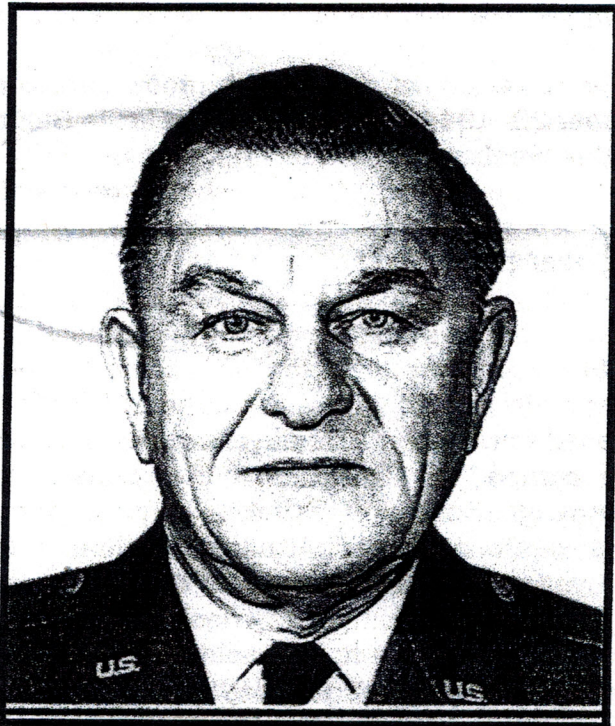




VOLUME 27, ISSUE 2

JUNE 2009

**"AIR APACHES" TO VISIT
WRIGHT-PATTERSON MUSEUM
CELEBRATE 15TH
ANNIVERSARY
OF WWII MEMORIAL**



LT. COL. EDWIN BINA USAF (RET.)

On December 15, 1983, Lt. Col. Edwin Bina (Ret.)(Deceased), representing the 345th Bomb Group Association, made application to the Director of the USAF Museum at Wright-Patterson AAFB, requesting authorization to construct a monument at the museum in Dayton, OH,

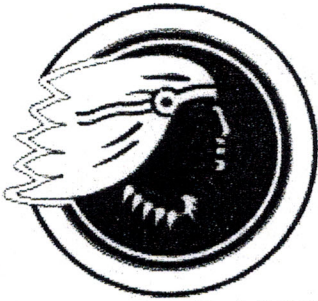
The purpose of the memorial was to commemorate the Group's participation in WWII and to honor the 755 members of the organization that had tragically been killed in action.

The Association's monument proposal was subsequently approved, construction was completed, and the memorial was officially dedicated during the 345th Bomb Group Association's reunion ceremonies on September 7, 1984.

On September 5, 2009, a rededication ceremony will be held at the monument during the course of Reunion XXII.

After an interval of fifteen years, the 345th Bomb Group Association is scheduled to return to the site of their WWII Memorial at Wright-Patterson AFB in Dayton, OH,

If you were fortunate to be among those present at the original dedication, this is an opportunity to return and reaffirm your respect for the friends and associates we honored at that time. If you were unable to be present at the original dedication, this is a wonderful opportunity to join with fellow members of the group to honor those that were lost in action during WWII. If you are an Associate member, this may be your last opportunity to stand together with the few remaining survivors of that conflict if possible, please be present.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

BY: BEN MILLER

Hello, members of the 345th Bomb Group. Due to the unfortunate loss of our president, Lynn Daker, this is indeed a new position for me. I previously held the job of VP for the 499th Squadron for a lot of years, and it was always a fun project. However, the longer I had the VP's job, the less and less help came from the members. So, please support your squadron leaders and send in your memories, they need your support.

When I think back to old times I remember all the sing-a-longs we had at our earlier reunions. Julian Baird was always ready to lead the singing with his booming voice, but sadly he has now joined the group of people we miss.

The Association officers are aware of our dwindling numbers, and are doing their best to unify the Group, as it was in the past. With larger numbers in attendance, attending future reunions should be more affordable. There is strength in numbers, and remember, your fellow members are probably the oldest friends you have left!

This issue of the STRAFER contains more information about the upcoming reunion. Be sure and register ASAP, and then attend your squadron and Group meetings, so you will be represented.

If you have copies of photos of our past gatherings, be sure to bring them. When we held the dedication of our benches at Wright-Patterson they managed to keep me out of the pictures, as I had grown a beard for a church celebration. The beard's gone now, as is most of my other hair.

The last time we paid the place a visit, there was a British fighter plane by the front door. We were surprised at just how tiny a Spitfire was, but the RAF sure did big things with them!

Our computer is off (again) when it comes to sending e-mail, so it was up to the old Smith-Corona to get this job done. Hope everyone is well. And making plans for Reunion XXII.

SEE YOU THERE!

HEADQUARTERS

By: KEN GASTGEB

REMEMBERING LEYTE - 1944

The 345th Bomb Group left the island of Biak in early October, for a destination unknown to us. Headquarters was assigned to the Liberty Ship, USS Thomas Nelson, along with members of the 498th and 499th Squadrons. When we got on board, all of the below-deck sleeping areas were taken. Several of us from Headquarters got together and put up a tarp to be used as our home for the trip. We headed southeast to Hollandia, and dropped anchor to refuel and take on fresh water. After a day or so there, the rumors began flying as to where we were going. Soon, we weighed anchor, steamed out of Hollandia and joined a huge convey headed north. After a couple of days at sea we found out that we were headed for the Philippines.

The invasion of Leyte, P.I., took place on October 20, 1944, and we arrived at Leyte Gulf on Sunday evening, October 29, "D-Day" plus nine!

While looking for a good place to drop anchor, the Nelson ran into a small naval craft that was lying at anchor in the harbor. No one was hurt, but the craft was damaged, and it was rumored that the little ship was loaded with depth charges!

Later that same night the wind started to blow and it really rained! With winds up to 100 MPH we were right in the center of a typhoon. All of us that were camped on deck had to find some other place to go. Several of us took shelter in one of the deck storage areas. At times we thought the ship was going to roll over. Later that night, after the storm subsided, I got my flashlight and went down into one of the holds hoping to find a place to spend the rest of the night. The floor was covered with cots with guys sleeping. I stumbled around and finally found an empty cot. I sat there for a while and nobody came, so I stretched out and spent the rest of the night there. All of our belongings up on deck were soaking wet. After a memorable night, the next day was spent laying out clothes to dry in the tropic sun.

Due to our arriving during the monsoon season it was too wet and muddy to establish a flying field large enough for our planes, so we had to stay on board ship. The front lines were less than 10 miles inland. All the ships in the harbor

changed position at least once every day because of the Jap aircraft attacks. While changing position one afternoon, a Liberty ship approaches our ship from the left, and we were on a collision course. Our ship's pilot put our ship in reverse to avoid the collision. When the other ship got out of sight on the horizon we saw a black column of smoke in that area. We thought it may have been hit.

While on board the ship Air Raid Alerts were sounded several times every day. We watched the shoreline and could see the Jap planes bombing and strafing areas along the beach.

On November 6th, I was selected, with a small group of men from Headquarters to go on the advance echelon with Major Darwin. A "water buffalo," a truck converted into a boat, came out to the ship and picked us up. We had to climb down a rope ladder to get onboard. After traveling about eight miles, we pulled up in a coconut grove. The driver said this is it! We didn't have any tents, but managed to fix a place to sleep with remnants of material from an abandoned Jap construction site. Across the street was a battery of 155mm "Long tom" artillery guns, manned by US Marines, and a little further back among the coconut trees there was a small airfield with some of our fighter aircraft and observation planes. This airfield was too small for our B25s, which were still back at Biak waiting the end of the monsoon season so the CBs could construct suitable airstrips.

On November 12, 1944 the Japanese launched Kamikaze aircraft attacks against the ships lying at anchor in Leyte Gulf. This was possibly the first time the Japs used this tactic. Both ships transporting 345th Bomb Group men and supplies were hit. The Group lost 110 men, and many more were wounded. After the attack, all personnel still remaining aboard the ships were brought ashore. They brought tents, and we all got together to make camp in a vacant field. That night it rained, as usual, and we woke up we found about six inches of water covering the ground! In a day or so we moved out of "the lake," to higher ground near the beach.

The beach was a nice area for lounging, swimming, and surfboarding, using inflatable mattress covers. That gave us something to do while we waited for the end of the monsoon season so an airstrip could be constructed and our planes could be ferried up from Biak. In the

meantime, some of our planes were flying so called, routine courier missions, from Biak to Tacloban. Sometimes these planes would be pressed into flying what almost amounted to suicide missions as they mounted attacks against Jap convoys headed for Leyte, or some other vital Allied target.

During the first part of December the Japs dropped about 200 paratroopers in our area. The night of the drop an air raid was underway. I watched the action from a foxhole and could see the tracer bullets in the sky going in every direction. Many were close enough that we could hear them whizzing by! What a night! We didn't learn about the paratroopers until sometime the next day. Then, Major Darwin directed that we set up a perimeter security plan. Each evening at dusk a detail of men was assigned to guard the area. Those on guard duty were required to man a command car, positioned out in the open field between our campsite and the swamp, for the duration of the night. Four men were assigned to the car each night, and they took turns standing guard and sleeping. One night while I was on duty, I was sitting in the driver's seat of the vehicle, when I heard twigs snapping as though someone was walking toward the car from behind! I quietly raised my rifle and pointed it towards the jungle. The sounds kept getting closer and closer... then, to my surprise, I saw several pigs approaching! I was certainly glad I was surrounded by local pigs and not Jap soldiers!

Christmas had almost arrived when we got the bad news. A ship transporting Christmas parcels for our area had been sunk by a Jap sub. However, there were supposedly some parcels that got through on other ships, and a lot of mail. Danny O'Brien produced a makeshift Christmas tree, made from a small tree branch, complete with homemade ornaments, and put it up in our tent. Mac, played Santa Claus, and went around to each tent with a jolly "Ho! Ho! And A Merry Christmas!" Christmas dinner was delayed one day, so we celebrated with turkey and all the trimmings the day after Christmas.

The Liberty ship survivors from the 345th Bomb Group spent a sad Christmas on a lonely beach in the Philippines back in 1944. We thought about those Christmas times from years gone by as we remembered the tragic loss of so many of our buddies because of those crazy Jap Kamikaze attacks.

REGISTRATION FORM

345TH BOMB GROUP REUNION XXII

Hosted by the 500th Bomb Squadron

Name: _____ Squadron #: _____ Phone #: _____
 Spouse Name: _____ Guest (1): _____
 Guest (2): _____ Guest (3): _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Cell Phone #: _____ Email: _____
 Arrival Date: _____ Departure Date: _____ Travel Via: _____

NOTE: Print Names Shown Above As You Want Them To Appear on Name Tag(s). Attach Sheet If Additional Space Is Required.

DATE	EVENT	NUMBER PERSONS	COST PER PERSON	AMOUNT
FRIDAY: 09/04/09	Registration in Hospitality Suite, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm	_____	\$30	_____
	Reception in Hospitality Suite, 5:00 pm to 11:00 pm. (Compliments of the 500 th B.S.)	_____	\$0	_____ 0
SATURDAY: 09/05/09	Tour Wright-Patterson AF Museum. Bus departs 9:00 am. Hospitality Suite Available 9:00 am to 11:00 pm.	_____ 0	\$10	_____
SUNDAY: 09/06/09	Squadron Business Meeting, 8:30 to 9:00 am. Group Business Meeting, 9:00 to 11:00 am. Hospitality Suite Available 9:00 am to 11:00 pm Group Banquet. Time to be announced. Check Banquet entrees & number of each: Chicken _____ No. _____ Beef _____ No. _____ Fish _____ No. _____	_____ @	\$35	_____
GRAND TOTAL \$				_____

NOTE: Make your check payable to 500th BOMB SQDN. ASS'N.
 And Mail Together With Completed REGISTRATION FORM To:

DENNIS O'NEILL
 3269 WENDOVER DRIVE
 TOLEDO, OH 43606

If you need additional information
 contact Dennis O'Neill as follows:

Phone: 419-450-6370 after 5:00 pm weekdays or Email at <djoneill@bex.net>



**ROUGH RAIDERS
500TH SQUADRON
By: DON WAGNER**

At long last we have gotten an edition of the ROUGH RAIDER Newsletter out to you, and a big one it is, 22 pages. Don't expect the next edition to be that big unless all of you make a contribution to it. Kathy is tooling up for a June issue and needs your input. She is also about to publish a new Directory for us, and the dual workload has got to be appreciated. The last Directory was in 2005 and a new one is sorely needed. I hope you met her 30 April "last day for changes" commitment, and **GET THOSE STORIES AND ARTICLES** in to her. Although I know we original members expect the now frequent losses to our ranks, I am still in shock over the passing of Lynn Daker. I talked to him by phone on the Sunday before he left us, and although he confessed he was tired from his trip to the Philippines, and chemo treatments since returning, was upbeat and sounded as optimistic as always. I think we all agree we have a biological family, and a military family. Over the years of reunions, Lynn and I bonded closely. I admired his energy, optimism, and his zeal to tell the Air Apache Rough Raider stories to anyone who would listen. We bounced ideas off each other, and were in frequent contact. He was elected by acclaim last year to the Presidency of the 345th Association, and I know the leadership qualities he showed the 500th for 14 years would have been experienced by them. He was a great gentleman, and we will all more than miss him.

I was visiting my son Scott in Virginia Beach in March, and together with my grandson Scotty, home from law school, we visited the Military Aviation Museum in Virginia Beach. They had just received a B-2SJ named Wild

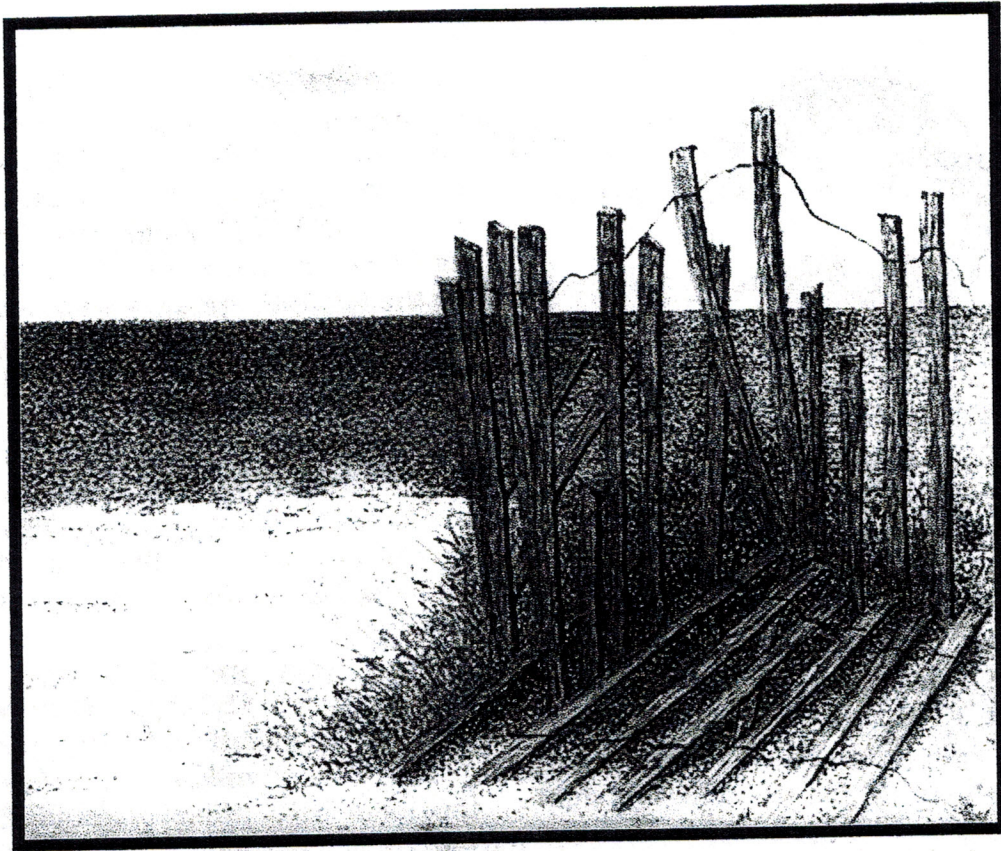
Cargo, with a total of 24 hours on it since total restoration. The museum is privately owned by one man, and has about 50 warbirds so far, both WWII and I. All aircraft are flyable and frequently flown. When they found out that I had flown missions in B-2S's, they asked me to be the keynote speaker on a dual celebration of the Doolittle Raid anniversary, April 5th, and the official installation of the B-2S into their inventory. I accepted because I saw an opportunity to tell how the Strafer version was the greatest use, of the airplane, how it came about (the saga of Pappy Gunn) and the great overall record of the Air Apaches/Rough Raiders, to include its memorable combat missions.

They told me that they usually have audiences of 150-200. They were delighted when 400 showed up for my presentation. I was fixed with dual mikes and transmitters because the local NBC affiliate would film and record me, to include an interview afterward. I thought I was doing pretty good, but did not anticipate what I was told was a first for the museum – a standing ovation! Both of my sons, Randy & Scott were there, and told me that many in the audience were in tears over my Lynn Daker story. Lynn, I hope you were listening. That respect was for you.

I've been invited back as their guest for their annual air show held this year on May 16-17. By the time you read this, I will have been to the show, and I'll tell you about it next time.

Don't delay making your reservations for the 2009 reunion in Dayton, OH, September 4-7. The dates were specially picked to allow max participation, particularly by our 2nd and 3rd generation members, which allows for the least time off for those who work for a living. Dennis and Susan O'Neill, and Joe Symonds have made great arrangements for us, to include a reunion site that provides shuttle service to and from the airport. Separate squadron meetings have been scheduled prior to the overall 345th Group meeting. We will have one hospitality room, and a 345h Bomb Group Association banquet. Get you hotel room reserved and your Registration Form back o Dennis ASAP!!

SEE YOU IN DAYTON!



LOW TIDE AT MYRTLE BEACH, SC, 2009

Too many years have come and gone
Since I first passed this way,
But my thoughts often returned to this strand
Where I spent a younger day.

The beach seems to have lost the dimension
Measured with youthful stride,
And I have lost that imagined purpose
That justified false pride.

The ocean waves appear vaguely familiar,
As does the waning season...
But life has somehow lost both focus
And it's certainty of reason.

The curvature of the earth is clearly visible
As I gaze far out to sea,
But no exotic vessel plies the coast
With someone seeking me.

Tar-papered barracks have long vanished
From this coastal land,
But I am still haunted by the engine's roar
Of "MITCHELL'S" that buzzed above this sand.

Where is the *OCEAN FOREST*,
That once occupied that space?
And all the pretty college girls
In saddle shoes and lace?

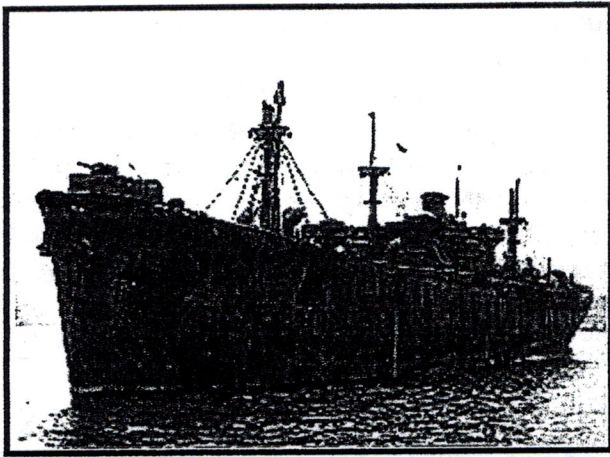
What became of those seashells?
Found, and saved to mark the time?
What happened to that day I squandered?
Without thought, reason or rhyme?

Where are all the people formerly
Counted among my friends?
And what exactly where those means
That justified the ends?

While INFINITY'S boundaries dwarf
The ocean's endless span,
The vastness of space cannot define
The LONELINESS of MAN.

Should LIFE deny me TIME to return
To wander MEMORY'S hallowed trail,
May those that someday follow discern
The treasure that resides beyond this veil.

Frank L. Dillard, 05/25/2009



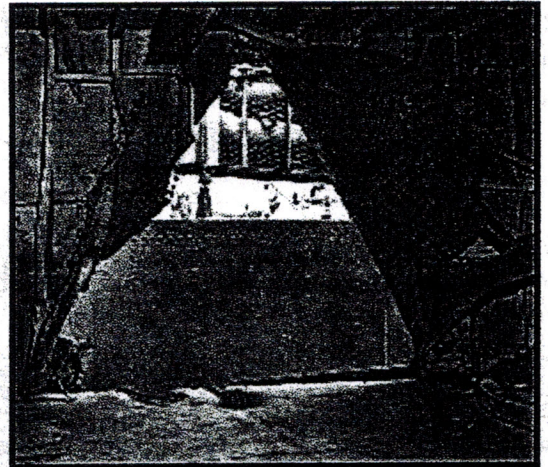
**SS WAITE AT ANCHOR IN LAYTE HARBOR
(NOTE HOLE NEAR BOW ON PORT SIDE)**

**BULLION CUBES VS. KAMIKAZES BY:
JOE VALENTINE, JR.**

The horrendous tragedy at Leyte involving the *SS Thomas Nelson* and the *SS Morrison R. Waite* has been chronicled and documented in a macro sense, but here's an untold story that happened during the attacks of the Japanese Special Attack Corps and their kamikazes on 12 November 1944.

My father, Joe Valentine, Sr. (501st) was on the *Waite* with personnel from the 500th, 501st, the Chemical Company, and his superior, Martin Taylor. It had become boring being on the ship awaiting the arrival of aircraft so that operations could be set up on shore, and Dad was restless. But the *Nelson* had been attacked earlier in the day and all personnel were confined to their quarters. Dad had gotten a box of bullion cubes from my Mom some time earlier and wanted a cup of soup, but the only potable water source on board was in the ship's kitchen, so Dad tried to convince Mart that it would be okay to sneak out for this most important mission. Mart, of course, refused and informed Dad that not only would he not leave his bunk, but that Dad also would not be allowed to leave his either. Dad was persistent though, and kept working at Mart explaining that all was now calm, nothing was happening on the ship and that no one would be the wiser if they just had a cup of soup while this seemingly infinite waste of stand-by time continued. After much cajoling on Dad's part, Mart apparently had had enough of the incessant whining (a Valentine trait) and so agreed that a quick cup of bullion would be in

the best interest of both their dispositions, at least for the short term. Up to the kitchen they went at about 1810 or so because, according to *Warpath*, a kamikaze pilot struck the *Morrison R. Waite* on the port bow at 1818 (see photos). The strike happened to hit the *Waite* exactly where Dad and Mart's quarters had been assigned!



**VIEW OF HOLE FROM INSIDE WAITE'S HULL
(LOOKING FROM VALENTINE'S BUNK SITE)**

While more than 200 men were to die for their country on the two ships during those attacks, the little cardboard box of bullion had saved two lives that fateful day in the South Pacific. Dad kept that box with him during the remainder of the war, brought it home with him, and growing up I remember seeing it in his dresser drawer and hearing the story behind it. It's really amazing, almost spooky, how something as insignificant as a small package with a few salty nuggets inside could profoundly change the course of two people's lives, family, history, and yet, the little box of bullion, sent from home by Mom, did just that.

To this day, Mart Taylor's children credit my father with saving their Dad's life on the *Waite* in November 1944. But even up to his death, my Dad never believed it was his doing.

Of course, the aftermath of the attacks were chaotic with bodies and blood everywhere. My father, who never learned how to swim, was panic stricken beyond belief not knowing whether the ship would sink or stay afloat. He dived under a cot in the first opening he could find and landed on a life jacket. Another, minor (or major!) miracle. Years later as Mart's health was failing, I was able to fly with my father to Mart's house in Grand Rapids for a two-man

reunion. Along with some of Mart's family, the local papers were there and produced a nice article about them, the men of the 345th, the war in the Pacific, and the day they were spared death by a little red and yellow box of bullion cubes. I videotaped a lot of what was said and will record the session on DVD for those who might want to watch it.

Also, if you're interested in reading more about the *Nelson's* and the *Waite's* demise from another perspective, go to:

www.armed-guard.com/sanbom.html >

for a Merchant Marine sailor's recount of that day at Leyte Gulf.

Oh, by the way, as Dad's Parkinson's disease progressed, he kept that bullion box on a table where he was continuously re-reading the *Warpath*, until it was tossed into the trash by a health aide who thought it was just another empty box. I don't think I'll ever get over that.

ANOTHER WRIGHT MEMORIAL

BY: CHARLIE WILSON (498th)

I read with interest in the last Strafer about the rivalry between North Carolina and Ohio concerning credit about the Wright Brothers. Just ten miles northeast of New Castle, IN where I live, is a historical memorial to the Wright Brothers. The family farmhouse and acreages around it have been restored as a memorial to the birthplace of Wilbur Wright. The house is furnished with some original and some period pieces. There is a small museum on the property that houses a replica of the original Wright Bros. plane. Each year in June there is a three-day festival commemorating the memorial. One of the highlights of the festival is the warbird display of model airplanes. They are built to scale, and look authentic. The planes are flown from a field behind the memorial. They are radio-controlled and the maneuvers are something to see! My friend has models of a Stearman, a P-51 and a C-47, all beautifully crafted.

There are usually about 100 of these planes at the event. I remember a model B-17 that had a 10-foot wingspan, and was put together with hundreds of very small rivets. The B-25 model was equipped with bombs under the wings,

which were remotely released during a pass over the airfield.

Last year, during the festival, the Wright airplane replica from Wright-Patterson made a pass over the memorial and then landed at Richmond, IN, before going back to Dayton. Sherry (Barnaskey) Herman, daughter of George Barnaskey, told me that she had logged 20 minutes in that particular Wright plane.

MISSION COMPLETE

BY: ERIN McCRAKEN, YORK SUNDAY NEWS

Quinton Stambaugh, 85, wears a silver B-25 bomber bolo around his neck. It is a miniature copy of the plane the Jackson Township, Texas, native logged hundreds of hours in during World War II, as a member of the "Air Apaches," 345th Bombardment Group.

The "Air Apaches" sank many Japanese warships, but many planes never made it back to land.

Stambaugh was drafted at the age of 19, fresh out of High School.

During gunnery training in 1943, he befriended Frank Tubb, who was from the small central Texas town of Robert Lee. The two crossed paths again in Hawaii and in the Philippines. After graduation, both were radio operators with the 345th Bomb Group. Stambaugh was in the 499th Squadron, and Tubb in the 500th.

It was a dangerous job. During flight, radiomen sat hunched in the radio operator's compartment in the rear of the plane, just behind the bomb bay. The radio compartment was often fitted with an auxiliary fuel tank that increased bombing range, but added an additional fire hazard to an already cramped and dangerous position.

The B-25s skip bombing runs on Japanese ships were accomplished at maximum air speed, minimum altitude, and while flying an erratic flight path to the target. This approach placed the attacking aircraft below the enemy's line-of-fire, and minimized the potential of being hit by anti-aircraft fire during the attack.

Death was always an instant away, Stambaugh said. "I have to think that I'm a survivor." He never had to open the silver ring on his finger to swallow the cyanide pill inside. He made it through 39 combat missions. Tubb

wasn't as lucky. He was killed when his plane slammed into a mountain in China. Stambaugh volunteered to pack up Tubb's belongings and send them back to Texas. He began corresponding with Tubb's mother, Mary, and his sister Ava Lou, who was just a teenager at the time.

He thought it was the right thing to do, having lost his own mother before he went into the service. After he flew his last mission on August 9, 1945, he intended to visit the Tubbs too. But life got in the way. It took Stambaugh months to get back to Spring Grove. He enrolled in classes at Franklin & Marshall College. He took a job at P.H. Glatfelter Paper Mill. He served as a District Justice from 1970 to 1987.

"You think you are going to travel, but that gets hard when you settle down and have a family," he said.

Stambaugh said he tried to put the war behind him, but he never forgot the friends he lost. His biggest regret was not getting to visit their families.

Then, he got an unexpected call. It was from Ava Lou. She had uncovered Stambaugh's letters.

Stambaugh had never thought he'd see her in person until he met Charles Runk, 72, during a meeting of the Hi-fliers club for retired airmen. Runk, who lives down the street from Stambaugh, volunteered to drive him to Texas. They set out together on February 18, 2009, in Runk's Chevy Impala. They were on a mission to pay respects to the sister of one of his friends from the distant past. The journey spanned more than 60 years, and 3,200 miles.

On the seven-day trip, they stopped in Copperas Cove, Texas, to find Runk's friend, Gervie Allred, who served with him in Germany. Then, with the help of Runk's GPA, they paid a visit to WWII Air Force pilot and author Garrett Middlebrook in Fort Worth, Texas. Runk and Stambaugh traded stories with the 90-year old veteran. "Everyone should have a trip like that in their lives," Runk said.

As they pulled into Robert Lee, Stambaugh stopped to get flowers for Ava Lou, who was now 82. "It was a long time to wait for a reunion," he said.

Ava Lou shared memories of her brother with Stambaugh. She showed him and Runk around town. As Stambaugh read Frank Tubb's name on

a World War II memorial at Angelo State University, he felt a sense of closure. "It was another mission accomplished, Stambaugh said.

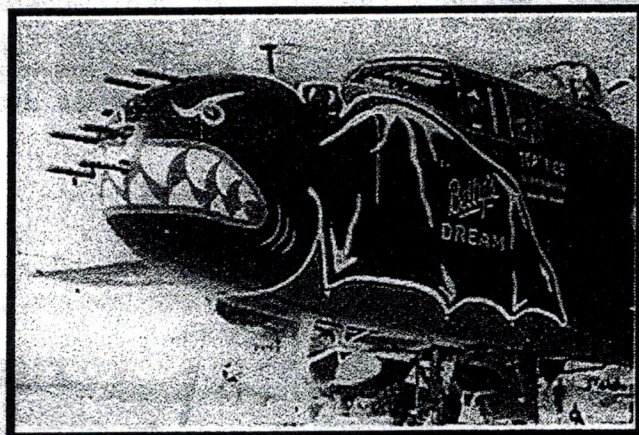
Footnote: Since retiring, Charles Runk and Quentin Stambaugh have both been able to achieve life-long dreams.

In 1997 Runk returned to York College to study structural engineering. He brushed up on calculus and took an ethnic diversity class – something not even offered back in the 1950s. He was surprised that his much-younger classmates readily accepted him, and were so eager to help him. "It was one of the most exciting things," Runk said.

Quentin Stambaugh learned how to fly a plane. He started taking lessons at York Airport and flew solo for the first time at age 60. He sometimes took the wheel of a B-25 while on non-combat flights during WWII, but that was the extent of his experience. "It was something I always wanted to do," he said.

The plane that Stambaugh flew most of his combat missions in was named "Toofie's Taxi." This aircraft was severely damaged during a training mission, and was retired from service.

"The type of flying we did was very effective." He said. "We must never forget those who didn't come back."



At the 2007 Thunder Over Michigan Air Show, Stambaugh had the opportunity to get up close and personal with a B-25 bomber again. He sat in the cockpit of "Betty's Dream" (pictured above), a plane from the 499th Squadron that had carried Gen. Douglas MacArthur to meet with the surrendering Japanese at the end of WWII.

501ST SQUADRON

BY: PAUL VAN VALKENBERG



GEN. A.E. DUNWOODY & "AIDE"

As some of you folks know, I am an investigator with the New York State University Police at the Cortland NY campus. On May 16th SUNY Cortland held its commencement ceremonies and I was assigned the security detail for the commencement speaker. I don't recall ever having a special security detail for a guest speaker in the past, but this year's speaker happened to be our countries first female four star general, Ann Dunwoody. The respect for the General was evidenced by two standing ovations by several thousand in attendance, Standing ovations are very rarely seen at our commencement ceremonies, and I'm pretty sure two is an absolute first!

I didn't have a lot of opportunity for small talk, but I did get to mention my affiliation with the 501ST Bomb Squadron and the 345th Bomb Group Association. At the end of the day she told me to send her best to the men of the 345th.

Following is General Dunwoody's biography:

General Ann E. Dunwoody assumed the duties of office of the US Army Materiel Command's Commanding General on November 14, 2008. The AMC is one of the largest commands in the Army, with more than 61,000 employees in 149 locations worldwide, including more than 30 states and 50 countries.

General Dunwoody received a direct commission as a Quartermaster officer in 1975, after graduating from the State University of New York at Cortland. She later earned a Master of Science Degree in Logistics

Management from the Florida Institute of Technology in 1988 and a Master of Science Degree in National Resource Strategy from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in 1995.

Her command assignments include: the 226th Maintenance Company Fort Sill, OK; 5th QM Detachment (ABN) Kaiserslautern, Germany; the 407th Supply and Service Battalion/782d Main Support Battalion (MSB) Fort Bragg, NC; the 10th Division Support Command (DISCOM) Fort Drum, NY; the 1st Corps Support Command Fort Bragg, NC; the Military Traffic Management Command (MTMC)/Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC) Alexandria, VA; and the Combined Arms Support Command (CASCOM) Fort Lee, VA. She most recently served as AMC's Deputy Commanding General.

Her key Staff Assignments include 82d Division Parachute officer; strategic planner for the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA); Executive Officer to the Director, Defense Logistics Agency; and Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics G-4. She deployed with the 82d as the Division Parachute Officer for Desert Shield and Desert Storm from September 1990 to March 1991, and in 2001, as 1st COSCOM Commander she deployed the Log Task Force in support of OEF1 and stood up the Joint Logistics Command in Uzbekistan in support of CJTF-180. As Commander of SDDC, she supported the largest deployment and redeployment of U.S. forces since WWII.

Her awards and decorations include: the Distinguished Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster; Defense Superior Service Medal; Legion of Merit with two Oak Leaf Clusters; Defense Meritorious Service Medal; Meritorious Service Medal with Silver Oak Leaf Cluster; Army Commendation Medal; the Army Achievement Medal; the National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Star; SWASM (2 campaign stars); and the Kuwait Liberation Medal. Her badges include the Master Parachutist Badge and the Parachute Rigger Badge.

She has been recognized as a 2001 Distinguished Alumni for Cortland State SUNY, the 2004 recipient of the National Defense Transportation Association's DoD Distinguished Service Award, the 2007 recipient of the Military Order of the World Wars (MOWW) Distinguished Service Award and the 2009 recipient of the Association of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces Eisenhower Award.

General Dunwoody has been married to Colonel Craig Brotchie, USAF (Retired) for 19 years. They have one puppy, Barney.

BULLETIN BOARD

IN MEMORY OF:

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

Fred E. Arnett (498), 02-25-2009,
Durant, OK.

Nicholas G. Dovica (499), 05-20-2009,
Cherry Hill, NJ.

Gordon Evans (498), 06-12-2009,
Columbus, NJ.

Fabian G. Moeller (499), 05-20-2009,
Phoenix, AZ.

Henry H. Seidel (501), 04-06-08,
Center Hill, PA.

Evelyn Ward (498), 03-16-2009,
Cincinnati, OH

TREASURER'S REPORT:

GROUP FINANCES AS OF 05-11-09:

Star Financial Bank Checking Acc't. 3,384.21
Edward Jones Money Mkt. Acc't. **13,917.10**
Total Financial Assets **\$17,301.31**

MEMBERSHIP & SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Don't forget to check your mailing label. If it is M (member) or AM (associate member) and the date is earlier than 2009, your dues of \$15.00 are past DUE. Dues should be paid by January 1 and not later than January 31, according to the by-laws. LM (life members) and AW (associate widows of deceased members) are exempt from yearly dues but donations are always welcome. Dues and donations are our only method of paying the expenses of producing the Quarterly STRAFER which we all enjoy.

To avoid being removed from the mailing list and membership roster, make out your personal check in the amount of \$15.00, payable to:
345TH BOMB GROUP ASS'N. and mail to:

CHARLES WILSON, TREASURER
345TH BOMB GROUP ASS'N.
80 CRESCENT CREEK
NEW CASTLE, IN 47362-1676

NOTE: If you find an error in your label-date or membership classification – please let me know. Keeping track of all the details about 350 people is not an easy task, and mistakes can be made. Also, PLEASE let me know about address, telephone and/or e-mail changes WHEN THEY OCCUR.

A BIG THANKS to Frank Dillard for editing the STRAFER.

Also, A GREAT BIG THANKS to Judy Best Zurlis for taking on the responsibility of notifying ALL 345th members about the upcoming reunion in Dayton, OH. That was a monumental task!
CHARLIE WILSON, Treasurer

EDITOR'S NOTE:

The next STRAFER is scheduled to be published in September. For material to be included in that issue, all articles, photos, or other material must be post-marked no later than **August 10, 2009.**

Send to:

FRANK L. DILLARD
963 WELLINGTON RD.
WINSTON-SALEM, NC 27106

Whoever said money can't buy happiness just didn't know where to shop!

REUNION XXII:

HOTEL REGISTRATION:

Make your hotel reservations by calling the Crowne Plaza Dayton, Ohio hotel directly. The number is 888-233-9527. Be sure to identify the reservation is for the 345th Bomb Group Association Reunion.. The official reunion activities are scheduled from Friday, September 4, 2009 through Sunday, September 6, 2009. For those that wish to spend additional time in the area the special hotel room rates are available from September 2, through September 6, 2009. Don't delay! To obtain the special room rates, reservations must be made on or before August 13, 2009

REUNION ACTIVITIES:

Make your Reunion XXII activity reservations by filling out the Registration Form enclosed in this issue of the STRAFER, and returning it to

DENNIS O'NEILL
3269 WENDOVER DRIVE
TOLEDO, OH 4606

If you need additional information contact Dennis O'Neill by phone (after 5:00 pm) at 419-450-6370, or E-mail at djoneill@bex.net.

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