



THE PYRAMIDIERS

The Newsletter of the 98th Bomb Group/Wing Veterans Association

August 2013

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Pieces of My Mind

Greetings to all,

It is my sad duty to report the passing of our Founding President, John A. Fornwalt on April 25, 2013 at his home. Our heartfelt condolences go out to his wife Ruth and his family and friends. John had so many wonderful qualities that it is difficult to find adequate words to describe them.



For those of us who can remember the 1930s, perhaps there is no better way to define him than to simply say he was a nice man. Today those two words may have lost the meaning they formerly had. When people called someone a “Nice Man” then, they were saying that he had all of the good qualities man can have—they were the best possible. John Fornwalt was a Nice Man.

A special note to those who are planning to attend our reunion in Charleston: Our reunion hotel has changed its name to InnPlace Hotel Charleston. Only the name changed. So remember to look for the Innplace van if you plan to use the hotel’s shuttle service.

A 70th Anniversary Reunion of the Ploesti Veterans was held at the Air Force Museum from 30 July to August 2nd. Several of our members planned to attend and we hope to have some coverage of the event in our November newsletter. This was probably the last reunion for the Ploesti Veterans as their numbers have steadily decreased with their advancing ages. For those of us who call these Veterans our heroes, it is a sad day indeed.

Our new web site is up and running. If you haven’t had an opportunity to check it out, the address is: ThePyramidiers.com. If you wish to make a comment on the site, you will need to log-in. Your username is

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Pieces of My Mind

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your first initial and your last name. The password is Veteran. If you have a suggestion to improve the site, or for additional content, please send it to me either by e-mail or USPS. They are always welcome.

By the time you read this newsletter, it will be time to think about getting ready for our reunion. We are expecting a large turn out and hope you will be able

to join us. As always, Dennis has done a super job of planning the reunion and I promise you will have a great time. Hope to see you there.

With Warmest Regards,

Bill Seals



FOR THE RECORD

ADDRESS CHANGES

Clement	Francis (Bud) J.	4750 S Blosser Rd, Spc 340	Santa Maria	CA	93455-4646	B-29 / 343 SQD
Eddington	Horace A.	447 Gem Smith Place	Folsom	CA	95630	B-29 / 345 SQD
	(Maj USAF Ret)					
Ordiway	M. Vernon	94 Lincoln St	Ridgway	PA	15853-1918	B-47
Smith	Robert L.	6414 North Parkway, #317	Tacoma	WA	98407	B-29 / 344 SQD
Walsh	Richard T.	3939 Ocean Dr, Apt C207	Vero Beach	FL	32963-1389	B-29 / HQ
Watson	John A.	102 23rd Ave SW, Apt F-104	Puyallup	WA	98371-7896	B-29 / 343 SQD
Bailey	Mrs. Eugene	4547 Vista Dr	Canal Winchester	OH	43110	Honorary
Braemer	Lucille M.	5550 Pioneer's Blvd, Rm 112	Lincoln	NE	68506	Honorary
Gibbs	Mrs. Luverne D.	5412 N Syracuse St	Portland	OR	97203-5238	Honorary
Kidd	Mrs. Nancy	12034 N Saguaro Blvd, Unit 101	Fountain Hills	AZ	85268-4796	Honorary
Milligan	Mrs. Lucy B.	3191 Aster Dr, #303	Prescott	AZ	86305-3743	Honorary
Turner	Mrs. Ann A.	PO Box 434	Loughman	FL	33858-0434	Honorary
Edwards	Jonathan	13370 Yellowstone Ave	Victorville	CA	92395	Scholarship 2013
Turner	William J.	PO Box 34	Swayzee	IN	46986-0034	Associate

NEW MEMBERS

Kelly	Konley	1625 Cemetery Hill Rd	Carrolton	TX	75007	Associate
Torrison	John	405 Pond Meadow Rd	Westbrook	CT	06496	Associate

DECEASED

Fornwalt	John A.	390 E 5th Ave	S. Williamsport	PA	17702-7416	B-24 / 415 SQD
Smith	George E.	1709 E Walnut Grove	Derby	KS	67037	B29 / 344 SQD
Layman	Mrs. Harry B.	11334 Upper Georges Creek Rd SW	Frostburg	MD	21532	Honorary
Parkhill	Mrs. Mynta Lu	21628 N 56th Dr	Glendale	AZ	85308-6225	Honorary

98th Bomb Group Veteran's Association Scholarship Awarded

The 98th Bomb Group Veterans Association Scholarship in memory of Sgt. William Simons has been awarded this year to Jonathan Edwards of Victorville, California. Jonathan was chosen for his dedication and hard work which he has demonstrated both at school and in his communities. He will start his planned medical career by attending Victor Valley College, where he plans to get his associate degree, after which he plans to continue at Azusa Pacific University where he will enroll in their Bachelor of Nursing Program. A member of the AFJROTC program in high school, he would like to use his medial skills by eventually joining the military.

When asked what Patriotism means to him, Jonathan answered: *"Patriotism is loyalty and pride in our country and her ideals. Ideals like freedom, peace, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The ability to shout out against oppression and spread freedom. Patriotism is a uniting force that drives us towards the creation of a better world. The best description of patriotism I can't give you. But the soldier that spends*

his day in the scorching heat of Afghanistan with a pack that can weigh as much as 90 pounds, roaming the streets of hostile territory – there is where patriotism at its epitome is found. Sacrifice, answering the call to service, the call of our country.

The officers and members of the Association hope this Scholarship helps to preserve the memory of all the brave men of the 98th Bomb Group, past and present, who put their lives in harm's way to fight for the freedom we enjoy today.

Congratulations and best wishes to Jonathan as he begins this new chapter!

To date this Scholarship has been funded primarily by donations for the video, *FORCE FOR FREEDOM, The 98th Bomb Group 1942-1945*, raffles held at the annual reunions, and direct donation. Any donations are greatly appreciated and can be sent to the Scholarship Chairman, Suzanne Mioduszewski.

Message from the Secretary

It is with heavy heart that I put 'pen to paper,' as we have lost our beloved member, John Fornwalt, who left us to join all his many 'buddies' in heaven. John was an Army Air Corps Veteran of World War II serving with the 98th Bomb Group (H) in Palestine, North Africa (9th Air Force), and in Italy (15th Air Force). He was a founder and past president of our 98th Bomb Group (H) Veterans Association. John was noted as a war historian, having written a book about the 98th and his time served. He was presented a plaque by the Air Force Thunderbirds and was seated next to President Bush at the 2006 dedication of the Air Force Memorial in Washington, D.C.

To me John represented the soul of our organization, the best of the best, the embodiment of the "Greatest Generation" who put serving their country first and never looked back. They also never lost the love, respect, and friendship they had for each other. When they got together at reunions it was as though time

stood still and they were back in their tents and sharing stories. John described my Dad to me as though they had just been together the day before. What a gift to know about your Dad when he was that young and serving his country!

My Dad thought the world of John, and he was one of those early guys that came together to establish the Association to continue their friendships and reminisce about their experiences. It was at the last reunion my Dad attended that John gave me the idea of the Scholarship Fund, saying that they had one once upon a time had one, and that he thought it important to reestablish it so that we were helping educate others who would carry on the stories of the 98th.

We will miss you always, John. Miss your smile, twinkling eyes, and the stories you shared. Your spirit will always be with us. Our deepest sympathy to your lovely, sweet Ruth and your family. God Bless You.

final IP (Floresti) and turned to the bomb run heading of 127 degrees. Several crews recognized the mistake and broke radio silence to warn the leader. Unfortunately, Compton either had his radio turned off, or was not monitoring it.

At this point, all but one of the authors that I have read assumed that it was too late to save the mission and have simply recorded the actions that followed. (See Figure 2) Only Major Sternfels in the latest edition of his book asks the “What if Question.”

It is my view that it wasn't too late to salvage the mission. In fact, it wasn't too late until several minutes after the turn when Col. Baker saw refineries off to his left and turned the 93rd toward them. Until this point Col. Compton could have altered his course and headed to the final IP. Perhaps it is only ironic that because of the different power settings flown that there were several minutes to salvage the mission even after the turn.

I understand the reasons for maintaining radio silence as long as the mission was proceeding as planned, but by the time Col. Compton had flown several minutes towards what should have been his target without sighting it, both he and General Ent should have questioned the need for silence and started to try to correct their mistake. Finding out where the other groups were would seem like a good place to begin, and would have been relatively easy by using the radio. One has to wonder what was possible if Col Compton had been monitoring the radio.

I submit that by using his radio Col. Compton could have determined the position of Col. Kane's groups and that with this information it would have been possible to develop a coordinated plan of attack. All that was required was for the two leading group to return to the correct IP where they could have joined with the three trailing groups. Certainly, the maneuver would have been difficult, but remember this mission had been intensively planned, and the aircrews had been prepared more completely than any mission flown to date. Moreover, the leadership was unparalleled—

there were five Medals of Honor awarded for the mission. Even if the timing wasn't perfect, and it could have been, an attack by all five groups on their assigned targets would have produced a great deal more damage—and perhaps fewer losses of aircraft and crewmembers. Unfortunately, the view of several authors that the wrong turn doomed the mission to failure proved largely true, despite the heroic efforts of the crews who attempted to hit their assigned targets.

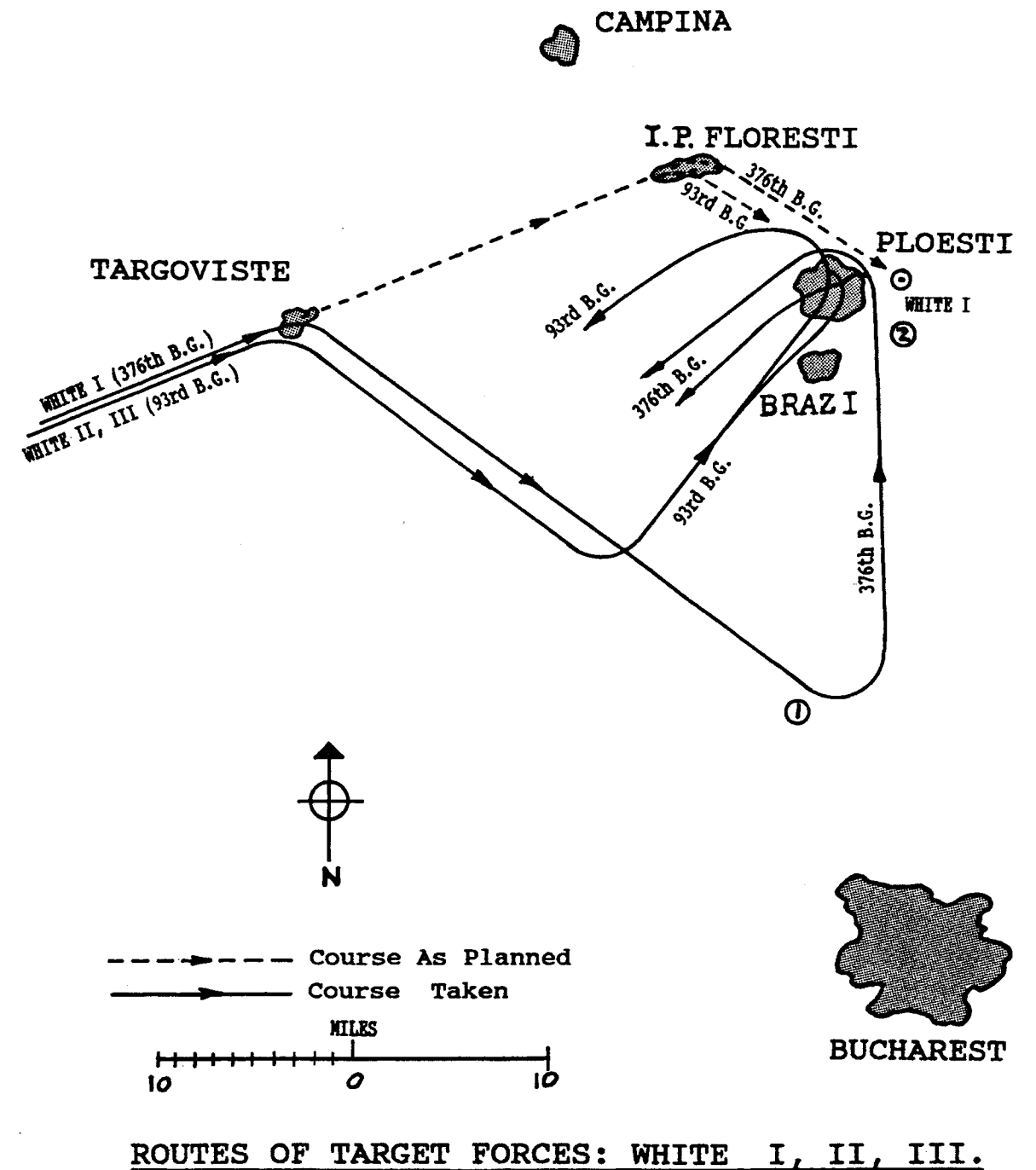
Who was to blame if anyone? As I pointed out earlier, it isn't my intent to place the blame. However, the reader may be interested in knowing who received the “official” blame. In his after action report, Major General Lewis Brereton, Commander of Ninth Air Force, admonished General Ent for the wrong turn and for the manner in which the attack was carried out. Gen. Brereton wrote, “The decision of the Commander to execute an attack from the south after his formation had been lost and missed its IP was unsound. It resulted in the wrong targets being bombed, destroyed coordination, and sacrificed the benefits of thorough briefing and training of the crews.” However, he added that “no blame is attached to any commander or leader participating in the mission for decisions which were made on the spot under the stress of combat.”

Colonel Kane was also admonished later by General Brereton for not keeping up with the formation leader. Interestingly, there is no record of General Ent being admonished for not demanding that Colonels Compton and Kane use the same power settings.

Three men took responsibility for the wrong turn. General Ent and Colonel Compton did so publicly nearly sixty years later, and Captain Harold Wicklund, the lead navigator, did so to his family. Wicklund wrote that he gave Colonel Compton the wrong estimated time of arrival: “The error was all mine. I did not correct him during the turn. I simply made a mistake.” To which I can only add: Haven't we all?

Written by: Bill Seals

Figure 2



ROUTES OF TARGET FORCES: WHITE I, II, III.

(From Page 199 of PLOESTI—UNCOMMON VALOR)

An Unlikely Role for Sunglasses on an Historic Day

Ploesti, Romania was the hub of the Axis oil supply for the German military. August 1, 1943, Operation Tidal Wave was nicknamed "Black Sunday" because five bomb groups (376th, 93rd, 44th, 389th and the 98th; together including 178 US planes) were scheduled to encounter a 15-hour, low-level bomb raid—the longest ever at that time—against the German military.

The record of that day presented here was kept by Paul Warrenfeltz, navigator, WW II veteran from the Army Air Corp, 98th Bomb Group serving in Benghazi, Africa 1943:

"We took off at 7 a.m. Sunday morning, August 1, 1943, 155 US B24s from Benghazi, Africa. Our target was the Ploesti oil fields in Romania. We were scheduled to drop our bombs at Ploesti then return to Benghazi, Africa.

I was a substitute navigator for this mission and was not briefed on the details before takeoff, so one of the other navigators, Norman Whelan, gave me a set of regional maps. My pilot, Francis Weisler, was also a substitute for this mission. We boarded "Baby" and took off in formation along with 177 other planes. Our 98th Bomb Group was led by Col. John (Killer) Kane.

We headed north across the Mediterranean Sea along Bulgaria towards Ploesti. When we turned in to prepare for the bombing, approximately 10 miles from the target, we had to put on our flak vests. While I was adjusting mine, I laid my sunglasses down on the navigator's table. My glasses slid down behind and into a group of wires, shorting out our number three engine. We could not keep up with the rest of the group, so we had to drop out of formation, not completing our IP (initial point) of contact and turned left towards the mountains to drop our bombs before returning to our base.

We were unable to gain much altitude in this mountainous area so the pilot asked me to point him towards the nearest friendly port base. We turned due south flying approximately 1000 feet off the ground. We crossed over the Danube River and into Bulgaria. Our bombardier, Joe Nagy, spotted German fighters taking off to shoot us down, when a miraculous thing

happened . . . we found our plane in the middle of a thunder squall, visibility was less than three feet, not being able to see the end of the wings on our plane or anything above or below. It was up to me at this point to navigate us through this area without hitting the mountains, or crashing. My only thoughts were to get us to Turkey or Cyprus. When we came out of the storm, the German fighters were no longer around. We flew towards Turkey, got to Dardanelles and successfully crossed over the first mountain. We had reached an altitude between two and three thousand feet, but our plane was unable to gain enough altitude to clear the next mountain.

We turned due south at this time and flew through the valley. I was able to accurately calculate our navigational points thus far. With darkness approaching we continued on towards Cyprus. The pilot was able to make contact with the tower who advised us of the proper altitude and direction to continue upon. We were told the runway was short and not designed for our plane, (it was designated for fighter planes), but when we touched land and hit the brakes hard, we were able to just stop short of the water at the end of the runway. Surprisingly, within a few minutes of landing, our leader, Killer Kane who was flying in the Hail Columbia came in for a landing behind us. They touched down about ten feet short of the runway, breaking off their right wheel gear and spinning to a halt. We found out that our group hit our targets, however during this mission a total of 45 planes were lost. A member of each of four bomb groups received the Congressional Medal of Honor during this mission. This was the only time five Congressional Medals of Honor were given during one mission in the history of US military.

I flew a total of 33 missions which included 310 combat air hours during my tour of duty in Africa.

Editor's note: Paul Warrenfeltz recently wrote this narrative for his daughter, Joyce Lochridge, and his grandson, Major Keith McGee, who are trying to develop a permanent record of Paul's service. It is based on the diary he kept during the war.

A Little Levity Always Ask, Never Assume!!



The following has "made the rounds" on the internet. You may have received it as a "forward" via email. We repeat it for laughs. Enjoy.

His request approved, the CNN News photographer quickly used a cell phone to call the local airport to charter a flight.

He was told a twin-engine plane would be waiting for him at the airport.

Arriving at the airfield, he spotted a plane warming up outside a hanger.

He jumped in with his bag, slammed the door shut, and shouted, "Let's go."

The pilot taxied out, swung the plane into the wind and took off.

Once in the air, the photographer instructed the pilot, "Fly over the valley and make low passes so I can take pictures of the fires on the hillsides."

"Why?" asked the pilot.

"Because I'm the photographer for CNN," he responded, "and I need to get some close up shots."

The pilot was strangely silent for a moment, finally he stammered, "So, what you're telling me is . . . You're NOT my flight instructor?"

AAH-OH!



Life is short. Drink the good wine first!

★ ★ AMERICA'S

In September 1931, Japan began its fanatical aggression to acquire areas of China. The disorganized Chinese forces were no match for the well-organized, fully equipped, and well-trained Japanese forces when they attacked the Northeast provinces of China. Despite large amounts of foreign aid, effective Chinese armed forces had not been established. Corruption was rampant at all levels of the Chinese government and the military. China's province of Manchuria quickly fell under the blood red banner of the Rising Sun, with little resistance from the Chinese forces.

Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek was the only man who provided some leadership for the country. Chiang was stubborn, vain, and suspicious of everyone and everything, but he was the only leader who was able to exercise some control over the warring factions in China. Together with his wife, Madam Chiang, they called for an international force to fight the Japanese. Fortunately for the Chinese, Madam Chiang was a skilled diplomat. Unfortunately, there was little the international community could, or would do, to stop the Japanese advance in China during the decade of the 1930s. By 1933, the Northeast provinces of Manchuria, Manchukuo, and Mukden plus the province of Jehol were under Japanese rule. Following the capture and "Rape of Nanking" in 1937, Hankow fell to the Japanese in late 1938 and Chiang relocated his government to Chungking. By the end of the year, Japan claimed control of 1.5 million square kilometers of Chinese territory with a population of 170 million people. For the next six years, Japan undertook no major military operations in China.

By October 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt had become acutely aware of the desperate need to stop Japanese imperialism. A long time staunch supporter of China with a firmly held belief that the nation should take its place in the international order as a leading power, the president took action. He expressed grave concern regarding the Japanese aggression and expansion of its authority in China. It appeared that

the increasing Japanese-China conflict was causing international concern and could precipitate a U.S. war with Japan. Plans were therefore made to establish a covert mission through the creation of the AVG (American Volunteer Group). In April 1941 President Roosevelt signed a secret executive order authorizing the AVG.

The organization of the covert group was largely the creation of General Claire Chennault, a medically retired Army Air Corps Captain who had worked in China in a variety of jobs since August 1937. Chennault spent the winter of 1940-41 in Washington, supervising the purchase of 100 Curtiss P-40 fighters and the recruiting of 100 pilots and 200 ground crew and administrative personnel that would constitute the 1st AVG.

Forty of the pilots came from the Army Air Corps and sixty from the Navy and Marine Corps. One army pilot was refused a passport due to his earlier participation as mercenary in Spain, so only 99 actually went to Asia. Ten additional flight instructors were hired as check pilots for Chinese cadets. The volunteers were discharged from the armed services, to be employed by a private military contractor, the Central Aircraft Manufacturing Company (CAMCO). To compensate for the risk involved they were paid \$600 a month for a pilot officer, \$675 a month for flight leader, \$750 for squadron leader, and about \$250 a month for a skilled ground crewman. All of these amounts were far more than they had been earning and were considered quite generous when you consider a new Ford automobile could be bought for \$675. The pilots were also orally promised they would be paid \$500 for each Japanese aircraft they shot down.

During the summer and fall of 1941, some 300 men carrying civilian passports boarded ships bound for Burma. Initially they were based at a British airfield in Toungoo for training while their planes were assembled and test flown by CAMCO personnel. Because many

FLYING TIGERS

of the pilots had lied about their flying experience, Chennault set up a training school to prepare them to fly the P40 fighters in combat. The men called Chennault "the Old Man" because of his much older age and his leathery exterior the result of flying in open cockpit aircraft in the Army Air Corps.

About this time, the image of a ferocious tiger was adopted as the emblem of the AVG. The nose of the AVG's P-40s were painted with a large shark face after a photograph of a British P-40 of No. 112 squadron was seen by one of the pilots.

With eastern regions of China under Japanese control, the port of Rangoon in Burma and the Burma Road leading to China was of critical importance to Republic of China as virtually all material destined for China arrived at that port and were transported via the road. To protect this vital route the AVG was divided into three squadrons with two squadrons stationed at Kuming in western China and the third near Rangoon.

On 20 December 1941, the AVG saw its first combat when it intercepted Japanese bombers on a raid on Kuming. Three bombers were shot down and a fourth crashed before reaching its home base. No AVG aircraft were lost and the bombers jettisoned their bombs prior to reaching their target. Additionally, the Japanese discontinued their raids on Kuming as long as the AVG was based there.

In early January 1942, the Japanese launched their Burma campaign. Despite heroic efforts by the British defenders and the AVG, Rangoon

fell at the end of February and the forces retreated to northern Burma. It is estimated that while defending Rangoon, the AVG destroyed 50 Japanese aircraft while losing 20 P-40s. Ten AVG pilots were either killed or listed as missing. All in all, a very creditable performance considering the AVG was outnumbered and faced fully trained and combat experienced Japanese pilots. On April 29th the AVG was ordered to leave Burma and relocate to Baoshan in China.

With the Burma campaign finished, Chennault redeployed his squadrons to provide protection against

General Claire Chennault



Japanese air raids on China. Following the Doolittle raid, the Japanese launched an offensive to capture the AVG bases. Some of the last missions the AVG flew were in defense of the Guilin base. By June 1, 1942, the first personnel who would form the USAAF's 23rd Fighter Group began to arrive in theater. The AVG's last combat mission was over Hengyang on the day it was disbanded, July 4, 1942.

Despite the horrible environment of the remote bases, and critical shortages of nearly everything, the AVG compiled an enviable record. The unit was officially credited with 297 Japanese planes destroyed, including 229 in the air. Fourteen pilots were killed in action, captured, or disappeared on combat missions. Two died of wounds sustained on bombing raids, and six were killed in accidents during the AVG's existence as a combat force.

Chennault and many of the AVG personnel were integrated into the USAAF and continued to serve in Asia and other theaters for the remainder of the war.

Claire Chennault and the AVG received many tributes for their service including the following:

A statue of General Chennault in the Republic of China's capital of Taipei; monuments on the grounds of Louisiana's State Capital; a P-40 on display at the Riverside War Memorial in Baton Rouge; various parks and public areas are named in honor of the group. A "Flying Tigers Memorial" was built on the old airstrip of the AVG in Huaihua, Hunan Province in 2005. On the 65th anniversary of the Japanese surrender in China, President Carter unveiled a statute of General Chennault in Zhijiang County, Hunan, the site of the Japanese surrender.

In December 1972, Claire Chennault was inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame and a U. S. Postal stamp was issued in his honor in 1980.

Immediately prior to the 50th reunion of the AVG Veterans in 1992, they were retroactively recognized as members of the U.S. military during the seven months



the unit was in combat against the Japanese. The AVG was also awarded a Presidential Unit Citation for "professionalism, dedication to duty, and extraordinary heroism." In 1996, the U. S. Air Force awarded the pilots the Distinguished Flying Cross and the ground crewmen were all awarded the Bronze Star Medal.

Several days before his death at age 64 on July 27, 1958 from lung cancer, Chennault was promoted to Lieutenant General, and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. He apparently had two happy marriages and was the father of ten children who were active in both politics and military affairs,

[Pictured left is Pilot Robert \(R.T.\) Smith. He stands beside his P-40 fighter which includes the emblem of the Fighting Tigers. \(Photo taken in Kunming, China.\)](#)

[The Tigers' emblem was created by the Walt Disney Company.](#)

[Pictured above are members of the The Flying Tigers.](#)

Epilog:

Throughout the duration of WWII, there were actually two wars being conducted simultaneously. One was the war between the Chinese and the Japanese for control of the nation, and a second between the Nationalists led by Chiang Kai-shek and the Communists led by Mao Tse-tung for the allegiance of the Chinese people. The Chinese war against the Japanese invaders is generally presented in the histories of World War II. However, the struggles for power between Chiang's forces and those of Mao are often omitted. Whether the omission was intentional, or simply an oversight, the struggle between these forces would determine the fate of the Chinese people for decades.

The battle between the Mao and Chiang groups began in 1927. Throughout the remainder of the 1920s and the decade of the 1930s, both sides enjoyed victories and suffered defeats as the relative strengths of the groups varied. In 1937 the Nationals owned an army of one million men, a small navy and an air force of

some 200 aircraft. In the same year, the communist's Eight Route Army numbered only 45,000 men, but by 1940 it had grown to 400,000.

As noted earlier, Chiang had decided not to resist the Japanese invasion of the Northeast provinces and had traded space for time. One of the problems with his strategy was that the communists were engaging the Japanese behind their lines, and while these engagements were not necessarily large, with each one the party gained greater support from the Chinese people.

When the United States and Great Britain declared war against the Japanese, it appeared to Chiang that China would be saved and that in the long run of things his strategy had been correct. However, in spite of large amounts of American support to Chiang, the communists were successful in converting American opinion in their favor.

While Chiang slowly emerged as a great leader of the nationalists, Mao gained complete control over the Chinese communist party and demanded that Chiang recognize communist's control of the areas they held and demanded increased manpower for his army.

By 1943, Chiang's regime and power were on the decline. He became authoritarian to the extreme. Refusing any advice to the contrary, his treatment of the people became more and more brutal. As result of this treatment, the masses turned to the communists for relief.

The Chiang government received a great boost in America with Madam Chiang's visit to America at the insistence of Wendell Wilkie following his trip to China. As the guest of President and Mrs. Roosevelt, Madam Chiang won the hearts and respect of the American people. She had an appealing dignity, spoke English perfectly, and blended Chinese and American prose to illustrate her points. At times her voice would choke and she would stop her story as if overcome with emotion. Her visit made a marked change in the U.S. government's support of Chiang. Prior to her visit, President Roosevelt was seriously considering shifting U.S. aid to China to the communists who had been painted as "communists" in name only by some American representatives in China.

Massive American aid flowed into China as result of Madam Chiang's visit, but when President Roosevelt died in April 1945, the rationale for his "China" decision died with him. When the war ended with the dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan, the Chiang government was not prepared for the war that followed.

A detailed account of the post WWII war in China is beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to note that the war between the nationalists and the communists resumed in 1946. The communist forces were victorious and established the People's Republic of China on the mainland while the nationalists retreated to Taiwan in 1948. Sadly, the Chinese people on the mainland would remain under the tyranny and paranoia of the communist regime for the remainder of the 20th century.

Submitted By: Dolores J. Haritos, Colonel USAF (Ret)
(Photos from Wikipedia)

Photo 1: A "blood chit" that explains (in Chinese) that the bearer is a foreign person aiding China's war effort and should be rescued and protected by Chinese citizens.

Photo 2: The Curtiss P-40 Warhawk, "Joy," at the USS Kidd Louisiana Veterans Memorial & Museum, Baton Rouge.

Photo 3: At the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force, this P-40 Warhawk is emblazoned with the Flying Tigers' shark face.

Photo 4: A captain in 1934; Claire Chennault stands in front of a P-12E.

Photo 5: Third Squadron Hell's Angels, Flying Tigers — photographed in 1942 by Pilot R.T. Smith.

Photo 6: The birthplace of Claire Chennault, an historic site in Commerce, Texas.

Photo 7: Statue honoring Chennault in Taipei.



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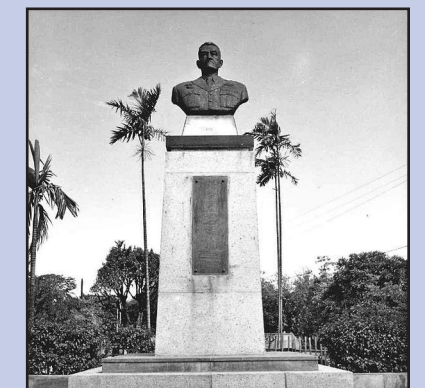
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7

From the Stratojet

In September, 1955 I reported to the 98th Bomb Wing at Lincoln AFB, Nebraska as a Second Lieutenant six months out of Undergraduate Navigator Training and a recent graduate of the Advanced Strategic Bombing Course. When I went to personnel to find out which of the three bomb squadrons I was to be assigned to, a Master Sergeant there informed me that I must be going to the Ariel Refueling Squadron because he had never seen a “brown bar” lieutenant navigator assigned to a bomb squadron. After I insisted I had been trained to fly the B-47, he decided to check with his “chief.” Following a brief absence he returned and told me I was assigned to the 345th Bomb Squadron.

I proceeded to the 345th orderly room to check in. After a replay of the scene in personnel with the Staff Sergeant in the orderly room, I signed in and was introduced to the squadron operations officer, Major John Murray, and the squadron commander, Lieutenant Colonel Chris Sheppard. They told me the wing would shortly deploy to the United Kingdom for six months and that I would remain with the rear echelon and would be attending a course at McConnell AFB during

their deployment. I responded, “Yes, Sir,” and the adventure began.

It didn’t take long to learn from the guys who were flying in the nose of the B-47 that the Bombardier/Navigator (B/N) position was a challenge to say the least. One of the reasons it was so hard was the lead-in training we received. The Advanced Strategic Bombardment Course consisted of classroom lectures, some time on a mockup of the bombing and navigation system (BNS) in the B-47, and approximately fifty hours of flying time in the T-29. The T-29 was equipped with a BNS that was similar to the system in the bomber. The major shortcoming of the flying training was that the T-29 flew at 270 mph, while the B-47 flew at 500 mph. As a result nearly every B/N had trouble keeping up with the aircraft when they started to fly the B-47. Moreover, it was very difficult to get the needed high speed training in the bomber due to its configuration.

There was no seat for the Instructor Navigator (IN) in the aircraft, and the only space available for an IN was poorly situated for almost any type of instruction. Most INs sat on the sextant case in the space just off the B/N’s

To Stratofortress

left shoulder. Setting in this position meant the B/N’s work table with his maps, bombing form, navigation log, etc. could not be viewed by the IN. Additionally, the radar scope for the MA-7 BNS was only three and a half inches in diameter and was fitted with a hood. This prevented the instructor from monitoring the B/N’s actions, and made it impossible to offer any inflight instructions regarding the operation of the radar which was the primary means of bombing and navigating. Any instruction in this vital area had to wait until the film of the scope was available after the mission.

Another factor which made “staying up with the aircraft” difficult was the BNS itself.

While the system was state of the art, it had several severe limitations. First, the primary heading system was a gyro stabilized magnetic compass with all of the inherent lack of accuracy associated with magnetic compasses. Secondly, determination of wind direction and velocity required a manual operation using the radar, and was time consuming and took a degree of skill. Thirdly, all inputs of bombing and navigation data into the system had to be done manually by the B/N which was also time consuming and prone to errors. Finally, it was physically difficult to operate the sextant in the nose of the aircraft.

Despite all these handicaps, the great majority of the bombardier/navigators who flew the B-47 mastered the skills required and became important and integral members of the combat-ready crews who flew the aircraft. The contribution of the B-47 and its crews “to keeping the peace” earned them an honored place in Air Force history.

In July of 1959 with 1,000 hours of flying time in the B-47, I gave up my “spot” promotion to Captain

when our crew departed Lincoln for B-52 training. Following ground school at Mather AFB and Castle AFB, we went to Walker AFB for the flying phase of our transition training.

Shortly after we began flying the “Buff” I developed a feeling that I must have died and gone to heaven. There were manifold reasons why I had the feeling. I now had another navigator sitting right beside me who did most of the navigation duties and helped me with the task of bombing. I had a Doppler radar that gave me a continuous readout of the wind at my altitude. I had an astro tracker that provided the BNS with an accurate true heading. I had a radar scope that was ten inches in diameter and was in full view of an IN when he was aboard. When we were flying celestial navigation, we had an Electronic Warfare Officer (EWO) who was also a trained navigator to operate the sextant. I had plenty of time to check the navigators’ calculations which meant we rarely had errors in their preparation. I could even check the navigator’s map for plotting errors. On a comfort level there was space to stand up and it was easy to use the relief facilities. I even had time to eat my flight lunch which often went un-eaten in the B-47. On long missions it was even possible to catch a little sleep while the navigator took care of the downstairs duties. Finally, when I flew as an IN or as an evaluator I had a proper place to set and had un-hindered views of what the two navigators were doing. No wonder I felt like I was in heaven after flying the B-47.

Written by: Bill Seals



Reunion Schedule • September 15–19, 2013

98th Bomb Grp/Wing Veterans Association

The Secretary/Treasurer will post registration times.

Hotel: InnPlace Airport, 4770 Goer Dr., North Charleston, SC 29406
Reservations: call 1 (888) 747-1900 • 98th Hotel Rate of \$100.00 Inc: Guaranteed until August 12th

(You may have noticed that our hotel has changed names — but it is the same facility as noted in our May issue. If you plan to use an airport shuttle, be sure to look for the “InnPlace” shuttle.)

- Day 1 Sunday September 15, 2013**
6:00 PM Cash Bar
6:30 PM Association Welcome Dinner
- Day 2 Monday September 16, 2013**
9:30 AM USS Yorktown (\$14.50 P/P not included with tour) Golf Cart will be available from the Bus to the Carrier Elevator.
Tour & Lunch at The Citadel
- Day 3 Tuesday September 17, 2013**
9:30 AM Tour Charleston — Free Day
“Hotel Shuttle to Historic Old Town”
- Day 4 Wednesday September 18, 2013**
9:30 AM Joint Base Charleston (AFB)
Tour & Lunch at the Club
- Day 5 Thursday September 19, 2013**
9:30 AM Ladies Event
9:30 AM Executive Board Meeting
10:00 AM Association General Meeting
6:30 PM Cash Bar
7:00 PM Association Banquet

Please Any question or concern regarding the Charleston Reunion Contact:
Dennis Posey Tel: (770) 971-3972 Email: dennis_posey@att.net
Bill Seals Tel: (281) 395-3805 Email: colbillyseals@hotmail.com

... See ya'll in Charleston ...

Reunion Registration

98th Bomb Grp/Wing Veterans Association

Registration Fee \$75.00

Last Name _____ First _____
Name as you would like it to appear on your name tag _____
Address _____ E-Mail _____
City _____ State ____ Zip _____
Sqd _____ Years _____ A/C _____ Duty _____
Spouse/Guest Last Name _____ First _____
Spouse/Guest Name as you would like it to appear on name tag _____
Address if different _____

Banquet Food Choice . . . Choose One (1) Plated Entré

1 *Steak & Chicken*

Grilled Sirloin Paired w/ Sautéed Chicken Topped w/ Lemon Dill Cream Sauce. Served with Creamy Garlic Whipped Mashed Potatoes and Fresh Vegetable Medley.

2 *Salmon & Chicken*

Broiled Salmon Paired w/ Sautéed Chicken Breast Topped with Lemon Dill Beurre Blanc. Served w/ Herb Rice Pilaf and Fresh Vegetable Medley.

3 *Steak & Salmon*

Grilled Sirloin paired w/ Broiled Salmon topped with Lemon Dill Cream Sauce. Served w/ Herb Rice Pilaf and Fresh Vegetable Medley.

Your Choice # _____ Guest Choice # _____

Sept 15 Day 1 – 6:30 PM – Welcome Dinner

Sept 16 Day 2 – 9:30 AM – Buses depart for The City, The Yorktown & The Citadel
Tours with lunch at The Citadel \$32.00 x _____ Persons = \$ _____
Yorktown Carrier Tour \$14.50 x _____ Persons = \$ _____

Sept 17 Day 3 – Free Day for touring Old Town Charlestown (Hotel Vans)

Sept 18 Day 4 – 9:00 AM Buses Depart for Charleston Joint Base
Tour with lunch at the Club \$32.00 x _____ Persons = \$ _____

Sept 19 Day 4 – Bus departs for Ladies Event (Dress Real Nice)
\$20.00 x _____ Persons = \$ _____

Registration Fee	\$75.00 x _____ Persons = \$ _____
Scholarship Fund	(donation) \$ _____
Annual Dues	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Make checks payable to: **98th Bomb Grp/Wing Veterans Association**. Please return completed registration form & check to: Ms. Suzanne Mioduszewski
1137 Joyce Lane
Ann Arbor, MI 48103



CHARLESTON

98th Bomb Group Reunion

September 15-19, 2013

Schedule and Registration Information Inside



Directions to InnPlace Airport Hotel

4770 Goer Dr., North Charleston, SC 29406

From the Airport; ask for directions or follow your GPS.

From I-26; Exit # 213 and there it is !!!

The Pyramidiers is the newsletter of the
98th Bomb Group/Wing Veterans Association.