



AIR APACHES

STRAFER

345th Bombardment Group Newsletter

Volume 20, Issue 3

October, 2002

TEXAS HOSPITALITY AT RECORD HIGH
REUNION XV ACCLAIMED THE "BEST"
MORDECAI RE-ELECTED IN LANDSLIDE
2nd GENERATION AIR APACHES ASSEMBLE



"WIND BENEATH OUR WINGS" DEPARTMENT

The 345th Bomb Group Association Official Registration Team and Welcoming Committee made checking in at Reunion XV a delight.

They are from left to right: Perle Baird, Mary Elizabeth Gamble, Pat Cummings, and twin sisters Carol Best Hilliman and Judy Best Zurlis (or is it the other way around?). Not shown are: Gus and Pauline Ouellette, Norma Miller and Marilyn McGowan. Thank you all for a job well done!



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

GEORGE MORDECAI

345th BOMB GROUP PRESIDENT

We came, we saw, and we returned home satisfied that we are still the best around. All who attended Reunion XV had a great time and the only thing missing was those buddies who were unable to attend. You sure missed a great reunion! It was so nice to see so many friends and enjoy their company in such pleasant surroundings. I know I speak for all of the members in attendance when I say, "thank you and well done" to Mel and Gladys Best who headed the Reunion XV Committee.

I have it from reliable sources that Melvin, operating on the theory that a smart boss picks a good leader and then gets out of the way, spent a large part of his time on the golf course (after delegating all of his responsibilities to Gladys), Gladys, proving that she was also familiar with the system, enlisted the aid of twin daughters, Carol and Judy, and then worked very hard supervising them. The girls, combining the supervisory talents inherited from both mom and dad, called on their assistants (husbands) to "bell the cat." It appears as if the entire family was standing on the shoulders of these two men to see that a GREAT REUNION was enjoyed by all! About the only thing the family did wrong was to work too hard!

Many thanks to our Registration group. As always, they did a great job. They were available at all times, working to straighten out problems and render assistance if needed. The committee, under the leadership of Mary

Elizabeth Gamble, included Gus and Pauline Ouellette, Pat Cummings, Marilyn McGowan, Norma Miller and Perle Baird.

Ken Gastgeb deserves a great hand for the ID badges. Each year he prepares all the nametags and makes them very colorful with pictures of planes and squadron insignia. This and his guidance in keeping me on the path to complete things that he started when he was president. THANKS KEN.

The tours were great, especially the Lockheed-Martin F-16 assembly plant.

The Ladies breakfast won many plaudits, but not having personally attended, I can only speak from second-hand information. It was reported that The BEST ladies put on a Paris (Texas) fashion show to top all fashion shows! Proving that we have a wealth of unpublicized talent within our Association and when we make our own entertainment it is the BEST. Many of the women were so inspired that they rushed out to the closest shopping mall and we only lost one in the process! All ended well when Rita Perkins was finally able to locate the other six (that were lost) and lead them back to the security of the hospitality room.

The banquet featured some of the best entertainment that I have ever seen at any of our reunions. Dr. Rose Mary Rumbley's subject was entitled, "WHAT MAKES AMERICA HAPPY??" and she certainly made everyone at the banquet happy. She kept the audience laughing for the best part of an hour. Afterwards, everyone was talking about the tremendous show she put on and how they never thought they could sit still that long. Our only problem with her presentation was worrying that someone might fall in the aisle while laughing and break a leg!

The Executive committee made up of Bob Fain, Lynn Lee, Bill Cather, Ben Miller, Kort Kortemeyer, Frank Dillard, Ken Gastgeb, DR Silas Pearson, Vic Tatelman, Julian Baird and Lynn Daker deserves KUDOS for their guidance in keeping this organization alive and on the right track.

At the Executive Committee meeting it was decided that we would try to determine if individuals that are more than two years in arrears with their dues wish to remain members of the Association. Our Gr Secretary, Dr. Silas Pearson, will contact those persons by letter to resolve this issue. Failure to respond to the letter will result in their name

being removed from the roster and STRAFER mailing list. Each delinquent member will be given the following choices:

1. Bring their membership up to date by paying dues for the year 2002.
2. Widows of members may receive a complimentary Associate Membership if so requested.
3. Any member who feels that payment of dues is a financial burden will be reinstated with a complimentary membership.
4. Inform us that they are no longer interested and wish to be removed from the roster and mailing list.

The Executive Committee decided that once the delinquent dues problem is resolved we would enlist the help of the Assistant Group VP's from each squadron to survey their members as to the correctness of their address, phone number, and other personal data. Once that survey is completed, the Association plans to publish a new membership directory and we will need everyone's cooperation to make the listings as complete and accurate as possible. The proposed publication will be more than an address book. It will include many items of a historical nature, photographs, poetry, and other items that should have universal appeal to members and their families. The completed Directory will be sent, without charge, to all members in good standing at the time of publication. Extra copies will be made available at nominal cost.

Frank Dillard is to be congratulated on his hard work in making the STRAFER the success it has become. Frank believes that every member has a great story that needs to be told before it's too late. When we go part of history goes with us. Keep the record straight. Please take the time to send in stories. Frank will take whatever you send and make you look like a great writer. THANKS FRANK.

I would like to thank the following officers who are stepping down for personal reasons: Roland Lamb, Secretary; Jerry Murphy, Treasurer; Ira Schaub, Ass't Group, VP 498th; Bill Cather, Ass't Group VP 501st.

I would like to thank everyone that attended Reunion XV. Without you there is no reason to have a reunion. It is the first reunion that I attended where so many members were

accompanied by family and friends. Mike Costa managed to bring eight members of his family and this made the function all the more special for everyone. Keep it up Mike and maybe others will follow your lead.

Frank Dillard has been preparing for Reunion XVI in Hampton, VA. next year (2003). We are fortunate to have the assistance of Ira Schaub's lovely daughter, Kim, who resides in Hampton. You will be kept informed of the progress in future issues of the STRAFER.

As has been our policy, we will be returning to the West Coast area in 2004. We need proposals from the membership to help us decide where to hold this reunion. It is not too early to start making arrangements. If anyone would like to propose a site please do some preliminary research and send it to me at the earliest possible time. Reunions don't just happen--it takes a great deal of preparation. They can only be as good as we make them.

The Association Officers elected to serve you for the next two years are:

George Mordecai, President
Frank Dillard, 1st VP
Lynn Daker, 2nd VP
DR Silas Pearson, Secretary
John Gale, Assistant Secretary
Edwin Scharpe, Treasurer

The Squadron Officers elected are:
August Ouellette, Headquarters.
Michael Hasslbauer, 498th Squadron.
Ben Miller, 499th Squadron.
Stan Muniz, 500th Squadron.
Quinton Giuliani, 501st Squadron.

These are the people that will be assisting me in representing you in the coming months. I am proud to be associated with them.

The minutes of the Group business meeting appear in their entirety elsewhere in this issue of the STRAFER.

I wish to express my appreciation for your vote of confidence in reelecting me to a second term as your President. I will do my best to earn that confidence and will make every effort to maintain the standards that have been established by the previous officers of our Association.

I hope everyone that attended Reunion XV had a safe journey home, and I am already looking forward to seeing you in Hampton, Virginia.



HEADQUARTERS

AUGUST OUELLETT, ASS'T. GROUP VP

The reunion in Dallas was one of the best-organized reunions I have ever attended. Ken Gastgeb and I were the only surviving members from Headquarters there but we didn't get lonesome surrounded by so many old friends, Melvin and Gladys Best invited Ken and I to join them at one of their twin daughter's house for the 498th party. Those Texans know to spell **HOSPITALITY** (and cook)! I know Ken joins with me in saying "Many thanks!"

During the Group business meeting on Saturday morning it was proposed that the Group make a donation to the fund for the construction of the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC. Someone asked, "**Why a World War II Memorial?**" There already are various monuments to commemorate the Civil War, Korean War, Vietnam War, and many World War II units. However, there is not a monument to collectively honor all those who served in World War II. Sixteen million Americans served in the armed forces during World War II and millions of civilians were involved in the war effort at home. Over 400,000 Americans lost their lives. Many of them were personal friends and relatives. I doubt that they would care, one way or the other if a monument is ever built. Monuments are erected so the living may honor the dead. Certainly the families of the deceased, and those of us that were fortunate enough to survive, deserve the opportunity to recognize the courage, patriotism and sacrifice of every American serviceman that paid the supreme price for our liberty during World War II.

A World War II Memorial will be an enduring physical reminder of one of the most significant events of the twentieth century. Although this war took place over 60 years ago, it continues to impact our lives today. represents the cornerstone of the freedom and values that we fought for and enjoy today, and those same freedoms and values that are our legacy to all future generations.

Sadly, our schools fail miserably to teach the youth of today the facts of that great worldwide conflict. Many do not know the truth about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, but consider our use of atomic bombs against Japan in retaliation a National disgrace. Perhaps, the sight of such a monument will arouse the curiosity of the uneducated and they will search on their own to learn what Tom Brokaw meant by the term, "the greatest generation."

The memory of the World War II years remain as an unprecedented example of the spirit of cooperation exhibited by Americans from all walks of life. Americans, who answered the call to unite in the defense of our Nation's freedom and democracy. Yes, America needs the World War II Memorial, and Americans that made the supreme sacrifice deserve this tribute.

Now, if you still don't know the answer to the question, "**Why a World War II Memorial?**" can tell me why you are a member of the 345th Bomb Group Association?



DON FETTERLY, NEW ASSOCIATE

Don Fetterly is a young man with an exciting hobby. He spends his vacations diving on WW II wreck sites in the Pacific. Don promises to keep us posted about future plans to dive on 345th Bomb Group crash sites.



498th SQUADRON
MIKE HASSLBAUER, ASS'T GROUP VP

It had been two years since I had seen my new friends from my first 345th Bomb Group Association reunion in Charleston. I went there with my wife who was graciously supporting my interest in my father's old squadron. Soon after arrival I met Ira Schaub and Frank Dillard. They had been personal friends with my dad. They patiently answered my questions and filled in some of the holes on how my dad began his career in the 498th as a B-25H cannoneer, and then later became a tail gunner. This first reunion led to my continued correspondence with these gentlemen, an Associate Membership, a STRAFER subscription, and then-- the Dallas reunion.

Some of my fondest memories of that reunion were the ferry trip out to Fort Sumter, and the tour my wife and I took of the aircraft carrier and destroyer where I could impress her with my naval exploits--greatly enhancing the stories with those life size props.

Ira Schaub, had served his "time in the barrel," and was looking for some relief, as the 498th Squadron Assistant Vice President. Innocently, I mentioned to the very resourceful editor of this respected publication that I might just possibly consider helping out. POW! That is what is known in the 498th as volunteering. The next thing I knew I was nominated and elected to replace Ira without opposition! Seriously, this is an honor and privilege to which I hope to do justice. It did not take much arm-twisting for me to accept.

For those of you that I didn't have the honor of meeting, I would like to tell you just a bit about myself. My wife, Tanya, and I have two small children, a son Matthew, three, and a daughter Rebecca, five. I served two tours with the US Navy in the South Pacific on a guided missile frigate (you know you guys used to call them Targets!). One of my tours included the evacuation of South Vietnam and the Maguez Incident.

After discharge from the Navy I attended Arizona State University on the GI Bill, and graduated with a BS in Communication and Business. For the past several years my work has involved the application of laser technology and Global Positioning Satellites (GPS) to the precision guidance and control of heavy earthmoving equipment for the construction industry. I spend much of my time flying around North America visiting widespread construction sites and offices.

With my background in the application of GPS technology, I was struck by one particular story I heard at the reunion. A gentleman, who was a former navigator in the 498th, told how he used to take celestial readings through the small bubble on the top of the B-25--and then how nervous he was making the numerous and complex calculations necessary to determine the planes position while flying over the Pacific ocean. He was totally aware that his accuracy would not only determine his fate, but that of his fellow crewmates. What a responsibility for a 20-something young man to shoulder! Today, the same task can be completed with pinpoint accuracy at the push of a button. I have difficulty comparing the inherent character- building aspect of plotting your course by the stars and shouldering the responsibility of other peoples lives, as opposed to that of simply pushing a button.

My memories of this years reunion are too numerous to name in this small space but right up there is the sight of Melvin Bests granddaughter wearing his original flight jacket while she stood near the B-25 Yellow Rose. The sight of that original WWII flight jacket put the crew of that historic plane in a state of awe. It was difficult to tell if all the attention was on the jacket or Melvin's lovely granddaughter. Regardless, it was a picture perfect afternoon.

Another fun moment to remember occurred in the hospitality suite. Lori Mushok, daughter of one of the 499th Squadron members, produced an olive-drab colored piece of fabric with stenciled numbers on it. She was curious if anyone could tell her what it was. Most in the room knew right away that it was a portion of the fabric covering of a B-25 vertical stabilizer. Her father had cut it away after a crash landing and written the names of the crew and date on the back. We looked in the book "Warpath Across the Pacific" and found the corroborating story.

In future STRAFER articles I would like to tell some of your favorite war memories. Those stories need to be told before it is too late. With your help we can include something everyone will enjoy reading and sharing with family and friends.



499th SQUADRON

BEN F. MILLER, ASS'T. GROUP VP

Many thanks to the people of all four squadrons and Headquarters, who attended a very well thought out reunion. A standing ovation in recognition of Gladys and Melvin Best, their reunion committee and the other two BEST girls in Texas! Any problems that came up were soon worked out.

At the last gathering it was decided not to have squadron meals, but we all did, and everyone enjoyed it. We will have them again.

If our organization is to survive we need more family members attending future reunions. One of the 499th Squadron members, Mike Costa, had meal tickets for nine family members. Great job, Mike!

While going into a large department store with my wife, she pointed out a sign on the door prohibiting handguns in the store. While overseas, a tent-mate of mine always referred to Texas as "the land of the blazing six-gun." Upon opening the local paper upon arriving home, in Ohio, the headline blared "Three men killed in a gun battle!" What does this tell us?

Our son-in-law, Don, and Jan, our oldest daughter, drove our black car with the 499th plate on the back, and they were surprised to see we averaged 30 MPG for the 2200 miles at 75 & 80 miles per hour. Vic Tatelman's plane takes from 150 to 200 gallons of gas per hour, so it's easy to see why he left the big bird home. It's always good to have him around, as he is our big problem solver. Please keep coming, Vic.

We missed Wendell Decker but he was at home recuperating from multiple by-pass heart surgery. We look forward to seeing him at next year's reunion in Hampton, Virginia. Ed Sharpe, Group Treasurer, stopped by on his way home from Dallas and conveyed our wishes for a speedy recovery in person.

Speaking of Wendell, Mel Best showed up at the hospitality room with prints made from a recently discovered roll of WWII K20 combat camera film. The photos were obviously taken from the portside waist window of Wendell's B-25 during the August

19, 1945 escort mission of the Japanese surrender party. It's a miracle that this chapter of history as recorded on film survived! Dr. Silas Pearson, Group Secretary, agreed to deliver some of the prints and our best wishes for a speedy recovery to Wendell on his way home.



**"ARMY ZERO-TWO-EIGHT
ON FINAL APPROACH."**

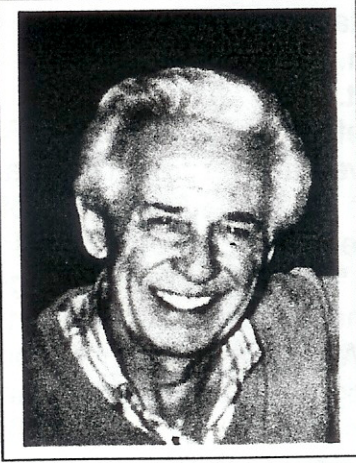
We were pleased that lovely Lori Mushok, daughter of John Mushok (499), attended the reunion. She was with us at San Diego last year and returned to Dallas with her father's scrapbook. Inside the book was a piece of history worthy of the Smithsonian! Lori's father had salvaged a strip of fabric from the vertical stabilizer of his plane, B-25D-5, BLUNDER BUS, serial no. 41-30028. This aircraft crashed during take-off at Port Moresby on July 8, 1943. The crew's names were printed on the reverse side.

Of the over 10,000 B-25's assembled during WWII only about 30 are still serviceable, and this has got to be the only original piece of fabric in existence! Lori had no idea, prior to the reunion, of just what that grimy olive drab piece of material represented. She is shown above with this priceless relic from World War II.

It makes you wonder how many other similar artifacts and relics of American history are tucked away in dark corners, never to be brought to light and identified.

Thank you for keeping me as the 499th Squadron VP. Please keep sending those articles and making the calls. We may soon have it easier, thanks to a grandson at Ohio State for building a computer for me. Time marches on! You can now e-mail me at <BNMILLER@adamswells.com>.

Let's start planning for a good turnout in Hampton next year. Be sure and bring the kids. Wasn't it nice to have members from all FOUR squadrons together in Dallas? Here's wishing good health to everyone 'till we meet again.



500th SQUADRON

STAN MUNIZ, ASS'T. GROUP VP

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the reunion in Dallas. From all reports, everyone there enjoyed it, and hopefully I will be seeing you in the near future.

The following story relates one of the more unusual flying experiences of WWII. The flight took place between Leyte and Biak, and reads like a major SNAFU, arranged by Fifth Bomber Command! It certainly places the 500th's Squadron Herman Reheis in an exclusive category.

AM I THE ONLY ONE?

Contributed by Herman F. Reheis

I want to make claim to being the only pilot to fly a B-25J solo, while assigned to the 345th Bomb Group. Here are the circumstances:

Early on the morning of November 4, 1944, I was told to report to 500th Squadron Operations. When I arrived, Lt. Fred Dick, Operations Officer informed me that I would go with him on a flight to Leyte. Since I was a first pilot at the time, I thought it rather odd to be flying as his copilot. Upon landing at Leyte, Lt. Dick told me and the rest of the crew to remain with the aircraft, while he made a brief visit to the Command Headquarters. When he returned, he called me aside and pointed out a specific B-25J, which was parked in a maintenance depot area. He said that the aircraft belonged to one of the other squadrons of the 345th Bomb Group, but there was no way to tell which squadron, because it was so

new it had not yet been painted with any squadron markings. The airplane had one engine shot out during a mission, and to keep the B-25 airborne, the crew had thrown out everything removable prior to landing. Lt. Dick said, "It's yours to fly back to Biak. I'm going on a mission."

I took a throat mike and headset from Lt. Dick's aircraft, as well as my musette bag, which I would use as a seat cushion, and went over to the B-25 in question. There, I met the maintenance officer, who told me the engine and propeller had been changed but only ground tested. He also mentioned the lack of equipment. He then told me that just before reaching Biak, I was to shut down the new engine, feather the propeller, and then restart the engine prior to landing. As I neared the end of the flight I did just that.

If you think flying a B-25 by oneself isn't interesting, think again!!! That aircraft had been stripped down to where it didn't even have a Form 1, so the three-hours-plus flight was never entered in my Form 5. I doubt there was ever any record of the flight, but I don't know.

I would appreciate hearing from anyone who can provide additional information about that particular B-25. I would like information on the mission that led to the engine change at Leyte and the assignment of the aircraft after delivery back to Biak. If anyone is familiar with this incident please contact me at 201 Parrot Drive, Monticello, GA 31604.

That must have been a lonely ride! No copilot, navigator, engineer, or radio operator. Just an everyday dead- eckoning, slow engine-time, routine solo flight, entirely over water in a combat zone. I am sure we would all like to know "the rest of the story." If you have any information about this subject please let Herman know. I am sure he will be more than nappy to share it with us.

Our STRAFER editor has asked me to prepare a feature story on my hobby of aircraft modeling. I have been assembling and painting aircraft models for some years now, and have over 300 kits and models in my collection. Look for this article in the next issue.



501st SQUADRON

QUINTON GIULIANI, Ass't Group VP

Congratulations to Melvin Best and all his family for our wonderful Reunion XV in Addison, Texas. I did not hear any complaints, and if you have any now--bite your tongue!

The camaraderie among all in attendance was sensational. Personally, looking at nametags, I looked for names and not which squadron the person was from. The amicableness of all four squadrons tells everyone what these reunions are about. There was no discernable rank or rancor among the troops!

Talmadge Epps (500th) and I live in the Philadelphia area and just by luck we managed to hook up on the same flights to and from Dallas. What is so amazing, we did the same thing two years ago to and from Charleston.

Going through security together at the Dallas airport, Tal, wearing shorts and a short-sleeve shirt set off all sorts of alarms! Although I had a pocket full of change, a moneyclip, and a bunch of keys I was cleared straight through without a hitch! Poor Tal had to empty all pockets and remove his watch. The alarms went on non-stop. He finally had to remove his shoes but nothing seemed to work. I suggested he remove his shorts but he declined. Finally, after more careful scrutiny they let him pass. Tal, whispered to me during our walk through the terminal that he couldn't take off the shorts because he was absolutely bald underneath, no boxer or jockey shorts!

We have completed the "Changing of the Guard" ceremony except for thanking Bill Cather for his service to the Association, and

his outstanding representation of the 501st squadron as our Assistant Group Vice President.

Before closing the book, Bill reports that he received a letter from Dick Barth along with an article from the April issue of AIR FORCE magazine. The excerpt was a five-page story entitled, "The Genius of George Kenney." It details the general's service in the Southwest Pacific. What is also special about the report is a photograph of 501st planes dropping parafrags over the furiously smoking runway at Wewak, New Guinea. Dick is justifiably proud to have been piloting one of those planes. Bill commented that he always thought that this picture was one of the greatest combat photographs taken during the Campaign.

On a sad note, Bill reported the death of Matt Lee, his former radioman. Matt was the last of the original crew of "The Wild Indian." He was the only one to fly all of his missions with Bill, from the initial flight across the Pacific to number 51, the final. We send our deepest sympathy to Ruth and family. Matt will be sorely missed.

One of Bill's last projects was up-dating the 501st Squadron roster and mailing list. If you attended Reunion XV in Dallas you received a copy at the squadron meeting. If you didn't attend the reunion and would like a copy you may obtain one by mailing your request, with a check for \$2.00 to cover mailing costs to: Bill Cather, 609 Windsor Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209.

I was proud to be accompanied to Reunion XV by my grandson, Tony. I really believe he might have enjoyed himself! Since I am computer illiterate I will be leaning very heavily on him for help in preparing future columns. I was glad to see other young people in attendance.

I will appreciate any and all contributions of stories and photographs for this column. Send clippings or other material that you think will be of interest to other members. Write a short story of one of your most vivid memories and we will print it for all to enjoy.

It was really good to see everyone at Dallas and to feel the warmth in the handshakes. Already I miss you all. Take care and let me hear from you. Until next time.....

(4)

**MINUTES OF THE 345TH BOMB
GROUP ASSOCIATION
BUSINESS MEETING,
REUNION XV ,ADDISON, TEXAS,
SEPTEMBER 28, 2002**

The business meeting for Reunion XV was called to order by President George Mordecai at 10:00 am, September 28,2002.

The first order of business was the reading of the minutes of the Group business meeting of Reunion XIV held in San Diego, Ca. Sept. 3rd, 2001. Silas W. Pearson (498), asst. sec. acting for sec. Roland Lamb (498), read the minutes. A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made and seconded.

President Mordecai called on Ed Sharpe (499), asst. treasurer acting for treasurer, Jerry Murphy (501), for his financial report.

The following report summarizes the 345th Bomb Group Association finances as of August 31,2001:

Checking Accounts:

Wachovia Bank - Burlington, NC. \$8339.90
(This includes \$5760.00 Reunion XV Deposits)

Certificates of Deposit:

Alaniance National Bank, Graham, \$10,000.00
Money Market.

A. G. Edwards & Sons, Inc. \$6,493.57
Vanguard Piime Money Market \$15,070.78
Total \$39,904.25

Frank Dillard (498) made a motion to accept the financial report as presented. The motion was seconded and passed.

President Mordecai discussed the expense involved in mailing the STRAFER to members who are not responding and who are several years delinquent with their dues. He also discussed the Executive Committee's decision to drop those members who are two years or more in arrears with payment of dues.. He stated that payment of the current year's dues would reinstate a delinquent member to active member status. There was some discussion about the possibility of writing letters to delinquent members explaining the expenses and other problems involved with

mailing the STRAFER and not knowing if the addressee received them.

President Mordecai stated that plans were underway to publish a new Group directory. He called on Ken Gastgeb (HQ), Group Historian, and Directory Committee Chairman, for his report. Ken noted that a directory would be constantly subject to change and proposed that the STRAFER include a status form to be used by each member to revise and update their personal information for the directory. It was proposed that the directory be published in 3-ring loose-leaf notebook format to facilitate filing pages and adding supplemental pages as developed.

President Mordecai called on Frank Dillard, 1st Vice President, and Nominating Committee Chairman; to present the committee's recommended candidates for officers of the Association. Frank proposed that George Mordecai (501), be continued as president for the next 2 years; Frank Dillard (498),to be 1st vice president; Lynn Daker (500), to be 2nd vice-president; Ed Sharpe (499), to be the treasurer; S.W. Pearson, Jr. (498), to be secretary; and John Gale (498), as assistant secretary. There was no recommendation for a candidate to fill the vacated office of assistant treasurer. Phil Grabbe (498), made a motion to close nominations and Roland Lamb (498), seconded the motion. President Mordecai called for a vote on the nominations. The vote to elect all nominees was unanimous.

Frank Dillard discussed the need to bring second generation members into the Association, and that they be permitted to hold office in the Association. This will require an amendment to the present by-laws if the suggestion is adopted. Frank stated that since there was no such restriction governing squadron offices, the 498th Squadron had established a first by electing a second generation member to office. He asked Mike Hasslbauer to stand and be recognized as the 498th asst. vice president. Vic Tatelman (499) proposed that the 498th squadron's election of assistant vice president be approved without further delay. It is to be noted that the Association presently has an unfilled office for

assistant treasurer, and both the 500th and the 501st squadrons are currently searching for replacements for asst. vice president.

Quinton Giuliani (501, and Bill Cavoli (500), commented that the Association by-laws place limitations on office holders depending on their former military rank in World War II. After reviewing a copy of the by-laws, it was determined that there was no such reference to military rank in regard to holding Association office, and that all former officers and enlisted men in the 345th Bomb Group Association were equal members without rank.

President Mordecai discussed the need for proposals for future reunion sites and noted that a preliminary report had been submitted for Valley Forge, Pa. Members wishing to sponsor a specific site should attend the next reunion and be prepared to make a presentation.

Frank Dillard discussed the details of our next reunion at Hampton, Virginia, and noted that the designated hotel is presently undergoing a complete refurbishment which will be completed before the date of the 2003 reunion. Since next year is the centennial celebration of the Wright brothers epic flight Frank said that a day trip to Kitty Hawk, North Carolina was being considered. He said that transportation from the Norfolk airport might be a problem, but Ira Schaub said there are direct flights into the Hampton airport. Lynn Lee volunteered his Air Apache bus to solve the transportation problem provided someone would drive it to Hampton, Virginia from Abilene, Texas. There being no card-carrying Teamsters in attendance the offer was tabled.

President Mordecai reported on the Executive Committee meeting and said that it was agreed we should continue with our present 4-day reunion format. He also noted that squadron parties and meetings seemed to be well received and should be continued in the future. The Executive Committee discussed the need to reduce surplus funds in the treasury. Elimination of the registration fee at future reunions was agreed on, and the use of Association funds to subsidize Group banquets was suggested.

President George Mordecai called on Lynn Daker, 2nd vice president, to introduce

his crewmember, Joseph Symonds, and son-in-law Robert Hill.

Lynn also introduced Donald Fetterly, who's hobby is underwater research and filming of aircraft and sunken ships. Next year, Don plans to visit a Pacific ditching site where 345th Bomb Group aircraft were downed by Japanese ground fire. **Don discussed the proposed site with Mel Best who participated in the raid where three aircraft were downed**

Lynn Daker reported that Larry Hickey would be publishing an expanded 5th edition of the WAR PATH ACROSS THE PACIFIC with 50 added pages, and will need additional information and pictures from the membership.

George Mordecai recognized Ken Gastgeb who had requested a brief time to report on some individuals who have been instrumental in keeping the association going forward. Ken acknowledged Pat Feucht (498) for her work in keeping the group roster up-to-date; Frank Dillard for his excellent production of the Strafer; and George Mordecai for his outstanding leadership as Group president. Ken presented these three members with beautiful calendars made up with Air Apache memorabilia.

Phil Grabbe (498), made a motion to donate to the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. Hal Cope (498), seconded the motion. There was added discussion and someone commented that we didn't need another memorial. Frank Dillard noted that this was not a 345th Bomb Group Association Memorial but a World War II Memorial for all branches of service. John Gale (498), said that this memorial would be the last one in the Washington, DC reflecting pool area. Gus Ouelette (HQ) discussed how the memorial in his hometown was brought about. Jerry Chelander (501), made a motion that the Group investigate the subject further before making a donation for this memorial. The motion was seconded.

Ken Gastgeb (HQ) made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Morris Perkins (499) seconded it. There being no further business to come before the Association the meeting was adjourned.

BULLETIN BOARD

LOST SHEEP...

The following persons are considered to be "Lost Sheep," Their copies of the June issue of the **STRAFER** were returned by the U.S. Post Office marked "Undeliverable--Forward Order Expired." Their names have been removed from the mailing list.

Dorothy Rushworth (499)

If you have information concerning the present address of anyone listed as a "Lost Sheep" please let your Squadron VP, the Treasurer, or your **STRAFER** editor know.

EDITOR'S NOTE: If you plan to move, you must notify the Treasurer, or your Editor, of your change of address to insure continued delivery of the **STRAFER**. We cannot maintain an up-to-date mailing list without your cooperation. The post office will not forward first-class mail indefinitely.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This (September) issue of the **STRAFER** was delayed because the entire editorial and publication staff attended Reunion XV in Dallas. Things are relatively back to normal (except for cutting grass and the laundry problem), and we trust you weren't unduly inconvenienced by the interruption to our regular mailing schedule.

All Assistant VPs and other contributors should submit your photos, notes, and articles **no later than November 10, 2002 to be included in the December 2002 issue.**

TREASURER'S NOTE: ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES: Association dues for the year 2002 are well past due. Check the date on your mailing label to see if you are current (2002). Still only \$15.00. Make your check payable to the **345TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION** and mail to:

Edwin F. Sharpe, Treasurer
345th Bomb Group Association
2438 Edgewood Ave.
Burlington, NC 27215-4794

**REMEMBER THE 345TH BOMB GROUP'S
60th ANNIVERSARY NOVEMBER 11, 2002!**

IN MEMORY OF...

The 345th Bomb Group Association wishes to extend our sincere condolences to the families of our departed members and friends.

- ✕ **Coralee Ames**, wife of Bill (500),
07-06-02, Salt Lake City, UT.
- ✕ **George H. Buck** (499), 04-02-02,
West Willington, CT.
- ✕ **John R. Crain** (498), 05-20-02,
Lucerne, IN.
- ✕ **Arthur Frank Croft** (499), 02-28-02,
Dayton, OH.
- ✕ **Janet Frazier**, wife of Thomas L. (499),
07-09-02, Athens, GA.
- ✕ **Ted U. Hart** (501), 04-01-02,
Walla Walla, WA.
- ✕ **Donald H. Leonard** (500), 10-12-02,
Brunswick, ME.
- ✕ **Bert S. Rosenbaum** (498), 07-15-02,
Lakewood, WA.
- ✕ **Candida (Connie) Valentine**, wife of Joseph
N. (501), 08-12-02, Newburgh, NY.

SEEKING: Nick Capobianco Jr., 8442 Urban Ct., Arvada, CO 80005, is seeking information about his dad, Nicholas J. Sr. (498), formerly of Brooklyn, NY. He attended gunnery school at Tyndall Field, FL. Nick Jr., sent a photo of his dad and three friends standing in front of the old "Tree Top Terrors" sign. The photo did not "download" with sufficient clarity for reproduction. He would appreciate hearing from anyone that remembers his dad.

SEEKING: Billy Hoopes, San Diego, CA, Phone 619-437-8159, is seeking information about his uncle, Lt. Jack Hoopes, formerly of Marysville, OH. He was a Army Intelligence Officer assigned to the 499th Squadron.

Lt. Hoopes was a passenger in B-25D-5, aircraft number 41-30165, piloted by 1st Lt. Howard F. Rhode, on the night of May 9, 1944. The plane crashed at Mokmer Airdrome, Nadzab, N.G. during a searchlight training mission. All six aboard were instantly killed. If you have any other information about Lt. Hoopes please contact Billy at the above phone number.



THE AIR APACHES
345th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION
1203 CLUBHOUSE RD.
MARION, IL 62959

**ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED**

|||||
KENNETH C. GASTGEB 2002
700
2313 Crestmont St Apt 227
Norman OK 73069-6524



Jack Fellows' latest painting, "The Water Landing," depicts the January 21, 1945 ditching by Lynn Daker off Cadiz, Negros Island, after the loss of an engine. Herman Reheis orbits the crash site in "Seabiscuit"

awaiting the arrival of a Navy PBY rescue plane. Copies of the painting are available for \$35, including shipping and handling. Contact Lynn Daker, 4250 Ponderosa Ct., Boulder, CO 80301-1634. Phone 303-444-6489.

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