



VOLUME 28, ISSUE 4

DECEMBER 2010

345th BOMB GROUP



NOV. 11, 1942
NOV. 11, 2010



68th ANNIVERSARY



This card commemorating the 68th Anniversary of the activation of the 345th Bombardment Group (Medium) was designed and produced by Ken Gastgeb of our Headquarters section. Ken, along with a handful of officers and enlisted men, was assigned to the 345th on Special Order Number 1, dated 11 Nov 42. Col. Jarred V. Crabb, the first Commanding Officer and Lt. Col. Clinton U. True were assigned to duty with the 345th on the same set of orders. The inside of the card features maps of the route overseas and the locations where the Group was stationed. Thanks go out to Ken for all his work to preserve the history of the 345th.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By: JIM BINA

Greetings!

Planning is well underway for Reunion XXIV in St. Louis, Missouri. The planning committee is putting together a wonderful array of events that should make this a memorable time for all. Details of Reunion XXIV are inside.

My wife, Rhonda, and I spent this Veterans Day at Disney World in Orlando, Florida and while all the rides and attractions are enticing (especially to the younger folk now days) we tended to immerse ourselves in the history of Walt and Mickey (we're both history buffs). At Hollywood Disney, a joint venture between Disney and MGM, there is a visual display (or more closely related to a museum exhibit) extolling the successes, and failures, of Walt Disney's life. Looking at all the accomplishments of this one man too numerous to mention here, kind of makes one feel a bit inadequate, but what I came away with was that you can tell that Walt was most definitely living his dream, and you can see that he was visibly happy with his life. Another item of interest was when WWII broke out, most of his studio and creative staff left for war leaving Walt to tend to the business. But this didn't faze Walt as he put his creative talents to work and sent Mickey, Donald, and others to the front. The images I've

included in this article of Donald and Mickey are just a couple I found at Hollywood Disney. I can only wonder how much these patriotic images helped the war effort and

improved morale at all levels of American life. It must have made some kind of a positive effect – we

won the war. Can anyone fill me in on how these icons of Americana affected the war effort? It could make an interesting study! Hey, I just realized

Mickey and Donald are veterans, too!

Veterans Day is a day set aside to honor those serving or have served in our military. There are about 28 million veterans today who have served in one way or another, and there are those who gave all. Yes, I am a veteran and I want to take this opportunity to recognize our 345th veterans for your service in a time of need. From one vet to another, thank you!

This is the holiday season and before we all know it Christmas and the New Year will be upon us and I wish all of you the best. May your holidays be joyous and your New Year prosperous and enjoy time with your family and friends this season.

Jim





BLACK PANTHERS **501ST SQUADRON**

**By: PAUL VAN
VALKENBURG**

Things are quiet on the 501st home front. Hard to believe snow has already begun to fly and the holiday season is fast approaching. I've been back to the archives of the Strafer to bring you another "best of", this time from December of 2002. Peppy Blount wrote an emotional piece which many agreed with. In memory of his recent passing, and since the content is still relevant, I thought it would be nice to see in print again.

If anyone remembers Gerald Sims please take a minute to give him a call. Gerald was the crew chief on "Tin Liz". I'm sure his daughter Tess would also like to hear from you. Her e-mail to me is printed below and has their contact information.

I wish you all a blessed holiday season with hopes of hearing from you soon.

Paul

LET'S QUIT WORRYING **ABOUT HURT FEELINGS**

**By: R.E. 'Peppy' Blount, reprinted from the
December 2002 Strafer**

December 7, 1941 and September 11, 2001 are two dates that will live in infamy, and America will never forget.

I am sick and tired of this nation worrying about whether we are offending some individual or their culture. As we anticipate terrorist suicidal bombings within our borders (as in Israel), our

aversion to racial profiling in the name of violating the Constitution approaches the absurd.

Since the terrorists' attacks on Sept. 11, we have experienced a surge of patriotism throughout our land. However, the death toll from the attacks had barely been completed when the "politically correct" faction began complaining about the possibility that our patriotism was offending others! I am not against immigration, nor do I hold a grudge against anyone who is seeking a better life by coming to America. The majority of our population is comprised of descendents of immigrants. However, there are a few things that those who have recently come to our country, and apparently some born here, need to understand. This idea of America being a multi-cultural community has served only to dilute our sovereignty and our national identity. As Americans, we have our own culture, our own society, our own language, and our own lifestyle. This culture has been developed over centuries of struggles, trials and victories by millions of men and women who have sought freedom. We speak English, not Spanish, Arabic, Hebrew, Chinese, Japanese, Russian or any other language. Therefore, if you wish to become a part of our society, learn the language.

"In God We Trust," is our national motto. This is not some Christian, right-wing political slogan. We adopted this motto because Christian men and women founded this nation on clearly documented Christian principles. It is certainly appropriate to display this motto on the walls of our schools. If the mention of God offends you, then I suggest you consider another part of the world as your new

home, because God is an integral part of our culture. If the Stars and Stripes offend you or you don't like Uncle Sam, then you should seriously consider a move to another part of this planet.

Americans are happy with our culture and have no desire to change. And we really don't care how you did things where you came from. This is Our Country, Our Land and Our Lifestyle. The First Amendment to Our Constitution gives every citizen the right to express his opinion and we will allow you every opportunity to do so. But, once you're through complaining, whining and griping about our flag, our Pledge of Allegiance, our motto or our way of life, I highly encourage you to take advantage of one other great American freedom: Your Right to Leave!

I am also fed up with the hyphenated nationalities. Let's drop the dash and instead of Cuban-Americans, Afro-Americans, Asian-Americans, Chinese-Americans and all the other pseudo couplings – simply become AMERICANS. If you enjoy the benefits of living in this great country and have chosen to become a citizen, you should accept the responsibilities that go with that choice. These freedoms were obtained at great cost and are so transient that they should be considered more like privileges than rights.

These thoughts are neither new nor original, but thank the good Lord, they're shared and embraced by that vast silent majority of the 288 million citizens of these United States of America. People, who believe in God, work at gainful employment from 9 AM to 5 PM each day, obey the law of the land and are raising

God-fearing families. People, who set the right example for their children and are willing to make any sacrifice to preserve our way of life and the freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution for their children and all of the generations to follow. GOD BLESS AMERICA.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

This email request came from Tess (Sims) Soto:

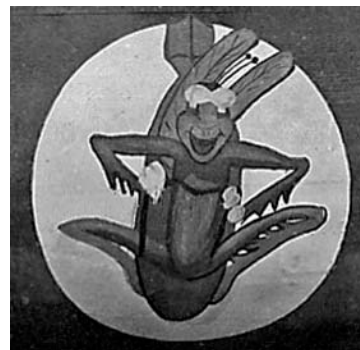
My father was with the 501st. He was crew chief for the B-25 TIN LIZ. Dad is getting up in years (he turned 95 this March) but still keeps going. He never spoke much about the war, although I did hear several fun episodes about bringing back supplies from Townsville, Australia. I was wondering how many of the men are still around that he might have known. My dad's name is Gerald E. Sims. I would appreciate any information.

Tess (Sims) Soto

1222 SW King Street, Lake City, FL 32024

(386) 755-4844

Gerald E. Sims (386) 752-1499



"Deadeye Sy", nose art from the B-25 TIN LIZ (from a photo provided by Gerald Sims).



Crew Chief Gerald Sims atop a B-25 engine on Biak, 1944.

Another poem by William C. Hilton of the 499th Squadron appeared in the February 1987 issue of the Strafer and is reprinted below. The topic ties in with the request for information for Gerald E. Sims.

CREW CHIEF

He was born and grew
to patience in some place
where life had to be torn
from a reluctant ground
with old machines and blood.
Here, he practiced necromancy
of bolt and cable, casting
spells upon dumb machinery
in pre-dawn darkness;
selling bits of his soul
that we might have a better
chance at life; he cast
out demons from the plane's soul
as a banker casts out counterfeit;
could smell the evil in
hydraulic fluid as a vintner
smells the bitterness in grapes.
He would touch the plane
in some magi-mixture of love

and antagonism, rap
a hand against her side,
"She's ready," and turn away.
Our faith was rooted
in the truth of that.

William C. Hilton



FALCONS

498TH SQUADRON

By: CAROL BEST
HILLMAN

Bits and Pieces from My Father's
Memories of New Guinea

The 345th Bomb Group moved to Dobodura in the spring of 1944. All food at Port Moresby and at Dobodura was either canned meat or dehydrated vegetables and that meant potatoes. At Port Moresby we went 42 days with Spam being the only meat served. At Dobodura other types of canned meat were served - beef and a red dry meat like corned beef. They used to tell us that the cattle in Texas swam all the way to Australia! One day the Flight Leader, Earl Griffin, told Doug Allen, my co-pilot, that he had heard that a merchant ship was docked at Dobodura. An Army Lieutenant was in charge of the anti-aircraft artillery guns aboard the ship. The ship was docked 2 miles from the 498th Squadron's area. We took a jeep and went to the beach and met the 2nd Lt. on the merchant ship who was in charge of the anti-aircraft guns. Captain Griffin introduced us then said we would appreciate it if he would invite us to dinner. Actually, it was lunch. The 2nd Lt.

Gunnery Officer was very nice to invite us to dinner. We went aboard ship and he gave us a tour of the ship while we were waiting for our lunch. Then we went into the dining room for our meal. The ship waiter handed us a menu and we had a choice of two entrees! One was chicken and one was beef. We had never been given a menu or offered a choice of a main entrée in the Army Air Corp. There were fresh vegetables, too, but I do not remember which ones. We three members of the 345th BG enjoyed the meal tremendously. We thanked that young man for the wonderful meal. Fortunately, we did not get sick from eating this variety of food. It was delicious but we never did this again.

February 10th is my birthday. While we were at Dobodura, there was an Officer's Club and I had saved a fifth of rum to celebrate my 22nd birthday. When we walked into the Officers Club another officer offered me \$75 for my \$3 bottle of rum. I turned him down – that's how hard drinks were to get in New Guinea. That bottle was one of the bottles from the case of rum in the BEST YET, my plane that we belly landed at Amberley Field. We didn't hurt a single bottle in that belly landing! Nothing was hurt except the air plane. Why did I have a case of rum in the belly of the plane? We had brought it from the US!

Damon Parra was a very famous Australian newsman. He was also a close friend of my co-pilot, Doug Allen. Parra was a civilian news reporter who specialized in beach head landings in the South Pacific. I know he was on at least 7 beach head landings. He was always in the first barge that hit the beach and he would photograph the marines who were aboard

the barge with him as they came ashore. It was not Hollywood make believe but the actual landings. The influence he had with the military was amazing. In December 1943 he was in Sydney and decided to get married. He contacted General Kenney of the 5th Air Force and said he sure would like to have Lt. Allen of the 345th BG come be his best man at his wedding. Right away, Doug got a wire from General Kenney to proceed immediately to Sydney with top flight priorities. Many times in the picture shows I saw Parra make a plea to the Australian people to buy war bonds. The last beach landing that Parra made was at Palau. He was hit during the landing and as he fell the camera panned up to the clouds. That bit of film became very famous. He was a fine, fine man.

2nd and 3rd generation readers, I urge you to talk to your veteran who was a member of the 345th BG and write down his stories. They are priceless. Even the little snippets like I have shared here help us gain a better understanding of what our heroes lived daily while in the South Pacific. My father, Melvin Best, was the last pilot chosen for the 498th Squadron and was one of the original pilots sent to New Guinea.



Mel Best's B-25 BEST YET resting on it's belly at Amberly Field after the mishap.



BATS OUTA HELL **499TH SQUADRON**

By: JIM MAHAFFEY

To those of you who were unable to attend the reunion, we missed you. The Bests and their daughters, Judy Zurlis and Carol Hillman, really put on a wonderful reunion.

The Gaylord Texan Resort, which is owned by the Gaylord Family of Oklahoma City, was every bit as nice as the Bests had told us it was, and then some. I encourage you to stay there or go by and see it if you are ever in Grapevine, Texas.

I know that at this age we all have physical problems but I urge you if at all possible to come to the next reunion in St. Louis. I also urge you to bring your children and grandchildren. They are our future and our heritage. I have enlisted five of my children as associate members to keep the memory of our accomplishments alive. We flew in the last battles of World War II. One of our own, Vic Tatelman, escorted the Japanese to the signing of the Peace Treaty. According to "Warpath Across the Pacific" the 345th sunk 260 vessels, destroyed 190,000 tons of shipping in 26 months of combat, flew 58,562 combat hours, used twelve and a half million rounds of ammunition plus had many other accomplishments. We sadly lost 712 men. We should never forget them or their families.

Now we need to get that in the history books our grandchildren will study and not apologize to nations we have supported, but remember the sacrifice that

the men of the 345th made, and many others made, to keep our country free.

On a better note, a crewman on the Doolittle flight over Tokyo named DeShazer, who was captured and tortured became a missionary after the war and returned to Japan as a missionary. He met the leader of the Pearl Harbor attack one day and led him to be a Christian. They traveled together for some time telling their story. It is gratifying to know that love can overcome hate.

Jim Mahaffey

The following is part of a letter from Capt. Edward Egan, the 499th Engineering Officer, written to a nurse in England.

Dear Nurse—

Light up a cigarette, settle yourself comfortably on your sack and get some soft music on the radio for I have a story to tell.

A while back I flew back to one of my old bases to get some equipment. It was a good trip and I mixed business with pleasure by doing some swimming and visiting a couple of doctor friends at the 105th General Hospital. I had a few dates with a nice little nurse and even spent a couple of evenings dancing, a luxury which I have been doing without for a long time. I was a bit loath to leave but finally a plane came for me and ----I left.

There were eight of us aboard. It was a B-25. All were from the Group although none were from my squadron.

The weather was pretty good when we started but as time wore on it began to get worse and worse until it became downright bad. We kept on through because we thought it would break, but it

didn't. The radio operator tried to raise our destination and get a bearing but he was not able to make contact. We were lost and we were running low on gas. Finally the weather cleared up and we sighted an island. We didn't know what it was except that it was in the Philippines. There are 7,000 islands in the Philippines. There seemed to be no sign of any military installations. I asked Lt. Cavins (the pilot) what he was going to do and he said our tanks were just about dry and he was going to set her down. I crawled back over the bomb bay and told the three in the rear to get ready for a water landing. We picked a little bay near a village but not too near in case there were Japs there. Cavins was going to make a pass at the beach so we could drop our supplies and save them but on the way in both engines quit almost simultaneously so there was nothing to do but drop it in. We all braced ourselves. I put a parachute pad underneath me and one behind my back, sitting facing to the rear, and hung on. We hit the water first but we were too close to the shore and smashed up on the beach. There was a lot of noise and bouncing around then all of a sudden we were still. I found that the fuselage had buckled and my legs were pinned in but otherwise I seemed to be okay.

Almost immediately it seemed the airplane was surrounded by chattering Filipinos. Somebody asked if there were Japs there. They said "No Japs, no Japs here," which was good news.

Sgt. Singerman, the engineer, got the crash ax which every plane carries and started chopping us out. Lt. Tarwater the navigator had to come first. I remember seeing his shoe alongside my left shoulder

twisted around 180 degrees and I said "Here's your shoe but it's bent way around. It must have come off" and he said "No, I don't think so" and I felt the toe and sure enough I could feel his toe inside. I thought "My God, his foot must be twisted off" but it wasn't and he was soon free with nothing more than some wrenched muscles. Sgt. Singerman then started on me. A finger injury prevented his swinging the ax so a Filipino lad did the work on his instructions. Meanwhile other natives were peering in the windows and some were mopping my brow with leaves and fanning me with fronds. I asked for water not thinking that fresh water might be miles from there but somehow, in a couple of minutes, I was handed a half coconut husk of good cool water. It sure tasted good.

The rest of Capt. Egan's letter to the nurse can be found at www.345thbombgroup.org. The aircraft involved in this story was CHOW HOUND, and was known as TONDELAYO before it was retired from combat and became the 345th BG's 'fat cat'.



ROUGH RAIDERS **500TH SQUADRON**

By: KELLY
MCNICHOLS

I made several trips with Lynn Daker. One of the most memorable was when Roger Lovett, Lynn and I traveled to Whiteman AFB, home of the 509th Bomb Wing, in April 2007.

Lynn was a very good speaker. He always told me that if I would schedule speaking engagements, we'd split the profits-which was nothing.

I found that I could call around and tell prospective contacts Lynn's story and of his willingness to speak. I can think only of a couple of occasions that the contacts passed on the offer.

My original intent in contacting Whiteman AFB was to try to get Lynn a ride in an A-10. Lynn told me that the Warthog was the modern equivalent of the B-25 in firepower and in combat roles. The only thing that I didn't know was that other than a couple of prototype two-seaters, there were no tandem A-10s. Time for Plan B. The contact did mention that there was an upcoming event where Lynn could possibly speak. He sent the information through his channels. Several days later, I got a call from Chris Walker, a former airline pilot who was President of the Base Community Council. The BCC was an organization of military and civilian business leaders who met monthly to promote Whiteman AFB. Arrangements were finalized and the trip was a go.

Because a security clearance was needed to enter the base, Roger, Lynn and I sent all the relevant information a month before the trip. The BCC meeting was generally a noon luncheon. With all the military personnel in attendance needing to be back at their posts, the schedule was tight. Lynn was given twenty minutes to speak. All who knew Lynn know that he was yet to be warmed up in twenty minutes, but that was the time limit. When the clearance information was returned, we had to indicate whether we wanted to go on the bus tour of the base

or fly in the B-2 simulator. Roger, Lynn and I all picked the bus trip even though we wanted to see the simulator too.

Roger and Lynn spoke to a morning history class at a high school in Clinton, MO and then we traveled on to Whiteman.

When we arrived at the base, all the clearances were in order so we went to look around. Near the entrance a B-29



painted to represent the 509th plane, "The Great Artiste" was on display. Roger, Lynn and I walked around it and took pictures.

Suddenly, a guard was standing near us. I really thought that we were in trouble, but he only wanted to know if we all wanted to be in the photo. He took the picture of the three of us.

We traveled to the Officer's Club, the location of the talk, set up and got dressed for the luncheon. As I mentioned, Lynn had only 20 minutes to speak. I was to video tape the talk from the back of the room. Lynn and I worked out a hand signal that would indicate when he had five minutes left.

At the meal, Lynn sat beside the 509th Bomb Wing Base Commander, Brig. Gen. Greg Biscone. At another table, I sat beside the 442nd Fighter Wing Commander, Col. Stone Arthur. 393rd Bomb Squadron Commander, Lt. Col. Paul Tibbets IV, grandson of Paul Tibbets of Enola Gay fame was also there.

Lynn gave his talk and in no time I was giving the five minute hand signal. I received several verbal reprimands from audience members for cutting Lynn off. I think the group enjoyed the talk.

At the conclusion of the luncheon, those left in the room were conversing when the start of the bus tour of the base was announced. General Biscone inquired whether we had signed up for the tour or the B-2 simulator. We told him the bus tour. He informed us that we were not to go with the rest of the tour but that he would take us personally

General Biscone took Roger, Lynn and I all over the base. I noticed that even though we accompanied the Base Commander, traveling to the most secure part of the base required that the General's car be inspected. We were taken to two hangers housing B-2 bombers and even got in the cockpit of one! We saw the General's office and he took us to the B-2 flight simulator. Gen. Biscone had some business he need to attend to, so he gave us to two Majors and told them to take Lynn and Roger through the simulator. This evidently caused some consternation to the Majors. I overheard one say to the other, "What are we going to do? These guys don't have clearance." The other said, "The General said to take them through, so take them through."

Lynn crashed his B-2 while trying to land. I told him that he just crashed a two billion dollar airplane. He just smiled. After Roger flew his simulation, one of the Majors came up to us and said, "We need to cover our a---- (backsides). You guys need to sign something." We signed some paper and everyone seemed happy. Gen. Biscone returned in about 45 minutes and

took us to meet some young B-2 pilots. It was like watching the "Pied Piper" seeing Lynn and those pilots.

It was a fine day and one that I'll always cherish. Later when I talked to Chris about the events of the day, he mentioned that he had known four different Base Commanders. He said that he had never known of one giving a personal tour as Gen. Biscone had given us. We must have made a great impression. In reality, Lynn was the catalyst. Even though Gen. Biscone had flown combat in B-52s and B-2s, he seemed to be amazed at the low level missions flown by the B-25s of the 345th. I believe that Roger and I were the beneficiaries of the fact that Gen. Biscone took a liking to Lynn Daker.



HEADQUARTERS

By: KEN GASTGEB

Merry Christmas and
to all a Happy New
Year!

WINGS AND A RING

By: RENE' PALMER ARMSTRONG

I am pleased to announce that I have received a contract to have my book, *Wings and a Ring*, published, with a projected release date at the end of August or first of September, 2011. I am requesting copies to bring to the reunion in St. Louis, but I can't make any promises. It has been my pleasure to get to learn of the 345th Bombardment Group's

accomplishments and to get to meet some of its fine members. I regret that I did not get to meet Lt. James Richard Jones of the 501st, the pilot who wrote the letters this book is based upon.

When my husband, Ken, found a box of 295 letters in a junk store in Texas City, Texas, he knew they were a record of something special, but little did he realize just how profound of a piece of history he possessed until we transcribed these words into a document. Sitting down and reading the over fifteen hundred-handwritten pages took me on the journey of discovery of a time that was gentler and kinder, even in the midst of war. The time period of 1941-1944 allowed people to fall in love and marry even though they might have only known each other for a few short glorious days.

Thus began a journey to discover whom these two young people were who met on a blind date, communicating to each other over three years in the only way that this era could afford - through love letters that encompassed two continents and the ravages of war.

So, to the wonderful men in the 345th Bombardment Group "Air Apaches," I dedicate this book to commemorate all that you did in World War II to make the United States of America stay free. Your sacrifices and gumption are the fabric that is woven into the history of these great Unites States. Amidst the atrocities of war, your "git-r-done" attitude and your sense of humor provided the fuel to bring this story alive. Stories of your generation's deeds have been told many times over, but my dream is to bring your "everyday" story alive so that we might be able to learn that even in our most difficult

hours, life moves on and romance will always find a way.

DEDICATED TO ALL THOSE WHO FLEW BEHIND ROUND ENGINES

By: VIC TATELMAN

We gotta get rid of those turbines, they're ruining aviation and our hearing....

A turbine is too simple minded, it has no mystery. The air travels through it in a straight line and doesn't pick up any of the pungent fragrance of engine oil.

Anybody can start a turbine. You just need to move a switch from "OFF" to "ON" after a while. My PC is harder to start.

On some planes, the pilots aren't even allowed to do it...

Cranking a round engine requires skill, finesse and style. You have to seduce it into starting. It's like waking up a horny mistress.

Turbines start by whining for a while, then they give a lady-like poof and start whining a little louder.

Round engines give a satisfying rattle-rattle, click-click, BANG more rattles another BANG, a big macho fart or two, more clicks a lot more smoke and finally a serious low pitched roar.

We like that.

It's a guy thing...

When you start a round engine, your mind is engaged and you can concentrate on the flight ahead. Starting a turbine is like flicking on a ceiling fan; useful, but hardly exciting!

When you have started his round engine successfully, your crew chief looks up at you like he'd let you kiss his girl too!

Turbines don't break or catch fire often enough, leading to aircrew boredom, complacency and inattention. A round engine at speed looks and sounds like it's going to blow up at any minute. This helps concentrate the mind.

Turbines don't have enough control levers or gauges to keep a pilot's attention. There's nothing to fiddle with during long flights.

Turbines smell like a Boy Scout camp full of Coleman lamps.

Round engines smell like God intended machines to smell!

DUES NOTICE

It is time to send in your yearly dues to our treasurer. Your continued support helps defray the expense of producing the *Strafer* newsletter and is critical to the health of our association. Dues are to be paid by January of each year. Send your check for \$15 made out to the 345th Bomb Group Association to:

Mary Sloan Roby, Treasurer
1916 Pratt Street
Baltimore, MD 21231

A TRUE FLYER

A REVIEW OF A PERSONAL HISTORY

I took a call from Jay Moore (501) several months ago. He was calling to tell me that he remembered seeing the 345th Tree Top Terror sign (shown on the front page of the March 2010 *Strafer*) when he reported to the unit at Nadzab, New Guinea in July of 1944.

He also mentioned to me that his daughter-in-law, Senath, was writing a book based on his memories of the war and the documentation he collected during his life.

With the emphasis that we are placing on recording the stories and histories of our vets, I had to give her a call and find out about her project.

The working title for her book is *A True Flyer: Memories of a World War II Air Apache* and covers Jay's life through childhood, the Depression, flight school, his long distance romance with his wife-to-be and his time at war.

Senath's interest in the subject came about because Jay was recording his wartime stories for the Smithsonian's veteran project and she had just completed some classes on writing biographies and personal histories. She started helping him record his history in 2007 and came to realize that there was a book in what she was hearing.

Jay celebrated his 89th birthday on 11 Nov 2010, the same date that the 345th celebrated its 68th anniversary.

A more in-depth review of the book will appear in the *Strafer* when it is closer to publication.



Jay Moore in the Philippines (courtesy of Jay Moore and Senath Rankin).

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:

George W. Sass (500th) 14 Oct 2010 Grand Island, NE

Robert P. Bynum (500th) 16 Oct 2010 Oneonta, AL

Chester L. Buckner (500th) 28 Oct 2010 Hamilton, OH

THE YOUNG DEAD SOLDIERS DO NOT SPEAK

Nevertheless they are heard in the still houses: who has not heard them?

They have a silence that speaks for them at night and when the clock counts.

They say, We were young. We have died. Remember us.

They say, We have done what we could but until it is finished it is not done.

They say, We have given our lives but until it is finished no one can know what our lives gave.

They say, Our deaths are not ours: they are yours: they will mean what you make them.

They say, Whether our lives and our deaths were for peace and a new hope or for nothing we cannot say: it is you who must say this.

They say, We leave your our deaths: give them their meaning: give them an end to the war and a true peace: give them a victory that ends the war and a peace afterwards: give them their meaning.

We were young, they say. We have died. Remember us.

Archibald MacLeish, 1941
American Poet and Librarian of Congress

HELP US FIND AND RETURN A LOST SIGNED RABAU BOOK

If you attended the 345th Reunion in Dallas this year, you received a copy of the *Rabaul* book that Melvin Best had copied for you. Your name is on the back with a short message from Melvin. The binding DOES NOT extend from the top to the bottom left hand side of the book.

Marc Stevens (499th) also brought a treasured copy of the *Rabaul* book that his grandmother received many years ago. A letter from Hap Arnold addressed to her is taped to the inside front cover. Marc's book has a hard, shiny cover (dulled over the years) with the binding extending from top to bottom with fragile black teeth.

WHEN MARC WAS GATHERING HIS POSSESSIONS, THE BOOK WAS MISSING!

Please check your copy of the *Rabaul* book and contact Marc directly at the address or phone number below if you happen to have his original.

Your assistance will be very much appreciated.

Marc Stevens
(325)- 450-5966
2228 Valleyview Blvd, Apt. 1009
San Angelo, TX 76904-8714

DEDICATION

*To the officers and men
who comprised the Rabaul
striking force.....those
who returned and those
who gave their lives,
that a new chapter in
the history of airpower
might be written*

YOUR PHOTO'S AND VIDEO'S ARE NEEDED!!

We are in need of video or still images of the "Welcoming the Troops Home" event at DFW during Reunion XXIII. We need these images to submit to CNN iReport so we can highlight the 345th's participation in the Welcoming Home event in conjunction with the 345th's 65th year celebration of the last air mission of the war. If the photos and story are accepted they could air on HLN's Morning Express with Robin Meade during the holiday season. Please send any photos or videos to JamesBina@verizon.net or to my home mail address. To learn more about CNN's iReport focusing on "Welcome Home: A Military Tribute" go to <http://ireport.cnn.com/ir-topic-stories.jspa?topicId=517036>, they have some good stories on the site.

345th Bomb Group XXIV Reunion 2011
Labor Day Weekend
September 2-5, 2011

Headquarters: Renaissance St. Louis Suites Hotel

827 Washington Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63101

Make your own reservations: 1-800-HOTELS-1 (or 314-621-9700)

Specify Group Code M-3L11AJ

Room reservations received after the reservation cut-off date of August 11 will be confirmed on a space-available basis at the best available rate at the time you make the reservation.

The Hotel: The Renaissance is located on Washington Avenue in downtown St. Louis and is home to trendy boutiques, loft living, restaurants, and nightlife activities. You will have access to the nearby Edward Jones Dome (St. Louis Rams Football), the Gateway Arch and the Cardinals will be playing in town. Their website www.renaissancelouisgrand.com gives you more information on the hotel amenities. Room rates of \$98/guest room plus 16% tax. Rates will apply three days prior to and 3 days following the reunion.

The City: St. Louis has a multitude of activities close to downtown. Forest Park (larger than N.Y.'s Central Park) is home to the famous St. Louis Zoo (free entry), the fourth largest science museum/planetarium, & the Missouri Historical Museum.

Within walking distance of the Renaissance is the newest attraction, City Museum, perfect for kids of all ages. Walking into the school bus balanced on the edge of the roof or riding the Ferris wheel on the roof means this "ain't your stodgy museum".

Varied events are held at Soldier's Memorial also located in downtown St. Louis. Jefferson Barracks and Cemetery is a short ride from downtown. The Barracks were established in 1826. Lots to see on guided tours.

Daily tours are available at the home of Anheuser Busch Brewery. The Clydesdale horses can be found at fascinating Grant's Farm.

Event: Scott Air Force Base is located just across the Mississippi River in Belleville, IL. SAFB is operated by the 375th Air Mobility Wing. SAFB is also home to the Air Force Reserve Commands 932d Airlift Wing and the IL Air National Guard 126th Air Refueling Wing. Major Tom Jackson, pilot of a KC-135r Stratotanker, will give us an ultimate up close view & discuss this impressive plane. The KC-135r has provided aerial refueling capability for over 50 years. The KC-135r can refuel two planes at one time. We are planning a luncheon on the airbase.

SAFB is also home to USTRANSCOM. You will think you are on a movie set; huge screens everywhere as SAFB is the single manager of America's global defense transportation system. They are tasked to coordinate people and transportation assets to allow the U. S. to project and sustain forces globally.

Note: SAFB does not finalize particulars until 2011 so events may vary slightly. SAFB also hosts the Midwest Air Show on Labor Day Weekend. Event is free.

Our reunion will end with Jim Terry showing a film of and discussing Lynn Daker's trip to the Philippines to locate his downed plane off-shore at Negros Island. The purpose of the trip was to give closure to the family of S/Sgt Chatigny, the turret gunner who was unable to exit the plane. This was Lynn Daker's final item on his bucket list as he felt responsibility for the lives of all his crew members.

More activities are planned and will be shared in the March newsletter along with pricing for the various activities, events and banquet.

Hosted by ***Diane (Daker) Brauer*** and ***Jan Daker***
319-360-6463



PBY Catalina rescuing the Daker crew near Negros Island, Philippines.



Lynn Daker



Lynn and Jim on a boat over the engines of the ditched aircraft.

PRESIDENT

Jim Bina (501st)
1386 Cranes Bill Way
Woodbridge, VA 22191
703-680-1057
<jamesbina@verizon.net>

1st VICE PRESIDENT

Dennis O'Neill (500th)
3269 Windover Drive
Toledo, OH 43606
419-475-3304
<djoneill@bex.net>

2nd VICE PRESIDENT

Kelly McNichols (500th)
2256 80 Road
Burr Oak, KS 66936
785-647-7541
<mcnichols@ruraltel.net>

SECRETARY and EDITOR

Andy Decker (501st)
1348 112th Avenue
Amery, WI 54001
612-296-1424
<strafer2@gmail.com>

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Ruth Damour (499th)
162 Box Branch Dr. (winter)
Branchville, SC 29432
843-563-2219 (winter)
<ruthoma1@hotmail.com>

TREASURER

Mary Sloan Roby (500th)
1916 Pratt Street
Baltimore, MD 21231
410-563-1442
<msroby@verizon.net>

ASSISTANT TREASURER

Nancy Ingram (498th)
700 Forest Trail
Cedar Park, TX 78613
512-258-3604
<jningram@yahoo.com>

HEADQUARTERS

Kenneth C. Gastgeb
2313 Crestmont St., #227
Norman, OK 73069
405-364-1350
<kenseasychair@aol.com>

498th "FALCONS"

Carol Best Hillman (498th)
2904 Woodhaven
Carrollton, TX 75007
972-242-6936
<carol.hillman@gcisd.net>

499th "BATS OUTA HELL"

James M. Mahaffey (499th)
2708 North Sterling Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73127
405-947-1855
<mahaffeyjk@aol.com>

500th "ROUGH RAIDERS"

Donald E. Wagner (500th)
11010 Presidio Drive
Raleigh, NC 27617
919-293-0047
<buzzwag@frontier.net>

501st "BLACK PANTHERS"

Paul Van Valkenburg (501st)
3127 East River Road
Truxton, NY 13158-3109
607-842-6356
<van@cortland.edu>



**THE AIR APACHES
345th BOMB GROUP ASS'N
424 TIFFANY TRAIL
RICHARDSON, TX 75081**

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US POSTAGE
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RICHARDSON TX

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