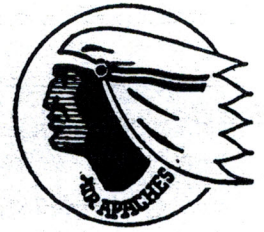


# STRAFER



498th SQUADRON

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501st SQUADRON

345th Bomb Group Reunion Association

January 1990

## Special Information Regarding Airfare to Las Vegas

The official airline for the 345th Bomb Squadron, American Airlines, is offering discounts to attendees of the October convention. Delta and U.S. Air also offer discount programs that may be of interest.

American will discount its full coach fare 45% for attendees flying coach to the convention. They are also offering 10% discounts off any published fares for attendees 62 and over and 5% discounts for attendees under 62. Some restrictions apply to each of the discounts. The reservations, for example, must be made through Travel Agents International of Westerville, OH (614/891-4800), which will accept collect calls from callers who identify themselves as members of the 345th. The discounts are only available for travel to and from Las Vegas between October 12 and 22, 1990.

Delta Airlines offers coupon books to people 62 and over. A book of four costs \$384 and a book of eight costs \$640. A round trip to Las Vegas would require two coupons per person. Each person must buy his or her own book. Coupons are good only for flights on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Reservations must be made within seven days of the travel date. Changes can be made with no penalty, but those also

must be made within seven days of the travel date.

U.S. Air offers the same coupon books at the same prices, but requires that the reservations and changes be made no later than 14 days prior to the travel date.

Coupon books can be issued over the phone by Travel Agents International in Westerville, OH. Their number is 614/891-4800.

## EARLY REGISTRANTS ELIGIBLE FOR DRAWING FOR FREE ROOM

As at Norfolk, a free room for duration of Reunion VIII at Las Vegas will be awarded to some lucky Air Apache winner. To be eligible for the drawing you must have your completed registration form and check received by Brenna Weimann in Ohio by AUGUST 15, 1990. Brenna is not handling hotel reservations, but will number the 345th registrations as she receives them. President, **Shuler Gamble**, will pick 5 numbers at random over the phone and Phil Rack, *Strafer* publisher, will then pick one of these at random as the winner. The September issue of *The Strafer* will announce the winner. Get your registration and check in before the August 15 deadline for the drawing.

## President's Message

I am writing this letter to all of you on December 6th and in so doing I am wondering where all of you were on December 7th, 1941. Actions by the Japanese on December 7th changed all our lives in a manner we never anticipated back in 1941. The second happening at this time which had a profound effect on our lives was the activation of the 345th Bomb Group (M) on November 11th, 1942.

The 345th itself changed many times after its original activation, but through all these changes one constant remained and that was



**Shuler S. Gamble**  
President

the dedication and abilities of all the men who ever became a part of this great fighting outfit of ours. The older men were always available to the newcomers for advice and tips on everything from combat missions to how to draw to an inside straight - (this particular bit of education cost

some of us our monthly pay until we learned when to stay and when to fold). As time went along, the older men went home and the newcomers became older men followed by more newcomers, and the learning process began all over again. The point I am making is that few of us would ever have made it home without the benefit of our more experienced warriors. I guess the point of this letter is to say "Thanks Fellas" - You all are the greatest group of men that I have ever been privileged to be a part of.

Mary Elizabeth and I wish you all a very prosperous New Year. We also look forward to seeing all of you in Las Vegas in October, 1990.



# Squadron Reports

## 498th Squadron

Dear Friends,

Thank you for remembering Pauline and I during the Holiday Season with your cards, letters and phone calls. Really a joy to hear from so many old friends.

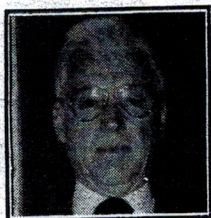
Start planning your trip to Las Vegas. From all reports so far it looks like a good turnout for the 498th. It would be great to have every member there. What a ball that would be! Our organizer for the 498th is of course **Mr. Don Stout** of West Coast fame. You can bet on a real gala time with Don using his Yankee ingenuity in his plans for our entertainment.

A note from **Bill Tinsley** of Deland, Fl. Bill was with the 498th Intelligence Section, went on to OCS, then to Intelligence of 90th Bomb Group after graduation. After our little exploit Bill stayed with the Air Force and retired from the Pentagon after almost 30 years service. He includes in his note the following -- "When it was time to board the SS Johnson we were identified by having a number chalked on our helmet liners. I thought maybe it was an omen when I found I had a big 13 on mine. I had some more thoughts as we were steaming up the Bay and approaching the Golden Gate Bridge. There must have been a thousand guys jammed on the deck looking up at the bridge. An overloaded seagull that had been soaring along above us made a sudden dive, pulled up and unloaded on number 13. I thought this an auspicious start! Somehow **Nate Goldman** still remembers this -- maybe he ducked faster, or maybe it was his seagull."

Bill claims that he did well with requisitions in the Pentagon since he received his basic training in the 498th midnight requisition unit. Backhanded compliments or something!

Keep your letters and anecdotes coming. Keep well!

Henry J. Reyns  
V.P. - 498th Sqd.  
Reunion Comm.



**TO SUBSTANTIATE CLAIMS. . . .**  
Biak, New Guinea, WWII --

**Avery H. York**, 5081 Old Forty Four Dr., Redding, Calif. 96003, needs to hear from anyone in 345th Bomb Grp., 498th Squadron, who remembers his congenital hip condition, which was seriously aggravated while serving as B25 tail gunner; especially needs to hear from **Lt. Col. Tucker** and **Maj. Schmidt** of Base Hospital staff, whose X-rays and prognosis on Dec. 4, 1944, verified that "congenital condition aggravated by service."

## 499th Squadron

On September 7,8,9-1989 the 499th Bomb Squadron had a stupendous mini-reunion in Ignatio, CO. 15 men and their wives enjoyed the hospitality (Sky-Ute-Hotel) in Ignatio, CO. The quality service and many discounts provided by the hotel made us feel very much appreciated.

(The Bats Out of Hell) visited Mesa-Verde, Aztec, the Four Corners and topped off the entertainment with a narrow gauge steam engine train, all day trip, from Durango, CO., to Silverton, CO., and returned.

New friendships were made, old friendships renewed, a great time was had by all.

Have a Happy New Year!

Pax Baker  
V.P. - 499th Sqd.

## Reminder

Please send back the reunion questionnaire A.S.A.P.

## 500th Squadron

The 500th Squadron had their fifth reunion in Seattle from 10 to 15 September. We were fortunate in having two weeks of the best weather the Northwest has. Fifty-seven members attended. Activities varied and plenty of free time was available for visiting and touring.

It was great hearing from a new member-- **Morris (Bud) Stratton**. Just a few days earlier and he could have been part of the reunion. He was at an air show in Illinois and saw the B-25J

with the Air Apache logo. **Herb Garland** put him in touch with us and we are appreciative of the part the Confederate Air Force played in finding this lost sheep.

Fred Moore  
V.P - 500th Sqd.



## 501st Squadron

By the time this issue of the *Strafer* arrives, 1989 will be history and welcome to a new decade. I hope everyone had a happy and joyous holiday with friends and loved ones and are looking forward to the new year.

I must publish a disclaimer for the 501st article in the last *Strafer*. It seems there was some confusion between the editors of this publication and a character by the name of J.B. Fisher. I was the guy that was almost killed for all the money we lost and that bird wasn't even worth killing.

Anyhow, by the time the last *Strafer* got out, my original article about our squadron reunion was completely obsolete. In fact the squadron reunion was over by the time the *Strafer* arrived. The 501st Squadron reunion at Branson, Missouri, I think was voted a tremendous success by those that attended. Branson, Missouri, is a fabulous place and, I believe, the best kept secret of the last decade. When you can see stars such as Roy Clark, Mel Tillis, Boxcar Willie and other stars of that caliber for around \$12 a show, whether you like country or not, that's hard to beat. I don't think anyone who attended lacked for anything to do and there was something to do to suit any tastes. I could go on but I'll let the attendees tell those who missed about it at the reunion in Las Vegas.

I am happy to report that for the reunion in Las Vegas the 501st already has space reserved for our squadron, dinner right in the Riviera Hotel, which is reunion headquarters. The dinner will be Wed., 17 Oct., 1990. Further details as to menu, price, etcetera will be sent out by Sec. **George Mordecai** as we



get close to the actual reunion time. **Nat Etkins** is our 501st liason in Las Vegas so we should be in good shape for the union.

I am sorry to report that another of the 501st answered the last roll call. Word was received from **Bob Fain** of the passing of **Henry L. Knoll** on 5 Nov., 1989. Henry was a flight commander in the 501st and at the time of his death lived at 2081 Marine View Dr., San Leandro, California 94577.

Good Lord willin' and the crick don't rise, we'll see you in Vegas in 90.

Jay Moore  
V.P. - 501st Sqd.



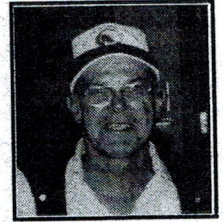
## Headquarters

It seems that the older we get the faster time flies. It will soon be time to pack up and head to Las Vegas. This is going to be a Reunion that no one in the 345th BG should miss. I'm sure we will meet many of the men from the Fighter Groups, Heavy Bomber Groups, Transport Commands, etc. as well as the men we worked with at the 5th Air Force and 5th Bomber Commands.

The HQ Group has a tentative commitment of 25 to 30 people that will be attending the Reunion. Hopefully we can double that number come October 1990. All of our Reunions have been GREAT. We had parties, sightseeing tours and banquets to mention a few things that go on. If you haven't seen Hoover Dam, now is the time to make plans to go to Las Vegas in 1990. If you haven't been to Vegas before you will be amazed at the sights. The size of the Hotel is unbelievable. Some take up a complete city block. The lights on the buildings and displays at night are fantastic. There are things to do there even though you do not gamble.

However, don't forget the reason for the Reunion is to visit with your buddies, reminisce and make new friends.

Sincerely yours,  
Ken Gastgeb  
V.P. - HQ Group



## Pilot Offers Penny-pinching Couple Ride For Free

**Tillie Walters** says it's an oldie, but what.

A man and wife, both quarrelsome and penny watchers, went out to the airport. The idea was to entertain themselves watching the airplanes. As they walked along the runway, a pilot saw them.

"I'll bet you folks would like a ride in an airplane," he said.

They agreed and the pilot told them he would only charge them \$10.

The man and wife argued back and forth. The husband wanted to go; she said the price was too high.

"I'll make you a special offer," the pilot said. "I'll take you up for nothing if neither of you say one word while we're in the air, but if you do say anything at all, the cost is \$10."

They agreed to the terms and climbed into their seats. The pilot did loops, dives, barrel rolls, steep-banking turns, the whole bit.

On the ground again, he told the wife, "You really surprised me. Neither of you said a word."

The woman smiled.

"Well, I was really frightened and I was going to say something when the old geezer fell out," she said, "but 10 bucks is 10 bucks."

## IN MEMORIAM

<b>James T. Bryan</b>	499th	Feb. 20, 89'	Austin, TX
<b>Leo C. Draper</b>	500th	June 14, 89'	Ft. Myers, FL
<b>Eugene F. Duff</b>	498th	May 3, 89'a	Joliet, IL
<b>Lee Rishel</b>	498th		Inglewood, CA
<b>C. J. Ellen</b>	Headquarters		Virginia Beach, VA
<b>Max Mortensen</b>	500th		Danville, CA
<b>Virginia Cather</b>	(wife of W. H. Cather, 501st)		Birmingham, AL

## Association Officers

President -- Shuler Gamble  
2011 Stebbins Drive  
Houston, TX 77043  
713/468-0737

Vice President -- Ed Bina  
628 Deresch  
Antigo, WI 54409  
715/627-2272

Secretary -- Julius Fisher  
3131 W. Draher Rd.  
Oxford, MI 48051  
313/628-1287

Treasurer -- Ken McClure  
2770 E. Main St.  
Columbus, OH 43209  
614/237-4251

Reunion Chairman -- Maury Eppstein  
415/851-1441

Co-chairman - Ben W. Fridge

## Reunion Committee Vice Presidents

HDQ - Ken Gastgeb  
1730D W. Robinson  
Norman, OK 73069  
405/364-1350

498 - Henry Reysn  
Box 281 Beattie Rd.  
Rock Tavern, NY 12575  
914/496-5375

499 - Pax Baker  
2425 S. 25th Rd.  
Cedaredge, CO 81413  
303/856-6670

500 -- Fred Moore  
4952 Vivaldi Dr.  
Las Vegas, NV 89102  
702/871-4405

501 - Jay Moore  
8145 Braun Rd.  
Groveport, OH 43125  
614/836-5215

Posted on the community bulletin board at Nick's Tap in Antigo, Wis.  
"Wanted: A good woman who can clean and cook fish, dig worms, sew and who owns a good fishing boat and motor. Please enclose photo of boat and motor."



# Las Vegas, Here We Come!

Thanks to all you interested Air Apaches who returned your reunion questionnaires promptly - they are a great help in our putting the plans together. The committee has carefully gone over the returns and has made its decisions on the agenda for Reunion VIII. Be certain you understand the information on events, schedules, prices should be filled out and returned as soon as possible.

For those planning to take the 7-day cruise to the Mexican Riviera, it is suggested you make your reservations at once in order to obtain the special 345th rate and guarantee cabin space. Rates are almost certain to increase before the summer season.

Look elsewhere in this issue for special articles regarding airfares, alternate hotels, free room drawing, Mexican Cruise, other trips and events, etc.

The following details are listed for your information and attention:

1. Reunion VIII will be Mon. thru Thurs. (not Thurs. thru Sat. as usual).
2. Make your hotel reservations directly with the Riviera Hotel on the form enclosed in this issue.
3. Be sure to bring your Sqdn. name tag buttons issued at Norfolk. We will issue modifications to make them easier to wear.
4. Las Vegas dresses casually night and day, shorts, T-shirts, etc. (But for the final evening banquet let's look good for the 345th).
5. There will be a miniature PX type of shop with 5AF and other items in the hotel for the reunion.
6. There is free parking at the Riviera and at most other hotels in Las Vegas.

Dear Friends,

We are sorry to report that Dave McCready died Aug. 30, 1989. Dave and his wife Hazel had recently returned from a trip to New Guinea visiting Rabaul and also the crash site of Dave's plane. We are not going to give anymore details as we will leave this to Hazel who is organizing the facts and records surrounding the trip. She hopes to attend our next reunion and at that time will present the story of their exciting tour. Hazel said that Dave had had hopes of presenting the story to us but now she will do it. WE SALUTE HAZEL! For those of you who would like to send her a note, the address is: Mrs. Hazel McCready, 477 Meadowview Ct., Vacaville, CA., 95688-4219. The phone number is 707-448-0735.

We have also received word that Elana L. Wooden, wife of the 498th's Merle G. Wooden, passed away March 16, 1989, after a long illness.

Elbert Wardle experiences, and I quote, "I had my noggin up in a nacelle of Farabaughs airplane when I heard a big engine running full bore. It wasn't one of ours because it was an inline and we didn't have any right near us. I got out of there and looked up to see a P-40 aimed right at me. He came in flipped over and burned right behind that revetment. He had been trying to take off dragging a tow target and didn't have enough power to do it. And that is why I had an extra toddy that night!" Lose any hair, Elbert?

Keep sending your anecdotes. They are good!

Haven't heard from Col. Bert lately. He and Martha were supposed to be travelling this summer.

Everybody keep in touch, ya hear!

Henry J. Reyns  
V.P. - 498th Squadron

P.S. Anyone know the whereabouts of Richard Fezatte, Rural Route 1, N. Berry, MI., 49868-9346? His mail being returned to us with no forwarding address. Let us know if you have any info. Thanks.

### 1990 DUES PAYABLE

Please send \$15 annual payment to  
Ken McClure, treasurer  
2770 E. Main St.  
Columbus, OH 43209

**REUNION**  
OCTOBER 15 - 18  
1990



LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

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

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