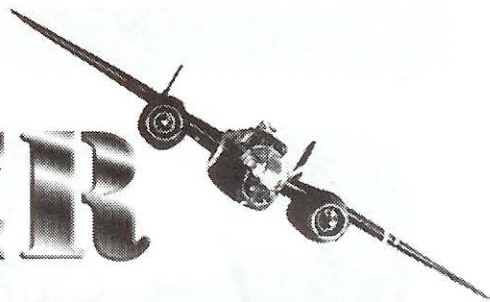




"AIR APACHES"

STRAFER



VOLUME 22, ISSUE 2

345TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2004

Rumble in Reno!

*Air Apaches prepare for reunion
at the foothills of the Sierra-Nevada Mountains*

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Reunion Details

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Returns*

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And Much More!



The Hilton Hotel and Casino in Reno, Nevada is the site of this year's reunion to be held from September the first through the fourth. Highlights for this year include: a trip to nearby Fallon Naval Air Base, a paddleboat ride on Lake Tahoe, the election of new group officers, a group dinner and the chance to renew old acquaintances as well as make new ones.

Accommodations at the Reno Hilton will be "First-Class". The Hotel features premiere restaurants, headline entertainment, family-friendly activities and, of course, there is also a 115,000 square foot casino to blow your children's inheritance in! The Hilton's 2,000 spacious rooms feature contemporary décor, renovated bathrooms, and high-speed Internet access (*to wire home for more money. ed.*) The self-contained destination resort is next to Reno-Tahoe International Airport, and is just 5 minutes from the downtown area.

Hotel Information

2500 East Second Street, Reno,
NV 89595 1-800-648-5080

Check in Time: 3:00 PM

Check out Time: 11:00 AM

Free Parking: YES

Valet Parking: YES

Data Port: YES

Cable TV: YES

Security: YES

Max Guests Per Room: 4

Distance to Airport: 1 Mile

Pets Allowed: NO

Free Airport Shuttle: YES

Room Service: YES

Roll Away Bed: YES Children Under 18
stay free.

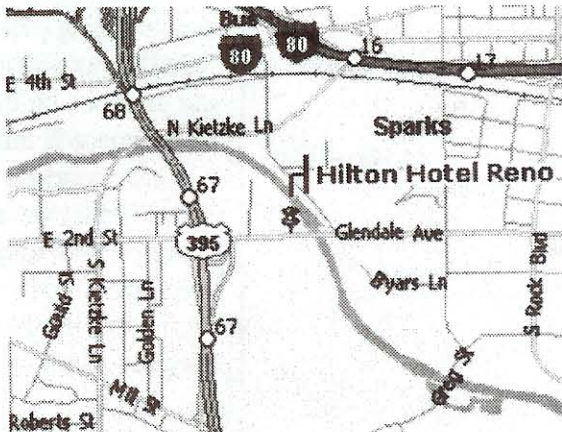
Maid Service: YES

Casino: YES

Wedding Chapel: YES

Handicap: YES

Cribs: YES





From the Editor

Cliff Dillard

“ On behalf of my generation, just let me say that we owe you a debt that can never be repaid.”

Hello and welcome to another edition of the Strafer. Hopefully by the time you get this you have already received, filled-out and mailed-in your Reno reunion registration form. This reunion promises to be quite an event, as they all are, so I hope everyone will make an effort to attend. As some of you may already know, George Mordecai is going through some tough times health-wise. As a result, Mr. Mordecai has requested that Mr. Lynn W. Daker (500th Squadron) take over as “Acting Group President” until the new elections can be held in Reno. I am sure that all members of the 345th would like to express their appreciation for the work Mr. Mordecai has done while serving as Group President, as well as wish him a speedy recovery and many happy days to come.

I hope everyone watched the WWII Memorial dedication ceremony on May 29th. I did, and I don't mind saying that I got a little choked-up thinking about the sacrifices made by all of you. On behalf of “My” generation, just let me say that we owe you a debt that can never be repaid. Thank you and God Bless America!

I don't know about the rest of you, but personally I am a bit concerned over the events taking place in Iraq. The absence of WMD's notwithstanding, our soldiers need our support, be they at home or abroad. Only time will tell how history will judge our government's decision to begin this war, but now that we are there, history should never be able to question our loyalty for the men and women currently serving overseas during this conflict. We can only pray that they can all come home safely.

Hopefully, events will play themselves out in such a way that future generations will look back on this period in our nation just as proudly the world now views the exploits of “The Greatest Generation.”

I had planned on doing a story on war medals in this issue, which my father and I are working on, but I thought the WWII Memorial in Washington was too big a story to pass-up, so look for the medals story in the September issue instead.

Keep sending me those articles and pictures and I'll try to see to it that they get published. You can send your articles and suggestions to me via e-mail at cdillard63@hotmail.com, or mail them to me directly at my home address: 1011 Election Circle, Benton, IL 62812. My phone number is (618) 435-6541. The next Strafer will be mailed in early September, so please submit your materials no later than August 15. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me any time.

By the way, if you haven't paid your group membership yet, (as I noticed I hadn't at press time!) now would be a good time to do so. You can mail your \$15.00 (Still quite a bargain) to our illustrious Treasurer, Mr. Ed Sharpe. Please make your check payable to:

345TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

Ed's address is:
3860 Wesley Court
Burlington, NC 27215

Sincerely,

Cliff Dillard

WWII Memorial Opens in D.C.

After 59 years, World War Two Veterans finally get the recognition they deserve.

by: Cliff Dillard



“This memorial serves to remind the world of the many sacrifices made not just by the young men and women in uniform, but by the entire nation—earning them the right to bear the title “The Greatest Generation””

On May 25, 1993, President Clinton signed Public Law 103-32, authorizing the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) to establish a World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. It is the first national memorial dedicated to all who served during World War II and acknowledges the commitment and achievement of the entire nation during World War II.

The memorial honors the 16 million who served in the armed forces of the U.S. during World War II, the more than 400,000 who died, and the millions who supported the war effort from home. The memorial is funded primarily by private contributions. National Chairman Senator Bob Dole and National Co-Chairman Frederick W. Smith led the fundraising campaign. The memorial received more than \$195 million in cash and pledges. Construction began in September of 2001 and was completed early this year.

The memorial opened to the public on April 29, 2004 and was dedicated on Saturday, May 29, 2004 — Memorial Day Weekend. A design by architect Friedrich St. Florian was selected for the memorial through a two-stage, open competition from over 400 different design proposals.

The World War Two National War Memorial resides at the Rainbow Pool site on the central axis of the National Mall. The Rainbow Pool is located at the eastern end of the Reflecting Pool between the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument. The Second World War will be the only 20th century event commemorated on the Mall's central axis. Notable speakers included; President George W. Bush, Senator Bob Dole, Retired Marine General P.X. Kelly, television news-commentator Tom Brokaw and actor Tom Hanks, dubbed the “Youngest member of the Greatest Generation”.



Group President

George Mordecai

"We may be too old to work, but we are never too old to teach."

As Mark Twain said, "The rumors of my demise have been greatly exaggerated." Hello to all. As most of you already know I suffered a rather severe heart attack in February. Fortunately, I am feeling a bit better these days, although I don't believe I will be able to make it to our reunion in Reno this year. If this illness has taught me anything it's this: live each day as if it were your last. With this in mind, I would certainly encourage anyone who is well enough to make it to the reunion that you make every effort to do so. And don't just limit the trip to yourself; bring a family member; children, grandchildren, friends, anyone you can find! We may be too old to work, but we are never too old to teach. This needs to become one of our top priorities. We can educate younger generations on what we had to go through in the name of freedom and democracy, lest the mistakes of the past are repeated.

In light of my recent affliction, I have decided to turn the office of Acting Group President over to Mr. Lynn W. Daker, of the 500th squadron. Lynn has always been a staunch supporter of our organization and I am sure he will do a fine job in my place. No doubt you will elect a capable group of officers in Reno to carry on our group's traditions for many years to come.

It's about time we got own monument, for a long time I thought the world had forgotten about us. But now that the WWII Memorial is open in Washington, I guess I can stop complaining. But it sure took them long enough. (*Maybe he isn't done.Ed.*) Hopefully, it will help generate renewed interest among younger people in our association activities and in WWII history in general. If you watched the memorial ceremony on T.V. like I

did, you couldn't help but feel proud to an Air Apache! There was never a war like ours before and, God willing, there will never be another one like it again. Well, I have to sign-off now. It has been an honor and a privilege serving the 345th as President. Although I will no longer be an officer, I do plan to remain active within our ranks. You won't be getting rid of me that easily! I wish you all good health and happiness in the future, stay in touch.

Sincerely,

George Mordecai.

Headquarters

August Ouellett

Assistant Group Vice-President

With trusty Headquarters pen in hand I'm ready to ramble-on for the June Strafer. First, I would like to commend Cliff Dillard for his work on the March Strafer. The changes he made have been very well received. I can understand not going with color printing; I used to work a press for a hospital after I retired nearly twenty-years ago and we didn't use color either. Of course, that was "Back in the day!"

I would still like to know if anyone heard how the picture on the lawn turned out from the last reunion and if any copies are available. If so, I would like to have two copies; one for myself and the other for the scout that pushed me around in my wheelchair. Also, my camera still hasn't found it's way home from the last reunion so if anyone has any pictures of Pauline, Duane or myself I would like to have some prints, or negatives-mainly for Duane. You can mail them to me at my address, which is listed on the back page.

I'm really looking forward to our reunion in Reno, Nevada. I just hope the traffic and airports aren't too crowded, what with the Labor Day weekend and college students returning to class. We certainly don't need that aggravation at our age. Actually, I don't need any aggravation at my age! That's why I won't be attending the WWII Memorial ceremony in Washington, D.C.

I haven't heard any news on how George Mordecai is doing. I assume no news is good news. George has done a lot of work for this group over the years; I hope he will be able to make it to Reno. I have spoken with Ken Gastgab since the New Year and he's feeling a bit better, which I was glad to hear. I also got my

usual assortment of Christmas cards to brighten my days. Ray DeRusha is still around, across the river from me. We get together for lunch on occasion. Like the rest of us, he's beginning to feel his age more and more. As for myself, I'm improving steadily too, though it takes more time to recover these days than it used to. Time to sign-off, dear buddies. See you in the desert and get prepared for the heat! Till the next letter...

SOME THOUGHTS ON AGING

Just a line to say I'm living,
that I'm not among the dead.
Though I'm getting more forgetful,
and more mixed up in the head.
For sometimes I can't remember
when I stand at foot of strair,
if I must go up for something,
or I've just come down from there.
And before the fridge so often
my poor mind is filled with doubt
have I just put food away,
or have I come to take some out.
And there are times when it is dark out
with my night cap on my head,
I don't know if I'm retiring,
or just getting out of bed.
So if it's my turn to write you
there's no need in getting sore,
I may think that I have written
and don't want to be a bore.
So, remember, I do love you
and wish that you were here,
but now it's nearly mail time
so I must say "Goodbye" my dear.
There I stood beside the mailbox
with my face so very red,
Instead of mailing you my letter,
I opened it instead!



"I would still like to know if anyone heard how the picture on the lawn turned out from the last reunion and if any copies are available."



498th "Falcons"

Michael Hasselbauer

Assistant Group Vice-President

Hello again to the 345th and just let me say that the hospitality of this squadron never ceases to amaze me. I had the great fortune of being in the Raleigh Durham area on business so I gave a call to Ira and Pauline Schaub. As luck would have it they were home and entertained me for the evening. As usual I have received a few calls of late from squad members. Most recently from Joel Solomon who was having trouble getting in touch with Ken Gastleb. So anyone who can help here it would be much appreciated.

I was also contacted by Marsh Dean, daughter of 1st Lt Dean, who, best I can figure, was a co-pilot on "Sandblaster". Anyone with any helpful information or antidotes about her father can sent it to her at mdean@eller.arizona.edu or get in touch with me and I will forward it to her.

More questions have come from CIAutomation Group's Clyde Heiman (TAG) 713-860-5220, clyde.heiman@tagsite.com who builds models. He is interested in the history of "Jaunty Jo" if anyone has any thing they might be willing to pass on he would appreciate it greatly. He also recommended two good books on the World War II Pacific Theatre for the readers among you. *Pacific Siege* by Lawrence Cortesi and *Samurai* by Saburo Sakai, et al which documents the enemy's point of view of the Pacific air war. You can pick both up on Amazon.com.

Concerning our upcoming reunion in Reno, Frank Dillard and I had a phone conversation the other night and we decided that we would like to try and hold a 498th squadron banquet, possibly on Friday night. All the details have as yet not been worked out, but anyone interested in attending should give Frank a call, we need an accurate head-count to plan for food, drinks, seating and all the other little details that go into putting on an event of this nature. So give him a call 498th and let's have a good turn-out!

Frank's number is: (336) 724-6547

Looking forward to seeing all of you at the reunion.

Mike Hasselbauer

Below: A close-up of Clyde Heiman's "JAUNTY JO"



"Just let me say that the hospitality of this squadron never ceases to amaze me."

499th "Bats Outa Hell"

Ben F. Miller

Assistant Group Vice-President



Here's hoping this issue of the Strafer will answer many of the questions I've been getting about our reunion in Reno. Rumor has it that we will met at the door by dancing girls, only they will be pushing wheel chairs! Something to look forward to I suppose. All the news from the conflict in the Mid-East sure does bring back memories of events long forgotten. One long and dreary evening we were on the beach at our first base in the Pacific watching the last big sea battle on the horizon. There were large orange flames coming from our warships as they fired on the enemy, too far away to be seen, followed by huge clouds of black smoke pouring from their guns. Several smaller ships were closer to our position, firing and trying to avoid being hit themselves by zig-zagging. The sand on our beach shook like small earthquakes with every shot.

Behind our location on the beach we could hear 50-cal. machine guns and other small-arms fire. Someone said I should report to 1st sergeant John F. Maloney, who always referred to himself as the "First Soldier." I found him and he gave me the squadron flag, a small 499th flag on a varnished pole, he said it looked like we would probably be invaded from the sea if our navy lost the battle currently taking place. My orders were to take the flag and head for our ground troops behind us. He told me "If anyone can get through to our lines, it was me." I'll never forget that. At that time I came to realize how flag bearers from previous wars must have felt, it was an awesome responsibility and I took it very seriously. No way was our flag going to fall into enemy hands! My dad was in WWI and he always taught me the value of respecting and protecting our flag. *(too bad the current generation doesn't feel the same way. Ed.)*

This week, Norma and I will be placing flags on all the graves in the cemetery just down the road from our house. Almost every time we do this we add another holder to a new name. We have seen the location of the WWII memorial in Washington and plan to visit there later this year. But first things first, so Reno, here we come!

Until next time,
Ben Miller

"My dad was in WWI and he always taught me the value of respecting and protecting our flag."



500th "Rough Raiders"

Lynn W. Daker

Assistant Group Vice-President

"I have been busy all year promoting what is being called 'Tondelayo Project.'"

Hello fellow 345th members! As you may know by now, George Mordecai has relinquished his post of Group President, due to a heart attack he suffered in February. I am filling-in for him in the role of Acting Group President until our new elections are held at the upcoming reunion in Reno, which I am certain you are *all* planning on attending (*hint, hint!*). This reunion promises to be special for several reasons; we will all be together as an entire group (500th squadron included), this marks the year that our government finally decided to erect a memorial in our honor and lets face it, Reno is a nice place to be! Not only have I been planning our reunion I have been busy all year promoting what is being called "Tondelayo Project." Needless to say, my days are rarely what you would call "Relaxing!" For those of you who are unfamiliar with the story of Tondelayo, I'll lay it out for you here:

Tondelayo was a B-25-D Mitchell, serial number 41-30669 of the 500th squadron. Tondelayo, by the way, was actress Hedy Lamarr's character in the 1942 movie "White Cargo". Tondelayo made history on October 18, 1943 during a raid on the Japanese bases on New Britain. She and two other B-25s claimed the sinking of a 6,000-ton freighter off the coast of Vunapope, ten miles south of Rabaul.

With an engine shot out over the target, Tondelayo then fought a vicious 75-minute battle with approximately 50 Japanese fighter planes of the 204th Kokutai Zeroes, as she flew homeward down the New Britain coast.



Both of the other B-25s were shot down during the battle. Tondelayo's turret gunner, Columbus, Nebraska native John Murphy was given credit for shooting down five Japanese fighters. Four others crashed into the sea after misjudging passes on the badly damaged Tondelayo, which was barely skimming the ocean wave tops. The 345th earned a coveted Distinguished Unit Citation and the crew earned Silver Stars for their bravery. The "Ordeal of Tondelayo" was considered one of the finest examples of bravery, tenacity and endurance by any crew of the 345th.

The Tondelayo is now restored and flying again, thanks to the Collins Foundation from Stowe Massachusetts. She has flown in several airshows and historical tributes throughout the country. The goal of "Tondelayo Project" is to raise the \$7,000.00 needed to fly her into Columbus for "Columbus Days" which are to be held August 14th and 15th, 2004. Anyone wishing to make a contribution may do so. The address is: TONDELAYO PROJECT
764 33 Ave Columbus, NE 68601

Lynn Daker

501st "Black Panthers"

Quinton Giuliani

Assistant Group Vice-President



Yo! It finally hit me! I must be from the Edgar Allen Poe School of Writing. I can't sit down and write a complete sentence without being "Half-in-the-bag" (drunk). I always heard a couple of drinks would loosen the tongue, but it also facilitates your thoughts. This factual story did not require any such prompting:

Francis Summers, a radio-gunner with the 501st was serving on a C-47 after the war. As luck would have it, they crash-landed the Dakota on an icecap in Greenland on December 9, 1948, stranding all seven of them. (*Sort of "Out of the fire and into the icebox! Ed.)* After several failed rescue attempts made by gliders, which added two more pilots to the barren landscape, a B-17 also managed to crack-up on the same icecap! Now there were three more mouths to feed.

Lt. Col. Emil Beaudry, flying a C-47 equipped with JATO (Jet Assisted Take-Off) tubes and skis finally succeeded in completing what he called "A routine take-off" and returned the now frozen crewmen to their base. Routine take-off? There was no landing strip; mountains encircled the icecap and the temperature was on far side of 30 below! Not exactly what I would call routine! As it was, the 12 men spent 19 days watching the wind blow and taking bets on who would join them next. To top it all off, one of our own (Air Force) made the rescue, even-though a Navy Carrier tried to get there first! Lt. Summers had many happy days afterwards. That is until a freak accident cost him his life while stationed in the Azores. He choked to death on a piece of bacon! If you ever find yourselves stranded on an icecap, or in any other similar situation, and are subsequently rescued, keep the following "interview rules" in mind for the sake of the Air Force:

- Do not criticize any phase of the rescue operation (no matter how ridiculous it is)
- Do not criticize the food or materials dropped to you (you may be billed for it later)
- Do not discuss the cause of the accident. If asked, say a board of officers will conduct an investigation (people love it when "Boards" do anything)
- Do not criticize any particular individual involved in the accident (within striking distance)
- Build-up, if possible, the efficiency and courage of the men making the rescue attempt(s) (just don't discuss their IQ's)
- Emphasize the co-operation and support you received while you were stranded (De-emphasize the "actual" co-operation and support you received while you were stranded)
- You may discuss: the living conditions, hardships endured, fear of dying, moments of revolt, thoughts of eating your fellow crewmembers in order to avoid eating the food that was dropped to you and periods of despair you experienced while watching your would-be rescuers become stranded as well. These items may be discussed at length if you can find a way to talk about it without actually using words to talk about it!

See you in Reno.

"I can't sit down and write a complete sentence without being "Half-in-the-bag."



Apache Bulletin Board

The latest news tid-bits

Treasurer's Report

Ed Sharpe

Group Assets as of April 30th, 2004

Checking Account: Wachovia Bank, Burlington, NC
\$3,676.29

Money Market Fund: Vanguard Prime Money Market
\$24,349.21

Total Assets: \$28,025.50

Looking for Information on...

Submitted by: Mr. Ken Peters

I am writing a book about my uncle, Lt. Lowell Lutton, who flew P-38's with the 475th Fighter Group-431st Fighter Squadron in 1943. Lowell was in the November 2nd raid on Rabaul and was listed as MIA afterwards. He went down in Wide Bay while providing a delaying action so his squadron could escape. In my research I noticed a small paragraph in one of the mission/combat reports that a B-25 saw a P-38 go down in Wide Bay. This was mission number 70 of the 475th. The time was 1340 hours, local time. The serial number of his plane was 42-66821. Additionally, I have come across pictures of that raid while it was in progress, it is my understanding that they were taken by a rear gunner on a B-25. The pictures are shown on the 475th web site and are included in my book. Anyone who has any information concerning the fate of Lt. Lutton can contact me at:

Ken Peters
2352 Anna Ave.
Clearwater, FL. 33765
(727) 799-0149
or email me at: kspeters5@msn.com

I would be pleased to hear from your group regarding the above.

A Little Humor

The pilot was sitting in his seat and pulled out a .38 revolver. He placed it on top of the instrument panel, and then asked the navigator,

"Do you know what I use this for?"

The navigator replied timidly, "No, what's it for?"

The pilot responded, "I use this on navigators who get me lost!"

The navigator proceeded to pull out a .45 and place it on his chart table.

The pilot asked, "What's that for?"

"To be honest sir," the navigator replied, "I'll know we're lost before you will."

"Flight 2341, for noise abatement turn right 45 degrees."

"But Center, we are at 35,000 feet. How much noise can we make up here?"

"Sir, have you ever heard the noise a 747 makes when it hits a 727?"

Lost Sheep Found!

Mr. Robert A. Armistead Jr.
Embassy Apartments #403
505 South Perkins ave.
Memphis, TN 38117

Ken Haller (498th)
8632 60th Ave. West
Mukilteo, WA 98275-3118

If you know of, or are looking for one of our "Lost Sheep", let us know so we can bring them back to the flock! You can contact our Treasurer, Editor or any of our Association Officers. The addresses are listed on the back page.

In memory of...

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

C.W. Romans

500th Squadron

Cumby, Texas

Raymond F. Proffitt

500th Squadron

Vancouver, Washington

Louis J. Stocklosa

Boonville, New York

Don Goehring

500th Squadron

Fremont, Ohio

Dorothy Cather, wife of William (Bill) Cather

501st Squadron

Birmingham, Alabama

Next Issue:

- *Reno reunion highlights*
- *War Medals (we mean it)*
- *President's Address*
- *Orders from HQ*
- *Squadron Reports*
- *Evolution of the B-25 Mitchell*

And More!

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