

# STRAFER



498th SQUADRON

499th SQUADRON

500th SQUADRON

501st SQUADRON

345th Bomb Group Reunion Association

May 1987

## Reunion '88 Updates

As mentioned in the February issue of *The Strafer*, a committee meeting was held January 17, in Norfolk, to set in motion plans for Reunion VII to be held there September 7-11, 1988. Much was accomplished and from all indications, our next gathering is going to be a huge success.

In response to personal invitations, the following Air Apaches came to the meeting on a volunteer basis to help out and to assume responsibility for the various reunion committees.

From Alabama: **Jones Burson**, HQ

From California: **Maury Eppstein**, HQ; Association Pres.

From Connecticut: **George Mordecai**, 501

From Delaware: **Clifford Faircloth**, 498

From Florida: **Vic Tatelman**, 499

From Maryland: **Charles Banz**, 499; General Chairman; **Lou Higgins**, 499; Co-Chairman; **Charles Chard**, 498

From New York: **Henry Reynolds**, 498

From Ohio: **Ken McClure**, 499; Association Treasurer; **Brenna Weimann**, Security Travel Agency

From Texas: **Lynn Lee**, 501

From Virginia: **H.P. Barney**, 500; **William Cavoli**, 500; **Larry E. Davis**, 498; **C.J. Ellen**, HQ; **Wood Harrell**, 500; **Roger Lexell**, 500; **James Minnick**, 501; **Martin**

**Wood**, 499; **Sallye DiVenuti**, Military Reunion Coordinator for Norfolk Convention & Visitor's Bureau.

The above attendees are listed (continued on page 2)

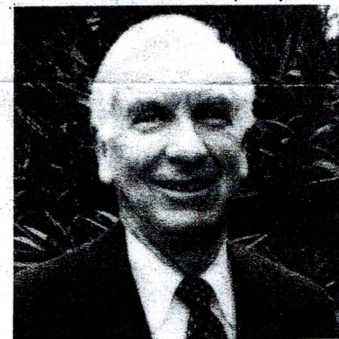
### President's Message

With this issue of *The Strafer*, we welcome our new Associate Editor, Sheila Batt. She will handle production and keep things moving for the 345th. We wish her much success working on our behalf.

We hope to continue our history of setting new attendance records with each reunion, hopefully surpassing San Antonio's total to keep the string going. Read the '88 reunion updates elsewhere in this issue.

We all know of some former 345th men who thus far have not been located and therefore haven't been with us at these gatherings. Give yourself a job and a job and go to work locating some of the "lost, strayed or stolen" Apaches. There are hundreds of them out there somewhere. They will really be happy you contacted them.

Shifting gears a moment — we urge you to join the 5th Air Force Memorial Foundation if you haven't already done so. **Bill Darwin** (HQ) was Vice



**Maury Eppstein**  
President

President of that Association in its formative years. **Bill Cather** (501) is the current VP. In addition, **Jim MacWilliams** (499) is Secretary, so the 345th is right in there.

Our Group is down the list a bit in membership compared to all the outfits in the 5th AF; we should do something about that. You can be joining now. Contact **Jim MacWilliams** at PO Box 764, Columbus, NC 28722 for details. Let's move the 345th up to the top. Future *Strafers* will contain news of big things in the offing for the 5th AFMF.

Happy Mother's Day, Happy Father's Day, Happy July 4th!

**Maury Eppstein**



Group Shot of Norfolk Meeting Attendees

To everything there is a season. It is the season of change, a time of new hope, as Spring peeks through the dreary winter.

I hope all you Headquarters men again made it through another winter. And we Headquarters men all hope the

## HEADQUARTER'S REPORT

entire compliment of the Bomb Group is now looking forward to new accomplishments. The first months after a reunion always seem to be a sort of vacuum — everything in limbo and not much in the way of excitement. But soon, that will change. It's not too early now you'll catch yourself saying, "Norfolk '88."

## 498th Squadron

Norfolk promises to be a good 1988 reunion site. We attended the planning meeting in January with other squadron and headquarters folk and enjoyed the territory's interest spots.



Henry J. Reyns  
Vice President

The 498th banquet room is reserved. Several members volunteered to help: **Don Stout**, entertainment; **Ira Schaub**, dinner plans; **Charles Chard**, tour co-ordinator. Start making plans now!

Don't miss the '88 gathering.

Speedy recovery to **Mrs. Lester (Evelyn) Howard**, who has been ill. Their address is: 405 Glasgow Road, Cary, NC 27511.

Additional names are on our roster, results of San Antonio discussions. Let's keep it up!

## Reunion Update

(Continued from page one)

geographically to emphasize the distance travelled by the volunteers, an indication of their cooperation and willingness to help make '88 a first class party. As with previous reunions (even as in combat) when men of the 345th were called upon, they responded. This was no exception.

We again have the job in capable hands and those working on our behalf deserve our gratitude and appreciation. General Chairman Banz and his Co-Chairman, Lou Higgins, have a good crew to assist them. The results of their efforts will be something to look forward to— so start planning for Norfolk, September 1988.



Charles O. Metzger

One of the Headquarters men who has not put the word "reunion" to bed is **Jones Burson**. He is actively planning and working toward a "mini reunion". Jones has contacted a number of Headquarters men in the Southeast and mid part of the country. This reunion is planned for September 1987 in Nashville, TN. More information will follow in future *Strafers* and in headquarters letter to that group. If you are interested, write: Jones Burson, Route 1 Box 832, Cropwell, AL 35054.

Charles O. Metzger  
Vice President

## A LOOK AT "BUCK" BANZ

Born and reared in Baltimore, MD, **Charles Banz** was commissioned at Williams Field, AZ, on December 3, 1942. Four days later, he joined the 345th Bomb Group (Squadron 499) at Columbia, SC, as one of the original co-pilots. He flew his first 20 missions overseas with **Norm Hyder**. The additional 35 missions, he flew as first pilot of the plane *Jingle Bells*.

In late March 1944, Banz returned to the US and married on May 3. He was then assigned to Fort

Dix, NJ. The detachment there came out of Wright Patterson AFB.



Charles "Buck" Banz  
Reunion General  
Chairman

Their purpose was to fly varied experimental missions using several different types of aircraft. At one point, Banz maintained a proficiency in nine different aircraft, from the C-45 to the B-17, as well as the A26, P38 and P59 (jet).

Banz left the service in December 1946. He returned to flying in 1951 with the Maryland Air National

Guard, while working for the C & P Telephone Company. He retired from C & P Telephone in March 1981.

## HIGGINS HISTORY

Assigned to the 499th in November 1942, **Lou Higgins** trained with and went overseas with pilot **Claude Burger's** crew: **Dick Baker**, copilot; **Tom May**, engineer; **Calvin Carson**, radio operator; **John Mushok**, gunner; **Vic Bright**, crew chief; Higgins, navigator. The crew was together until July 7, 1943, when it was broken up permanently; they piled up on take-off.

Three months later, Higgins returned to flying status. He flew 47 missions and was sent stateside nine months later. He married Stada, was assigned to Columbia AAB for a brief time, then entered pilot training. He was in Advanced Flying School, flying TB-25s when the war ended.

After his discharge in September 1945, Higgins returned to Washington D.C. and worked with HQ Dept. of Army. He continued with them until his retirement in 1975.

Higgins has seven children —

four boys, three girls. He also has six "super" grandchildren and another due in October. Congratulations to Higgins on another point — his daughter Susan was married March 29, 1987.

## HANNA'S HYPE

**J. Clifford Hanna** just loves the 345th! He nicknamed the bomb group the "Air Apaches"; he founded and was editor of the movies depicting the original "Warpath Across The Pacific" and flew enough missions to receive the Air Medal — all during his tenure with the 345th. On top of all this extracurricular activity, Hanna has "the dubious distinction of being the Group's oldest member." He turned 89 in March.

## IN MEMORIAM

Guy H. Anderson  
Alfred E. Bissell  
Lee Roy T. Boehneman  
Roy R. Bray (499)  
Rodney L. Byars  
Dale O. Eley  
Carl I. (Pete) Gritz  
M.B. King  
George L. Matthiesen  
Anthony Orbinati  
Charles E. Rice, Jr.  
Ralph Wallace  
Francis Wenger

Eugene, OR  
Chadds Ford, PA  
Burton, TX  
Livonia, MI (2/26/87)  
Houston, TX  
Cadillac, MI  
Pond Creek, OK (11/30/86)  
San Antonio, TX (3/15/87)  
Huntington Beach, CA  
Albuquerque, NM  
Lutherville, MD  
Camp Springs, MD  
New Providence, PA

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

To all Bomb Group members: Please inform us of any address changes, however minor. Third-class mail is NOT forwarded. If you have a summer/winter home, let us know as soon as possible. Also, please check the label on your *Strafer* for any mistakes in name, address or zip. Send changes/corrections to: Sheila Batt, 1906 Fontenay Court, Columbus, Ohio 43220. (Please enclose phone number to add to our list as well). Thank you!

## CAN YOU TOP "POP"?

Leo Hennen (499th) has been extremely busy since his 1945 discharge from the 345th.

It started in 1946 when he married his wife Evelyn. They lived in Minneapolis, MN, until 1950, then moved back to the farm in Morris, MN. They've been there ever since.

But that was the easy part. Hennen and his wife are the parents of 6 boys and 7 girls. This is not a misprint; they really do have 13 children. Four of his sons are salesmen; one lives in Columbus, OH, two in Cincinnati and one soon to live in Indianapolis. The two remaining sons are farmers. Of his daughters, Hennen reports four of them are RNs; one is a court reporter; one is a forestry technician in Montana and the youngest (19) is studying to be a legal secretary.

Pop's kept alive the belief of much love and communication is needed to rear a strong Christian family. Congratulations to both you and Evelyn, Pop, but aren't you ready for a vacation?

## DUES ARE PAST DUE!

If you have forgotten to pay your 1987 dues, please send them to Ken McClure at 2770 East Main Street, Columbus, OH 43209.

## 498th BOYS MEET 43 YEARS LATER



Charles Rosevear met his pilot, Roland Lamb, on Feb. 19, 1987, in Naples, FL. They will be meeting again in Louisville, KY. The last time the two men had seen one another was 1945 in Lugon, the Philippines.

## Newly Elected Officers

### Association Officers:

PRES – Maury Eppstein, 800 Mountain Home Rd, Woodside, CA 94602  
VP – Shuler Gamble, 2011 Stebbins Drive, Houston, TX 77043  
TREAS – Ken McClure, 5581 Chowning Way, Columbus, OH 43213  
SEC – Elbert Bosworth, 839 W 21st St, San Bernardino, CA 92405

### Reunion Committee Vice Presidents:

498th – Henry Reyns, Box 281 Beattie Road, Rock Tavern, NY 12575  
499th – Dale Rapp, Route 1 Box 552R, Pottsboro, TX 75076  
500th – Fred Moore, 4952 Vivaldi Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89102  
501st – Ed Bina, 628 North Deresch, Antigo, WI 54409  
HDQ – Charles Metzler, 1019 8-Mile Road, Cincinnati, OH 45230

# AIR APACHE VIDEOS

**J. Cliff Hanna** has a list of video cassettes about the 345th available to any interested parties. A brief synopsis:

**ROUGH RAIDERS:**

39 minutes, Black & White/Sound

A history of the 500th Squadron from its departure for overseas to its role escorting the Japanese Emissaries from Japan to Ie Shima, 19 August 1945.

**LOW LEVEL ATTACKS:**

12:30 minutes, Color/Sound

Scenes at Dobodura, New Guinea; followed by attacks on Kavieng, New Ireland, 15 February 1944 and on Hollandia, 3 April 1944.

**BIAK TO THE PHILIPPINES:**

10:30 minutes, Color/Silent

Story of the Group's move in October 1944, mainly that of the ground echelon by ship; the aftermath of 12 November Kamikaze attack on the Thomas Nelson; getting settled at Dulag, Leyte.

**MISSION TO KYUSHU:**

7:40 minutes, Color/Silent

How **Colonel Doolittle** led the Group against Taramizu, suspected site of the Baka bomb production, 5 August 1945.

**LOW LEVEL SIGHTSEEING:**

4:15 minutes, Color/Silent

A trip 27 August 1945, with **Colonel Coltharp** and war correspondent, Jack Carlisle of the *Detroit News*, to see what the "A" Bomb had done to Nagasaki. We didn't get over Hiroshima; it was socked in.

**CALL WORD "BATAAN":**

9:42 minutes, Color/Silent

Call word assigned by MacArthur to the two planes bringing the Jap Emissaries to Ie Shima. All other Japanese planes were grounded.

We are part of the 345th Group's four plane escort. At Ie Shima, the emissaries are transferred to C-54s for the flight to MacArthur's Headquarters in Manila. The Betty bombers' air crews stayed behind, awaiting their passengers' return the next day. Then, when one Betty failed to check out, its crew and passengers had to remain overnight at Ie Shima.

The prices for 1/2" video cassettes are:

- ROUGH RAIDERS** ..... \$68.90
- LOW LEVEL ATTACKS** ..... 37.70
- ABOVE TWO ON 1 CASSETTE** ..... 71.50
- BIAK TO THE PHILIPPINES** ..... 37.70
- MISSION TO KYUSHU** ..... 37.70
- LOW LEVEL SIGHTSEEING** ..... 37.70
- ABOVE TWO ON 1 CASSETTE** ..... 39.00
- CALL WORD "BATAAN"** ..... 37.70

Duplication from 3/4" Master Video Tape Specify VHS, BETA I or BETA II.

**NOTE:** The prices listed are based on the Video Studio making one transfer of the subject. When two or more are ordered, the cost each is much less.

For any of the above tapes, write: J. Cliff Hanna, 20083 Doyle Court, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236, or call: 313/882-6259.

## REUNION Sept. 7-11, 1988



**Holiday Inn Waterside  
Norfolk, Virginia**

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

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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

\*\*\*\*\*ALL FOR STATE  
91 51 47  
Edward L. Bina  
628 North Deresch  
Antigo WI 54409