.

He said he "never tried real intensely to get the award."

When Madson earned the award he was First Lieutenant with the 345th Group (M) 1036, Navigator, Army Air

Corps. He was in service from July, 1942, to October, 1945.

Madson's Distinguished Flying Cross was presented in Fort Dodge by U.S. Rep. Jim Lightfoot of Iowa.

The mission for which Madson received the award sank nine Japanese vessels in addition to destroying barracks and warehouses and seven other vessels, according to the award citation. It stated that Madson's "control and self-possession did much to relieve the tension accompanying the run and contributed to the success of the attack."

Madson's explanation was that in the Saigon bombing his plane ran into more anti-aircraft fire than expected and he changed the route so his crew got out where other planes hadn't.

## 345th's Distinctions Recalled

A newspaper's V-J Day 40th Anniversary story gave **J. Edward Myers** a chance to recall his experiences with the 345th Bomb Group. Myers is a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel and a retired IBM engineer living in Greencastle, Indiana.

For the *Greencastle Banner Graphic*, Myers recalled how the 345th escorted Japanese aircraft to make plans for the formal signing of the Japanese surrender on the USS *Misouri*.

"Aside from the escort honor given to our bomb group, what we feel is especially unique is the fact that we

were the very first Americans to make contact with the former enemy under other-than-war conditions."

Myers also noted that the 345th lost more men than any other Air Force group and also sank more ships than any other group in the Pacific.

### REUNION

Nov. 12-16, 1986

La Mansion Del Norte  
San Antonio, Texas



**Al Naigle**, who had served as 500th vice president, was buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

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**Tom Cunningham** was buried at North Fork, California, his home, with a VFW service.

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Word has been received from Jean Assmann of the death of **Florian Assmann** on 31 August 1985. She said they had always hoped to attend a reunion, and maybe she will join us some day in the future.

\*\*\*

Phyllis W. Rice, wife of **Charles E. Rice Jr.**, reports from Lutherville, Maryland, of his death on 12 February 1986.

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**Ralph S. Wallace** of the 500th died recently. His plane, the "Tondelayo," was featured on the cover of *Warpa Across the Pacific* by author Lawrence J. Hickey. Wallace was the pilot who flew the famous mission over Rabaul in the fall of 1943. He is survived by his widow, Bonnie.



# Registration Time Is Now!

The 345th Bomb Group plans for the San Antonio Reunion have been finalized, and we are anxiously waiting to receive your reservations so that we can complete the minute details required to make this another outstanding event for you.

The reunion committee has spent many dedicated hours in preparing many special and exciting events for you. You will see our agenda on page 2 of this reunion insert, along with a new event being put together by Maury Eppstein.

Please skip to page 4 for complete instructions for your reservations, as flight reservations are a separate chore, hotel reservations are handled directly by the hotel, and our Reunion Reservations are handled directly by Security Travel.

Page 3 is the form for your participation in the Reunion events. When you have completed this form, cut pages 3 & 4, and mail to Security Travel. Pages 1 and 2 are for you to keep as a reminder of the agenda, and for other information and location map.

I know that you will thoroughly enjoy your visit to San Antonio with all of its Texas charm and Latin flavor. Such a setting will make your visits with old friends truly an enjoyable and entertaining adventure.

Looking forward to seeing all of you again in San Antonio, I remain,

Yours truly,  
Bob Fain  
Reunion Committee Chairman

## SONGS OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC **INTER-SQUADRON SONG COMPETITION**

OK, you aspiring comedians, singers, entertainers . . . here is your opportunity to show what you can do. As part of the Group Banquet program Saturday, Nov. 15, there will be a singing competition between the Squadrons with prizes to be awarded the winners. The contest will be conducted under the following rules.

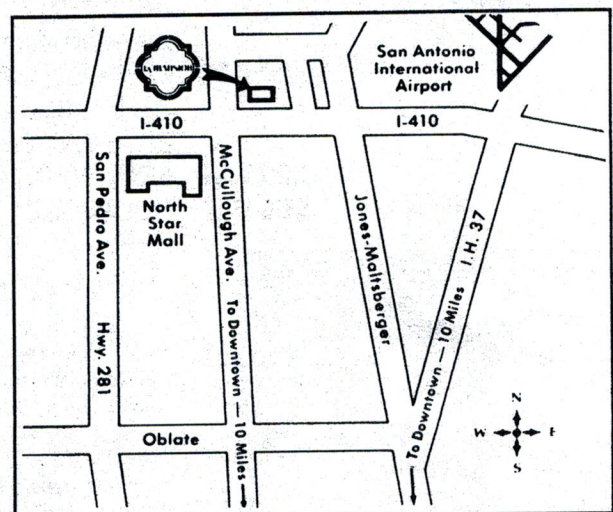
1. Each Squadron may have a team not to exceed six men, one of whom is to be their spokesman and leader.
2. Each team will have a limit of five minutes to present their offering.
3. Songs must be from the WWII era, military or otherwise.
4. Words/language, etc. must be edited so as not to be offensive to ladies present. If too "raunchy", the team will be disqualified.
5. Each group of singers will be responsible for their own accompaniment.
6. Performance will be judged for:
  - a) Choice of material; b) Musical quality;
  - c) Originality of any unusual costumes or uniforms, if any.
7. Following the performances, impartial judges will decide the winning squadron and appropriate prizes will be awarded.

Start organizing your Squadron team NOW so you will be competitive in the contest . . . and pay particular attention to rules #4 and #7 above.

Final instructions will be forthcoming at San Antonio. Meantime, crank 'er up — it's going to be some kind of contest!



The Alamo



## November 12-16, 1986

The La Mansion Del Norte Hotel  
San Antonio, Texas



345th Bomb Group Reunion

# Air Apaches

November 12-16, 1986



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

## Agenda

### **WEDNESDAY November 12**

- 1:00 PM HOSPITALITY ROOM OPENS  
REGISTRATION BEGINS  
GOLFING AVAILABLE  
NORTH STAR MALL — 1 block from hotel.
- 5:00 PM MEETING OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
- 6:00 PM BRIEFING OF REUNION ACTIVITIES

### **THURSDAY November 13**

- 9:00 AM REGISTRATION OPENS  
HOSPITALITY ROOM OPENS  
LEAVE FOR GOLF TOURNAMENT — fees payable at country club.  
OPEN TIME — many sights to see in San Antonio. The new  
North Star Mall offers Saks Fifth Ave., Marshall Field & Co., Foleys,  
Frost Bros., Joskes & many, many Specialty Shops.
- 6:30 PM BOARD BUSES TO "NIGHT IN OLD SAN ANTONIO"  
Fun-filled evening Fiesta (buses courtesy of hotel).
- 11:30 PM RETURN TO HOTEL BY BUS

### **FRIDAY November 14**

- 9:00 AM OPEN OPTIONAL TIME
- 1:00 PM LEAVE BY BUS FOR LACKLAND AFB for Military Review.
- 4:00 PM HQ's & 501st SQD REMAIN FOR OFFICER'S CLUB PARTY. REMAINDER  
OF GROUP RETURN TO HOTEL FOR THEIR BANQUETS.
- 11:00 PM HQ's & 501st SQUADRON RETURN TO HOTEL.

### **SATURDAY November 15**

- 9:00 AM MEN'S GROUP MEETING — Select officers and location of next reunion.  
LADIES BREAKFAST — The story of The Yellow Rose eloquently  
presented by Mrs. Esther Hardin.
- 11:00 AM OPTIONAL TIME — You may elect down-town inner city tour of the  
Alamo, Institute of Texas Culture, Governor's Palace, El Mercado,  
River Walk, or River Boat cruise.
- 3:30 PM RETURN TO HOTEL — Prepare for Group Banquet.
- 6:00 PM GROUP BANQUET & closing ceremony at La Mansion Del Norte Hotel.



### **Our Own Night In Old San Antonio**

Through a special effort on the part of our Reunion Committee, special arrangements have been made for a special NIGHT IN OLD SAN ANTONIO to be held in honor of our own 345th Bomb Group. This special event is patterned after the Fiesta San Antonio, a four night annual event. Of course, our special "block party" will only be a one night affair.

The event will be in the La Villita Historical District (one of San Antonio's original settlements). You will be amazed as the evening is transformed into a kaleidoscope of sound, sight and taste. The entertainment, food and fun includes special foods, drinks, favors, flowers, strolling mariachis, band, and floor show. The cost is \$31 per person, and includes the food and drinks.

This is an event you will remember forever.



# Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Squadron \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Wife's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Guest Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Total In Party \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Flt. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Carrier \_\_\_\_\_

Departure Date \_\_\_\_\_ Staying At \_\_\_\_\_

Each flight will be met by Limosine from the La Mansion Del Norte — No charge for this service. Signs will be posted for assembly of arrivals.

**ALL PRICES ARE PER PERSON — EXCEPT FOR COUPLES REGISTRATION**

Registration Fee: **Couples:** \$25.00 No. \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Singles:** \$15.00 No. \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**THURSDAY (November 12)**  
**Nite in Old San Antonio Fiesta** \$31.00 ea. No. \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Includes food and drink. Round Trip Bus Service compliments of La Mansion Del Norte Hotel).

**FRIDAY (November 13)**  
**Bus Fare to Lackland AFB Military Review** \$ 4.00 ea. No. \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**SATURDAY (November 14)**  
**Ladies Breakfast La Mansion Del Norte** \$ 7.50 ea. No. \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Downtown Inner City Tour to Alamo, El Mercado, etc.** \$4.00 ea. No. \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Group Banquet at La Mansion Del Norte** \$16.00 ea. No. \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL ENCLOSED:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

If handicapped, please indicate any special accommodations needed: \_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN NO LATER THAN OCTOBER 1, 1986**

Make checks payable to: **SECURITY TRAVEL AGENCY, INC.**  
 Dept. 417  
 Columbus, Ohio 43215

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, call Security Travel Agency collect at 1-614-461-8962, and identify yourself as a member of the 345th B.G. (Phone calls for hotel reservations are not accepted. Phone the hotel directly at their Toll Free Number — further information on next page).

**RECREATION VEHICLES:**

For those arriving by recreational vehicle, there is a campground called CAMP SIX, 1784 Austin Highway (4 miles from the hotel). Reservations can be made by calling them at (512) 821-6494.

**GOLF PLAYERS:**

Indicate your desire to play:  
 No. \_\_\_\_\_ of players  
 And days you desire to play: \_\_\_\_\_

Fees will be paid at the country club.

We need this information to arrange for transportation.

**ALL RESERVATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY OCTOBER 1, 1986**

CUT ALONG THE DOTTED LINE AND RETURN BY OCTOBER 1, 1986



# Registration Information

There has been some last minute changes, and this page is to help you in the complicated task of your air reservations, hotel reservations, and reunion reservations.

First, meet **Christy Algeo**, who will be personally handling the details of our reunion. Christy did not have a name change. Any confusion you might have is due to our previously introducing you to her sister, Kim. Kim is happily preparing for a blessed event, and her duties have been taken on by Christy. We are very impressed with Christy's abilities, and with her help we are looking forward to another very successful reunion in San Antonio this November.



Please read the following instructions for registering for the 1986 Reunion. There are 3 procedures for you to follow. They include separate instructions for obtaining your air carrier reservations, separate instructions for making your hotel reservations, and separate instructions for making your reservations for the reunion activities.



**EASTERN**  
We earn our wings every day™  
OUR OFFICIAL AIR CARRIER

*Fly with Eastern Airlines and save 45% or more for ALL 345th Bomb Group Reunion Attendees. This special discount is effective from November 11 to November 17, 1986 and is available only on Eastern Airlines.*

*For reservations, call Eastern Airlines directly on their TOLL FREE number (between 9 AM to 8 PM EST — Monday through Friday).*

Outside of Florida 1-800-468-7022  
Inside Florida 1-800-282-0244

To take advantage of these fantastic savings, YOU MUST REFER TO THE EZ ACCESS CODE NUMBER 11P32 when making reservations. This number has been assigned to the 345th B.G. Reunion in San Antonio.

**DO NOT CALL YOUR LOCAL EASTERN AIRLINE OFFICE EXCEPT IN CANADA!** For additional information, call Security Travel collect at 1-704-525-0833.

## LA MANSION DEL NORTE HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Enclosed you will find an envelope for your hotel reservations. All information that you will need for hotel accommodations are printed on this envelope, including a TOLL FREE number for any other questions you might have in IN REGARDS TO HOTEL ACCOMODATIONS ONLY.

Please note that you must send your HOTEL RESERVATION DIRECTLY TO THE HOTEL, and pay your hotel reservations DIRECTLY to the hotel. DO NOT MAKE YOUR HOTEL RESERVATIONS PAYABLE TO THE 345th B.G.

**LA  
MANSIÓN  
DEL  
NORTE**

San Antonio, Texas



### REUNION ACTIVITIES RESERVATIONS

On the back side of this page is your form for registering for the 1986 San Antonio Reunion and all of the activities in which you wish to take part.

Fill out this form with your choices of activities, and mail directly to SECURITY TRAVEL AGENCY, along with your check for the activities that you have chosen. Your check should also be payable directly to Security Travel Agency.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, YOU MAY CALL COLLECT (614) 461-8962 AND IDENTIFY YOURSELF AS A MEMBER OF THE 345th BOMB GROUP.

(Collect phone calls for hotel reservations will not be accepted by Security Travel ... call the hotel direct on their Toll Free number).

Security Travel Agency, Inc.  
Dept. 417  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

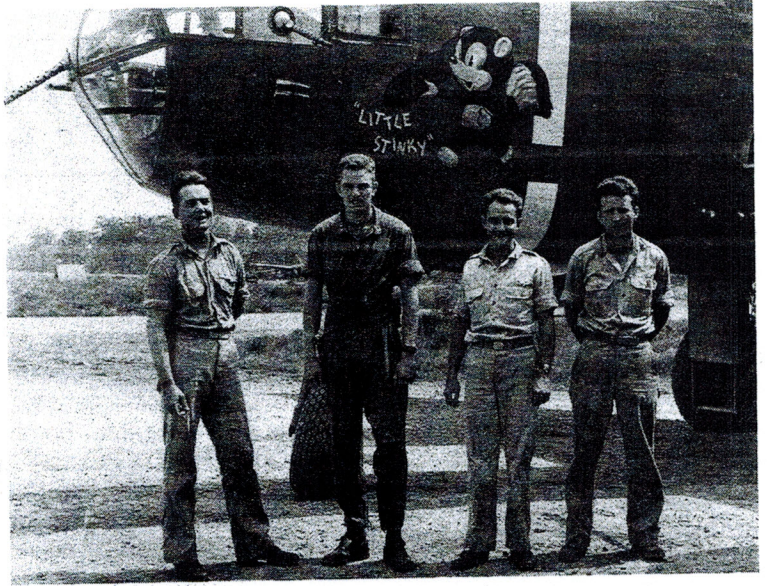
**RESERVATIONS AND ALL PAYMENTS MUST BE IN BY OCTOBER 1, 1986**





**Who is This Man, and  
Where is He?**

*(See Picture Note C on Page 4)*



**Can You Identify  
These People?**

*(See Picture Note B on Page 4)*



## **Strafer Photo Quiz**

**Who are These People and  
Why Do They Look Happy?**

*(See Picture Note A on Page 4)*

**Where Do You Think  
You Are Now?**

*(See Picture Note D on Page 4)*





# STRAFER Shorts...

The Aviation Cadet Alumni Association is seeking former pilot cadets. Information on flight class, primary, basic and advanced locations should be sent to Maj. Bob White (USAF Ret.), 54 Seton Trail, Ormond Beach, Florida 32074. The purpose is to help others locate former classmates.

The effort is non-profit and will not be commercialized, Maj. White reports. He asks a stamped envelope be included for specific class information.

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**Bruce Hoy**, curator of the aviation museum in Papua, New Guinea, reports to **Ken McClure** of Columbus, Ohio, that he enjoyed a visit from the 500th Bomb Squadron group who came through his territory recently.

"Hope one day you will be able to make it back to these shores — after all, you did leave a B-25 in the waters off Manus," Hoy wrote. He has been instrumental in helping to find downed World War II planes in New Guinea and has been written up by writer Susan Sheehan in her articles and book titled *Missing Plane*.

\*\*\*

Randall Bond, art librarian at Syracuse University, is looking for material for a book he is preparing on World War II airplane nose art.

Bond says he is seeking individuals "who either executed such art or used it on their aircraft. I am interested in how and why subjects/motifs were chosen and any memories/stories about individual examples." He says he also

is interested in anyone with photos of nose art, which "will be promptly returned after copying."

Bond can be reached at 205 Bird Library, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York, 13244-2010.

\*\*\*

Ex-navigator, bombardier and co-pilot **Rip De Pascal** remembered New Guinea and other wartime Pacific locales in an article for the Tuscon Citizen on the 40th Anniversary of V-J Day.

De Pascal, now a teacher at Tuscon's Amphitheater High School, recalled how the war hit him when he and other graduates of an Army Air Force navigator and bombardier training school arrived on New Guinea.

"We were replacing people who forgot to come back," De Pascal said.

He also described flying a B-25 as low as 50 feet above the ground under command of **Col. "Pappy" Gunn**.

## Sign Up for 5th AF Memorial Foundation

Memberships in the 5th Air Force Memorial Foundation are available, and current members are reminded to send in their \$2 annual dues. The address is Post Office Box 764, Columbus, NC 28722.

Be sure to list the 5th Air Force units you served in and the dates. Also, indicate the 5th Air Force reunion groups you belong to.

## PHOTO QUIZ ANSWERS

### Picture Note A

499th Squadron officers were especially happy when they inherited a beautiful clubhouse, complete with concrete floor, at **Dobodura**. The 345th had moved to Dobodura from Moresby in December, 1943, and the 22nd Bomb Group with their B-26 Marauders was just being pulled out of combat and relocated from Dobodura to the Townsville area. So the 499th got a ready-made camp, and a chance to meet the nurses of the 10th Evacuation Hospital.

Circling from left to right are **Ralph Stevens, George Cade, Leo Fleniken, Pat Goforth, Jack Hoopes, Julian Baird** and **Glenn Taylor**.

### Picture Note B

In this May, 1943 photo, from left, are: **Capt. Ben Fridge, Lt. Bailey, Lt. Van Perzee** and **T/Sgt. Thompson**.

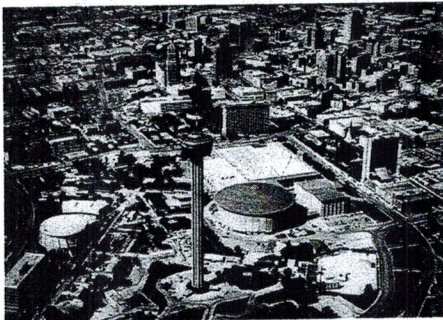
### Picture Note C

**Cpl. Bill Evans** staffs the 499th Squadron Post Office at **NADZAB, New Guinea**. Bill not only was postmaster, he also ran a library for the squadron. When the squadron was getting ready to move to Leyte, Bill knew space was at a premium but he was determined to take the library. He said the library qualified as medical supplies and he would load it all in an ambulance.

### Picture Note D

The 345th Bomb Group Headquarters at **Dobodura, New Guinea** around November, 1943.

## REUNION Nov. 12-16, 1986



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

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

FIRST CLASS  
U.S. POSTAGE  
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