

STRAFER



498th SQUADRON

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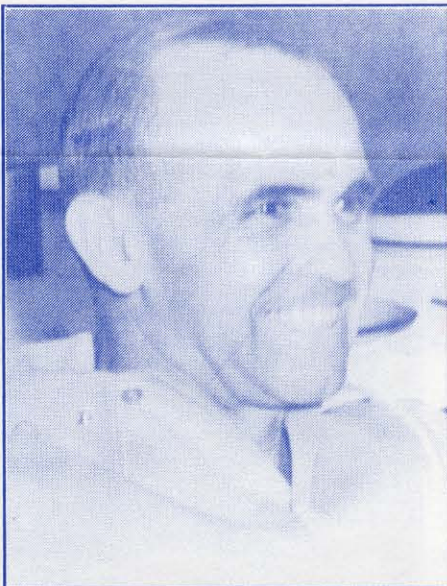
50th ANNIVERSARY EDITION

Air Apache Reunion IX

This item is primarily directed to those members of the 345th Bomb Group Association, who, for one reason or another, could not be present at the Group reunion held in Columbus, Ohio on Sept. 11-13, 1992.

First of all, we really missed you! You may have been out of sight, but not out of mind, no way! Second, I would like to report on some of the activities that transpired over those three days.

The trip to the Air Force Museum, where the 345th Group memorial is located was



Group Commanders

Clockwise from top:

Jarred V. Crabb - Activation to Sept. 9, 1943.

Clinton U. True - Sept. 9, 1943 to July 1, 1944.

Chester A. Coltharp - July 1, 1944 to June 28, 1945.

Glenn A. Doolittle - June 28, 1945 to Deactivation.



**Nov. 11,
1942**



**Nov. 11,
1992**



probably the highest priority for most of the members, except for the Group banquet, although the Ameri-Flora and COSI trips were well received. About 30 members attended the Ohio State football game on Saturday.

The Ladies' Breakfast, I understand, was well attended and the women with whom I talked all thought it was top grade.

During the Group business meeting, Maury Eppstein reported that progress on the 5th A.F. Memorial, to be located at the Air Force Academy, was moving right along. Final approval still was needed

from the Pentagon, and the Academy has already given its approval. Colorado Springs was chosen for our next reunion because of the plaque ceremony. We have 6 members residing in Colorado Springs, and a total of 31 members living in Colorado. The actual reunion date in 1994 is yet to be announced.

The election of officers resulted in the following: Squadron Vice Presidents; 498th - **Merl Wooden**, 499th - **Ben F. Miller**, 500th - **Ben T. Muller**, 501st - **Virgil Gross**, Group HQ - **Ken Gastgeb**.

"Reunion IX" cont'd on page 2

SQUADRON PHOTOS

On these pages are a reduced version of the squadron photos taken at the 1992 Anniversary reunion in Columbus. The actual photos are in color and are 8 x 10 prints. They can be ordered by indicating Squadron number directly from the photographer for \$11.00 per photo, including shipping and handling. Send order directly to Harlan E. Hoover Photography, 8375 Patterson Rd., Hilliard, OH 43026.



The Air Apaches sign was prominently displayed at the Marriott Hotel entrance to the Group Reunion in Columbus. Many members enjoyed the beautiful weather and renewed old friendships in reviewing the sign on their arrival at the hotel.

"Reunion IX"

cont'd from page 1

Group Association Officers are as follows: **Vic Tatelman**, President; **Jerry Murphy**, Vice President; **Ken McClure**, Treasurer, and **Julius Fisher**, Secretary.

The Group banquet food and activity was tops. After the food was served, plaques of appreciation were presented to past presidents, except for those not present who received theirs at another time. Ken McClure was presented a special plaque for his many years of service as Treasurer and his wife, Patti, received a bouquet of roses for her years of help to Ken in his Group work.

Past President Ed Bina was presented an American flag that had been flown over the nation's capitol.

The keynote speaker was Chief Warrant Officer Thomas J. Hennen, Astronaut on the Atlantis flight in 1991. His talk describing his preflight training of many months, his experiences during the flight along with supporting color slides alone were well worth the reunion effort.

Another highlight of the reunion was the attendance of Jarry and Charles Crabb, son and grandson respectively of Gen. Crabb, our late Group Commander. What a pleasant surprise. We hope they continue to join us in the future Group activities.

The overall attendance for the reunion was 474, which was made up of the following: HQ - 23, 498th - 104, 499th - 119, 500th - 96, and 501st - 136.

Julius Fisher, Secretary



498th Squadron Commanders: Bert Rosenbaum - Activation to Sept. 25, 1943; Chester A. Coltharp - Sept. 25, 1943 to May 15, 1944; Milford M. Magee - May 15, 1944 to June 4, 1945; Theodore R. Wright - Nov. 15, 1944 to June 4, 1945; Jack C. McClure - June 4, 1945 to Aug. 15, 1945; Ollie E. Hatcher - Aug. 15, 1945 to deactivation.



500th Squadron Commanders: Charles M. Hagest - Activation to Mar. 29, 1944; Keith E. Dougherty - Mar. 29, 1944 to Aug. 28, 1944; Max H. Mortensen - Aug. 28, 1944 to Feb. 21, 1945; Thomas R. Bazzel - Feb. 21, 1945 to May 5, 1945; Robert B. Canning - May 5, 1945 to July 11, 1945; Robert F. Todd - July 11, 1945 to deactivation.

Flag Ceremony Opens Banquet

A beautiful "Historical Flag Ceremony" was conducted by members of the 160th Air Refuel Group Color Guard and Historical Flag Team based at Rickenbacker near Columbus. The team was led by M/Sgt. **Mike Kights**.

The ceremony consisted of seven flags, each representing an era of history of our great country. As each flag was presented and displayed, accompanied by drum beats, M/Sgt Kights narrated the historical era and the subsequent changes as the flag developed into the present form we know today.

The last flag presented was the "345th Wing Bombardment" flag. Another story on this page explains why it is a "Wing" instead of a "Group" flag.

The ceremony closed with a "Last Mission" tape wherein the sound of a B-25 is heard starting, warming up, and proceeding to mission . . . then silence as the crew completed their last mission. This was followed by a bugle playing *Taps*, which resulted in many tears rolling down the cheeks of the audience.



499th Squadron Commanders: Buell A. Bankston - Activation to Sept. 25, 1943; **Edison K. Walters** - Jan. 27, 1943 to July 8, 1943; **Julian B. Baird** - July 8, 1943 to June 4, 1944; **Richard D. Reinbold** - June 4, 1944 to Dec. 25, 1944; **Wendell D. Decker** - Dec. 25, 1944 to deactivation.

345th Flag Received



As most of you know, our 345th Bomb Group never had its own flag, and the Group was deactivated after the war. Sometime during the 1950s or 1960s, though, the 345th was reactivated, this time as the 345 Bomb Wing. Originally it had three squadrons: 498, 499, and 500. The Wing did have a flag that bore the Air Apache insignia our Group used. Later a 501st Squadron was reactivated. Each squadron bore the same insignia as our Bomb Group's had. The Wing's planes were all jets.

Not long ago the last commander of the 345th Bomb Wing died, and shortly thereafter Ken McClure received a call from the commander's son, who thought our Group was the same as his father's Wing. His question: did we want the 345th Bomb Wing's flag and a few other artifacts. Ken was quick to say "yes".

When the flag arrived, he took it to several flag shops, trying to get the "Wing" on the flag changed to "Group." No luck. The stitching was too intricate to change. Nevertheless the flag is now ours.



501st Squadron Commanders: Robert S. Fain - Activation to June 4, 1944; **Darwin G. Neuenschwander** - June 4, 1944 to July 11, 1944; **John B. Nusbaum** - July 11, 1944 to Jan. 24, 1945; **Jack L. Jones** - Jan. 24, 1945 to May 25, 1945; **Thomas D. Giese** - May 25, 1945 to deactivation.

Unusual Gifts Offered

If you are looking for 345th memorabilia, here are some very rare and unusual items. Quantity is limited, first come-first served:



A. LAPEL PIN

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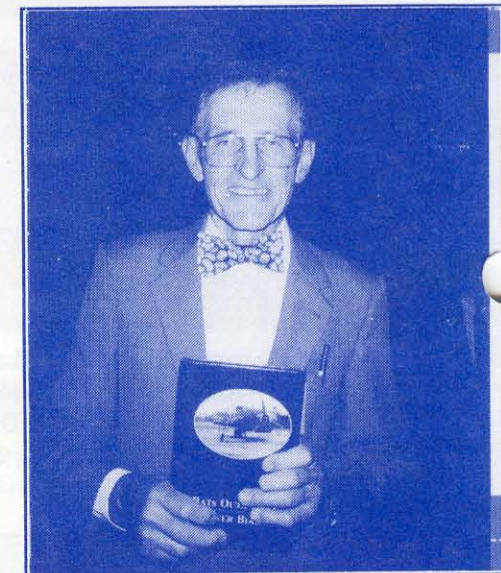
Attractive gold edged and enameled Apache insignia head pin with attractive enamel artwork. Also suitable as a pair for earrings. \$5 each/2 for \$9 incl shipping and handling. Send check and order to Ken McClure, 5581 Chowning Way, Columbus, OH 43213.



B. PAPER WEIGHT

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Clear glass 3-3/4" oval paper weight with red/white/blue background featuring a white disc displaying the Air Apache insignia with 345th Bomber Group 50th Anniversary 1942-1992 copy circling the insignia. Limited quantity available, cannot reorder another manufacturing run. \$45 each incl S/H. Send check and order to Bill Croop, 800 Highland Drive, Toledo, OH 43460-1035.



C. BATS OUTA HELL OVER BIAK

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This is an entertaining story written by Max Ferguson. It is a compelling tale in diary style format relating Ferguson's experiences during his tour with the *Bats Outa Hell*. Send \$14 (incl S/H) to Max Ferguson, 1215 Taylor Ave., Charleston, IL 61920-2928.

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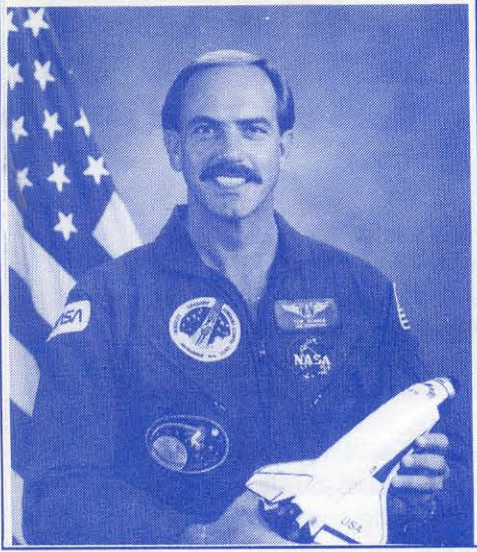
50th ANNIVERSARY
SPECIAL EDITION

Nov. 11, 1942 - Nov. 11, 1992

Next Reunion In
COLORADO SPRINGS, CO
1994

(Date to be announced)

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



NASA Guest Speaker **Captivates Diners**

CW3 Thomas J. Hennen, U.S. Army, was the Terra Scout Payload Specialist aboard the Space Shuttle *Atlantis* during the STS-44 Mission November 24 - December 1, 1991.

His talk consisted on pre-flight training, experiences during the actual mission, and answers to the most asked question, "How do you manage to go to the job in space?"

The presentation included almost 300 slides. Of interest was that the 3 major oceans and 3 major deserts have slightly different colors from space, and can be recognized simply by their colors.

It was also discovered during the Reunion that a 499th Squadron member, T/Sgt. Leo Hennen of Morris, MN is related to this astronaut!