



THE PYRAMIDIERS

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

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Message from Bill Seals . . .



Patience and Other Virtues

I have to admit that despite serving 28 years in the “hurry up and wait” Air Force, patience is not one of my virtues. I endured the frequent interminable periods of waiting with a sense of resignation which I still employ when I’m anticipating the arrival of an event or an article, and have little or no control over its arrival.

Perhaps, my substitution for patience would also work for some of you. I know that some of you become very impatient awaiting the arrival of our newsletter (I do too). Some of you become so impatient that you contact our editor, Dolores to inquire why the newsletter is tardy. And unfortunately, some of the inquires are none too polite. This is the way the newsletter gets printed and distributed. Dolores has a deadline to submit our material to our printer. She has never missed a deadline so she is NOT responsible for the tardy newsletter.

For the past 13 years an anonymous donor has paid for the entire printing and mailing of our newsletter. The donor’s generosity (a virtue we admire) has saved our association tens of thousands of dollars. The only restriction our donor has imposed is that we print the newsletter at his local printer. His printer runs a highly successful business and has accepted the job with the proviso that he does the printing when it is least disruptive to his busy schedule of work. That folks is why the newsletter is sometimes late. If you just must fuss at someone about a late newsletter, please contact me. OK?

Perseverance is a virtue that is often required when we face obstacles, or have a difficult task to do, especially when we have

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A Glimpse into the Past

by Devon Powell, Historian

Editor's Note — Our Historian takes us through flight in a B-24 Liberator and imagines life of crews fighting Migs in 1943-44. An excellent review.

There I was...sitting in the tail section against the bulkhead leading into the bomb bay. Contained in the basically open but crowded space of the fuselage with nine other men. But this was not just any aircraft...it was a B-24 "Liberator." And it's the last one on the planet still able to take to the air.

President's Message

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a limited time in which to accomplish the task. That is exactly what Dennis Posey has displayed over the last few months, and believe me there were plenty of road blocks to overcome in planning our Shreveport reunion. When his first trip to Shreveport didn't produce the desired results, he made a second trip. Most of us would have called the results achieved on the second trip "good enough" and pressed on. Not Dennis. He had the basics of the reunion in hand, but there were details that he wasn't satisfied with and he made a third trip. Take my word for it, his perseverance is what makes our reunions the best, and this one promises to top any that we have had before.

We have expended a considerable amount of time in getting the word out to as many of the veterans who participated in the Ploesti raids as possible. To date, the results have been encouraging, but we know there are many veterans who aren't aware of the reunion. Please, if you know a veteran who was involved in the raids, make sure he knows about our reunion.

The registration form is included in this newsletter. Fill it out, write a check. Mail to Suzanne Mioduszewski and join us in Shreveport for our reunion honoring the "Ploesti Raiders." You'll be glad you did.

A virtue we all appreciate in a speaker, or a writer is a sense of "knowing when to stop."

With warmest regards to all,

Bill Seals
President

Some of these men, once we were in the air, actually started to pretend they were firing the mounted 50mm cannons from the waist-gunner stations at what I can only imagine were "enemy targets." Nazi warplanes like the JU-88. Others, like me, moved from station to station reverently and with faces that reflected what I would guess was their attempt to imagine what it must have felt like to have been there in 1943-1945 in the Mediterranean theatre of operations, where the plane was widely used. Or maybe afterwards in the Korean War. Trying to imagine what it must have felt like to be wearing the heavy, heated gear and wearing oxygen masks for hours and hours on the way to and, hopefully, back from a target.

When I arrived at the Montgomery County Airpark, I could see the planes lined up on the runway. I'd actually been signed up for a flight the day prior, but the plane both hadn't yet arrived and didn't have enough passengers to make it worthwhile for a flight. The plane, currently painted and named "Witchcraft," in honor of the 8th AF/476BG aircraft, is operated by

... from our ...

Reunion Coordinator

In July 2010 while attending the reactivation ceremony of the 343rd Bomb Squadron at Barksdale AFB and meeting some more of the fellows involved in the Ploesti Raids, a couple folks and I came up with the idea of combining our 98th Annual Reunion to include anyone involved with those Raids. Well never in my wildest dreams did I envision just what that idea would mean. Over these last few months I have met (talked with) some of the most grand and wonderful gentlemen who were a part of those horrible missions and they, like me, are truly looking forward to this great and once-in-a-lifetime Reunion. Bring your **memories**, your **stories** and **memorabilia** to share with everyone!!!

We look forward to seeing you there!!!

Please Register Early

the Callings Foundation and tours the country offering on-board viewings as well as 30-minute flights to those interested in it, as well as preserving the memory of the WWII efforts of that aircraft and those who flew in it.

The day of my actual flight was a Saturday, and there was a full complement of 10 ready to take to the air. I met my 30-minute travel companions inside the gated area of the runway and received a numbered sticker before being led to the other side of the plane, where we were given instructions on how to board. We were to enter through the bomb bay and given specific instructions to absolutely and under no circumstances step on the bomb bay doors once in the air unless we wanted to find ourselves on the way back to the ground in a rather immediate fashion (meaning, the doors would simply fly open with any amount of pressure put on them). Not having flown in a plane with a 10-inch wide walkway from the back to the front of the plane (or any plane with a "bomb bay" for that matter), I was paying very careful attention. We were told a bell would ring indicating we were free to get up and go wherever we wanted, but to not crowd the nose of the plane as space was limited and to avoid backups on the narrow bomb-bay area.

We all crawled up and in, going forward or backwards, taking seats where we could find them and trying to figure out how to use the harnesses, which looked nothing like any seat belt any of us had ever seen. The rear hatch was closed and our instructor noted that if it flew open we were to bang it back down with the hammer located nearby. Everyone thought he was serious.

We chattered to each other hesitantly, not knowing anything about each other beyond we'd had this common interest of flying in this antiquated aircraft. And that we were excited. Maybe a little nervous, too. The plane was nothing like any commercial aircraft I'd ever been in. It had two rather large cut-outs in both sides of the plane at the waist, where the 50mm machine gunners would cover the sides of the plane — and anyone could quite easily jump (or fall) out. I won't even mention the plethora of red-painted warnings, ammo boxes, oxygen hookups, ball and tail turret — or that bomb bay again.

I'd watched the plane come in to land at the airpark on my way out the day before. I thought, watching

this bomber come down over residential areas, what anyone looking up must be thinking. It also gave me a good feeling about getting into the air and staying there

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... from our ...

Secretary/Treasurer

Greetings all and a Happy Spring! Once again we *Northerners* have survived another winter and all that "white stuff" it brings!

Thanks to all of you who have been sending in your dues. Remember dues are now \$15.00 per year, and in the interest of economy, I am no longer mailing out receipts. The number following your last name on the address label of *The Pyramidiers* newsletter indicates the year your membership is paid through. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about your status.

Regarding our newsletters — please be sure to provide me with any address changes. Amazingly, after every mailing there are at least a dozen that are returned or for which the Post Office sends us an address change; in all these instances the Association is charged a fee. If you have both a summer and winter address be sure to let me know and the dates when they are effective. We don't want anyone to miss out on our great newsletters! Also, if you have an email address we would like to have that on file as well.

I am really getting excited in anticipation of the Barksdale Reunion! For me it's another chance to meet and talk with men who participated in the Ploesti Raids; and honor those who are no longer with us, and those who gave their last full measure. My sister and I were fortunate enough to attend a 2003 reunion commemorating the 60th Anniversary, and it is truly something we'll never forget.

Lastly, I want to extend a special thank you to Bob Schinsing who so kindly always brings specially printed notepads to give out at our reunions, and which are much appreciated by our members.

Hope to see you in Shreveport!

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A Glimpse into the Past *continued from previous page*

(I mean, it got from wherever it was to here so I was guessing it would manage another 30-minute sweep of the surrounding area). So after revving the engines hard for about 20-30 seconds once we'd taxied to the runway, we hurled down it — and then the engines cut and we didn't go up. The people in the tail of the plane nearby looked at each other and though we didn't speak a word we all seemed to say "I hope there isn't a problem" because above all, we wanted to feel what it was like to be in the air in this machine.

After another taxi-ride back into position, and another 20-30 second revving of the engines, we rolled down until we lifted off and glided up into the air some several hundred feet above the ground. After about three minutes a bell rang, barely audible above the wind and whirring of the engines (which was VERY loud — I don't know how anyone who came back and was a crew member on these planes for any period of time isn't nearly deaf) we were able to unbuckle our antique seat belts and move around the plane.

I immediately moved towards the bomb bay and the cockpit. I carefully scampered over the bulkhead separating the tail section from the front and into the bomb bay, looking down at the thin walkway I had to traverse (and remembering the warning to not touch the bomb bay doors). I could see the ground between the not-sealed space of the walkway and the bomb doors on both sides, which looked about six or more inches and we were moving pretty fast — but very, very smoothly. It wasn't at all what I'd expected. It wasn't like anything I'd ever done or seen.

I moved forward and into the area containing the nose gunner and navigator. I poked my head all the way up to the front of the nose turret and looked around as best I could, but the turret area was of course blocked off from getting all the way into it. It was still great to see the world stretched out in front of the plane at the height we were. With 10 of us vying for time in each station, I didn't have long to look around.

From there, I pulled myself into the cockpit and spent a minute looking at the gauges, the pilots, and most of all trying to look out the windows. You couldn't see anything! I wondered how pilots knew where they were going back then if you couldn't see that well. In

any case, it was amazing to see all of the controls and dials and other instruments that made this aircraft able to maintain flight.

I moved then into the top turret gunner position, which was something unusual. Not many opportunities to get into one of those — ever. You had to pull yourself up into the turret and basically hang there until someone shut the seat in under you. From there you could see the top of the world. The turret wouldn't spin, but I imagined if it could it would be pretty amazing. The engines to each side were screaming and, though an optical illusion I know, seemed to move in both directions and speed up and slow down. I was shooting video and at this point, feeling alone and not able to hear much (and quite certain at this point no one would be able to hear me) let out a big "woohoo!!" before videotaping myself in that spot in homage to my grandfather, who was a pilot with the 98th.

I moved back to the tail section after that, and explored the waist gunner and tail turret positions. I poked around at the ball turret but it wasn't operational and there wasn't much there to see. I was amazed to stick my head out the waist areas and look down at all of the residences below, fields for growing crops and playing games, commercial businesses. I again wondered what people might be thinking if they looked up and saw this bomber flying overhead.

All in all, it was a great way to get even the slightest inkling of a glimpse into what it was like to have been a crew member on one of these planes. I didn't get to wear a heated cold-weather suit. I didn't have to hook up to oxygen. I didn't have to bear the burdens of war and the fear and anxiety of being shot down or whether or not we'd make it back home. But it was at least enough to give me just the slightest bit of a frame of reference and that was amazing.

Anyone interested in the "wings of freedom" tour schedule should check out the Callings Foundation website at this address:

http://www.collingsfoundation.org/cf_schedule-wof.htm.

The tour is national and they make stops all over during the year — so if they aren't in your area in the next month or two, keep checking back.

ODE TO THE 344th BOMB SQUADRON

On the third day of February in forty-two
We were formed at Mac Dill, no planes, no crew,
At Barksdale Field we began to grow,
Men and planes started to show,
We went to Fort Myers with a job to do,
To train our mechanics and flying crew,
Then it was Lakeland to learn to fly tight,
All over Florida, even at night,
They say "off to war" on the *Louis Pasteur*,
With a stop at Fort Dix on the way.
For thirty-one days we watched our wake,
And docked at Cairo, on the great Bitter Lake,
Palestine said they would open their door,
For us who would help with the war.
So it was off to Saint Jean, in a flying machine,
That we all called B-24.
The wind and the sand sure took its toll,
In Tobruk and Benghazi, as our planes grew old,
On August first in forty-three,
They had a plan about our destiny,
From Benghazi we went to Ploesti hell-bent,
They said "lets try it low," to deal them a blow,
With not enough fuel for the trip.
Led by Kane all the way, in *Hail Columbia* this day,
With Norm Whalen charting the course,
For Hitler's great loss, of all the fuel for his war.
And at Kane's side was Lebrecht in his *Squaw*,
Settling back for twelve hours or more,
Bill Banks was there, and Sam Neeley too,
We lost Nespor-Riley, and most of their crew.
Mistakes were made, and our targets were hit,
By others before we arrived,
This led to disaster, we learned shortly after,
As we lost many planes and their crews.
Heroes were made this day by the score,
The after effect of a day in the war.
Kane's Medal of Honor, as he would say,
"Belongs to the men who perished this day."
North Africa was next, and Italy too,
We bombed from Brendisi, at the heel of the shoe,
We moved to Lecce in forty-four,
So we could bomb Hitler at his front door.
We returned to the states, and they closed the books,
On the greatest bomb group of the war.
The month was November, the day was the tenth,
The year was forty-five,
The great Ninety Eighth was home again,

And happy to just be alive.
We did our job and we did it well,
As later historians I'm sure will tell,
And in our minds we won that war,
With that **glorious Liberator, the B-24.**

*Dedicated to the Legendary Ninety Eighth Bomb Group
Arthur Plouff, 344th Squadron*

THE ROAD TO TRIPOLI

On the northern coast of Africa
Where the sand meets with the sea
There's a road that winds a westward way
From the Nile to Tripoli;
And I have traveled along this road
Thru' the late-won battle ground,
And thoughtful in the wake of war,
This is what I found.
Ghosts of men, ghosts of tanks,
Ghosts of shattered town,
Ghosts of guns trained on the sky;
And ghosts of planes shot down.
Three times an army drove to the east,
Three times beat back to the west;
Each time a trail of men and steel
Were added to the rest.
Tanks with scorched and swollen scars
Where bursting shells came thru'
Stand guard in mocking solitude
O'er the graves of fighting crew.
Planes with their noses deep in the earth
And their tails flung to the sky
Stand monument to a race of men
Who chose this way to die.
Graveyards of steel, graveyards of men.
I know not which are more;
I smile to think my plane and I
May be added to the score;
And though the roads of the world be mine
There's a road I shall always see,
That ghostly road, that westward route
From Nile to Tripoli.

Ray L. Gleason
98th Bomb Group, 345th Squadron
KIA Ploesti Low Level Mission

Poems submitted by Suzanne Mioduszewski

The Story of the Vagabond King · *Raid on Ploesti*

By Lyndon Shubert

A pilot's detailed firsthand account describes the mission to bomb Romania's oil refineries in August 1943.

On August 1, 1943, a Consolidated B-24D Liberator bomber named the Vagabond King and its American crew took part in a massive bombing raid on the oil refinery complex at Ploesti, Romania. The B-24s took off from Libya without the benefit of a fighter escort.

We know the names and some of the ranks of the 10 men who flew aboard the Vagabond King that day — 1st Lt. John McCormick, pilot; George Brinton, co-pilot; 1st Lt. Marvin Mosco, bombardier; Marvin Mendelson, navigator; Paul Miller, Alfred Rossi, Gerald Murphy

and William Bundai, all of whom were gunners; David Shatties, crew chief; and Martin Van Buren, radio-man — and we know they all survived that mission. But a total of 54 B-24s did not return from Ploesti. Nearly 500 crewmen were either killed, captured or interned in Turkey.

The Vagabond King's crew cheated the odds in the August 1943 raid and made it to friendly territory before crash-landing. Many of those same men, however, survived that mission only to lose their lives

Ploesti: A Tempting Target

Early in World War II, Ploesti was producing more than half the German petroleum supply. Oil was of paramount importance to the Axis war effort. Consequently, Ploesti ranked with Berlin and Vienna as one of the three most heavily defended targets in Europe.

The anti-aircraft arsenal protecting Ploesti bristled with more than 240 88mm guns and hundreds of smaller caliber weapons. Between 250 and 300 fighter aircraft — Focke Wulf Fw-190s, Messerschmitt Me-109s and Me-110s — were stationed within the perimeter of the huge oil and railroad complex, all standing by to defend Ploesti's valuable industrial facilities.

It was the desperate need for oil products that had inspired Hitler's move into Eastern Europe to secure Ploesti. Hitler labeled it his "jewel of the Balkans." Possession of the refineries guaranteed the Germans a major continuing supply of oil — at the same time denying petroleum to the Soviets.

Allied brass was determined to destroy the oil-processing complex in Ploesti. By doing so they were confident that a shortage of oil would hamstring the Axis war effort and shorten the war — perhaps resulting in an early Allied victory.

The Allies believed the destruction of the oil fields and refineries of the Ploesti area would be the turning point of the war and would be a major factor in the complete defeat of the Third Reich. They realized the loss in lives and planes was likely to be high but thought the results would be worth the cost.

On August 1, 1943, 177 Consolidated B-24 Liberator bombers took off on the 2,700-mile round trip from North Africa to Ploesti. Among the large group that started out, 164 planes made it to the target. During the bomb run, 30 percent of the bombers were shot down by fighters or groundfire. A total of 1,725 men took part in the mission, and 540 men were lost, 310 of them killed in the skies over Ploesti.

Of the 177 planes that took part in the mission, only 33 returned to their bases in North Africa in flying condition. After the mission, 430 wounded survivors received Purple Hearts, and five Medals of Honor were awarded — three of them posthumously. Altogether, 2,500 decorations were awarded for service in that Ploesti raid.

L.S.



Consolidated B-24D Liberators of the 44th, 93rd, 376th and 389th bomb groups attack the oil fields at Ploesti, Romania, on August 1, 1943, in *Operation Tidal Wave*, by Nicolas Trudgian (The Military Gallery, Ojai, California).

in subsequent sorties. Following is an excerpt from an account of the August 1, 1943, Ploesti raid written by Vagabond King pilot John McCormick. His report — a copy of which was apparently later sent to the family of each man who participated in that mission — paints a vivid portrait of one of the most costly bombing missions in history.

What I wanted to write to you about was the story of the *Vagabond King's* part in the Romanian oil field raid. The story is out now, so I can give you the particulars.

You've probably heard how we practiced again and again on a full-scale replica of the vital facilities of the refineries laid out on the desert in Libya. We attacked them repeatedly to work out our precise timetable attack and approach through the Carpathian Mountains, and then one day we received our final briefing and got our ships ready for the long hop.

Inasmuch as it was to be the longest mass raid in history, we were prepared for plenty of trouble. We were

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The Vagabond King

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carefully briefed on how to escape if forced down and how to act as POWs or internees and where to escape to, in an emergency. The target was so important that headquarters deemed it necessary to destroy it, even if we stood to lose 100 percent of the striking force. The losses would still be acceptable.

So, without detracting from our chances of totally destroying the target, we worked out defense measures that we hoped would enable the greater part of us to return. We felt that a low-level attack by high-altitude bombers would constitute a combination of surprise and accuracy, sufficient to accomplish both aims. This would be the first time bombers would be used for strafing ground targets.

The well-known importance of the refineries to the Germans was the key to our great efforts to get our new technique and timing down pat...And the excitement never lagged from repeated practices.

We got up early, the morning of our takeoff, ate, and got out to the ships for a final check-up on our gas, oil, oxygen, bombs, rations and ammunition. We were well prepared. We signaled thumbs up to Sergeant Frank Chowanski and Pfc Eddings and got off, the last plane in our group.

Nerves were a little on edge because one plane just ahead exploded on takeoff and worried some boys who knew about it.

A small last-minute repair had delayed our take-off so that my wingman had taken off shortly before I did. That was James, our bad-luck kid since he joined the group back in Texas.

My left wingman lost a carburetor on the runway and had to abort. That was Lighter. He certainly looked sad to be left out of it, and I didn't particularly like losing a damn good wingman for a blank space of enemy sky.

We got into formation and headed across the bluest Mediterranean you can imagine. Things were running smoothly. The air was full, from starboard to port, from top to bottom with the Libs [Liberators]. Everything looked good.

Things never look dangerous when you have so much company. We even felt secure in the rear guard. We called ourselves "Cluster on the Purple Heart Squadron." James' plane was even the "Right Leaf of the Cluster."

Then, out of a blue sky, without warning, the lead plane of another group up front spun sickeningly out of formation and exploded against the sea, burning so as to leave a black tomb marker. The second ship had gone down before we had even touched enemy land.

Immediately, all gunners got itchy, looking for a possible fighter, and the pilots stood by silent radios



Liberators undergo low-level formation training before the Ploesti raid, dropping 100-pound delayed-action bombs on a target in the North African desert that has been modeled to simulate the oil refinery.



The crew of the *Vagabond King*, including 1st Lt. Marvin Mosco (standing, second from left), 1st Lt. John McCormick (standing fourth from left), Gerald Murphy (kneeling, second from left) and Martin Van Buren, or "Van" (kneeling, far right).

waiting for a Change Order or explanation. Nothing except the continuous drone of our four giant engines on the wings. We passed through the sickening black smoke, into the blue skies beyond. There were no survivors.

Then another B-24 peeled off, heading home, one engine feathered. That was the hot desert putting in its two cents' worth. We looked to our engines, but they gave no indication of weakening under the heavy load we carried.

Finally, land! Greece, our maps said. Enemy territory. Tension was relieved, a new excitement gripped us now. The enemy was man, and his threat was tangible... and at hand.

We were at 10,000 feet and working up towards our objective, against a little more head wind than anticipated. Clouds were becoming heavier but still no opposition. Then, through gaps in the clouds, we could make out mountains, marking the time for us to turn south for our let-down to the target.

Then an intercom call: "Fighter at 5 o'clock!" It was an antiquated biplane. He couldn't even catch us as we began dropping down the mountainside. Slowly changing our formation from the protective one we traveled in to one designed to allow us good individual runs on the target, we could see the lead plane down the valley in which lay our target. The dialogue on the *Vagabond King* went something like this:

"Good Lord! Mooney, we are too high!"

"Lord Almighty! I can't recognize the refinery stacks!"

"What kind of camoufleurs are these boys?"

"Mosco, open the bomb bay doors!"

And down we dropped, to silhouette our target against the sky, just like Mosco and I had practiced on the model area, simulating Ploesti, that they had built for us on the desert in Libya.

Then the lead plane, realizing he had turned too soon, worked back in a big "S" to the next valley. "By

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The Vagabond King

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Jehoshaphat!...if fighters were to hit us now,” I told myself. But I stuck to Mooney. James came in close as we turned to the north again, ready to make the final approach and bomb run. I warmed up my fixed nose guns with a loud burst that startled Mosco so much he almost jumped out of the nose.

We were ready for strafing now. For the first time in history B-24s were going to be used on a strafing run. We turned south down the valley. The lead plane was starting his bomb run. Christ! His plane was already burning, and he was carrying 1,000-pound bombs with delayed fuses!

Then it was: “Gunners, keep your eyes open for fighters and ack-ack batteries.”

“Don’t shoot civilians unless they are throwing bottles at us!”

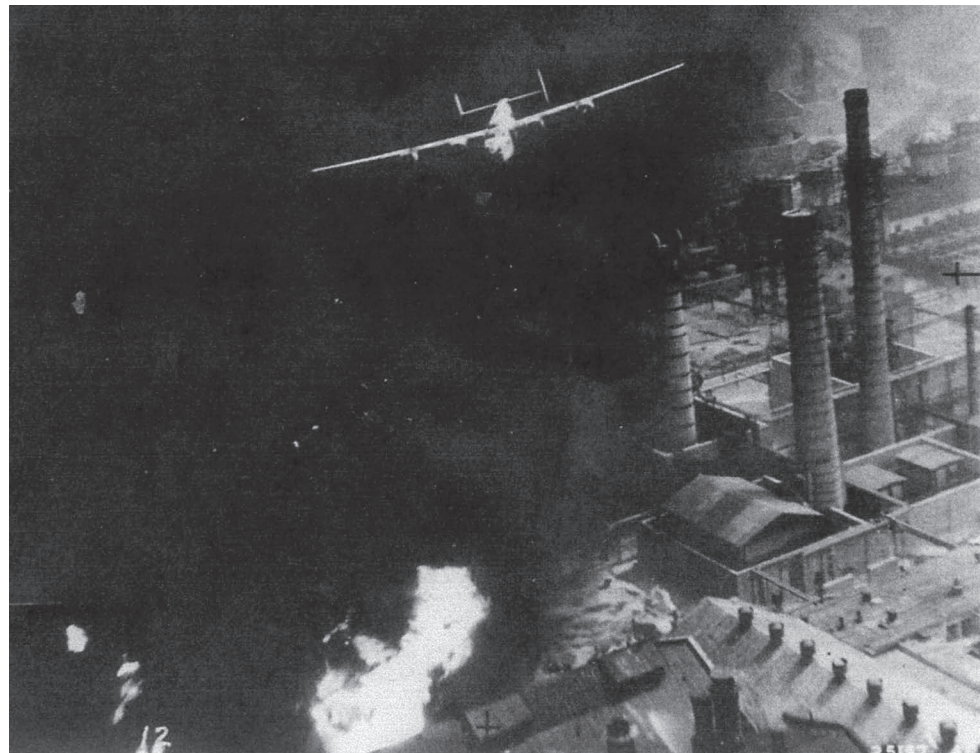
“OK, Mosco, bomb bay doors open.”

“Start the camera, Van.”

Bang! What the hell was that? Here we go anyway, down on the carpet. We get right behind and under Stan Podalak’s plane, Mooney’s left wing. We line up our two chimneys, which will put our bombs right through the windows of the boiler house. We can’t drop far behind Mooney’s plane because he’s carrying 45-second delay fuses, same as we are.

Above us, we could look into Stan’s open bomb bay doors. We could see the bombs hanging ready, willing and able. Tracers, red and white, were streaming up at the boys ahead, hitting them too!

The Sandman, a B-24D of the 345th Squadron of Colonel John “Killer” Kane’s 98th Bomb Group (*Pyramiders*), is photographed from its flak-battered sister, *Chug-a-Lug*, as it flies through the smoke of the burning Astra Romana refinery.



Then our cockpit exploded with sparks, noise and concussion. Tracers spit out over my head. Luckily, George and I crouched down, making ourselves as small as possible.

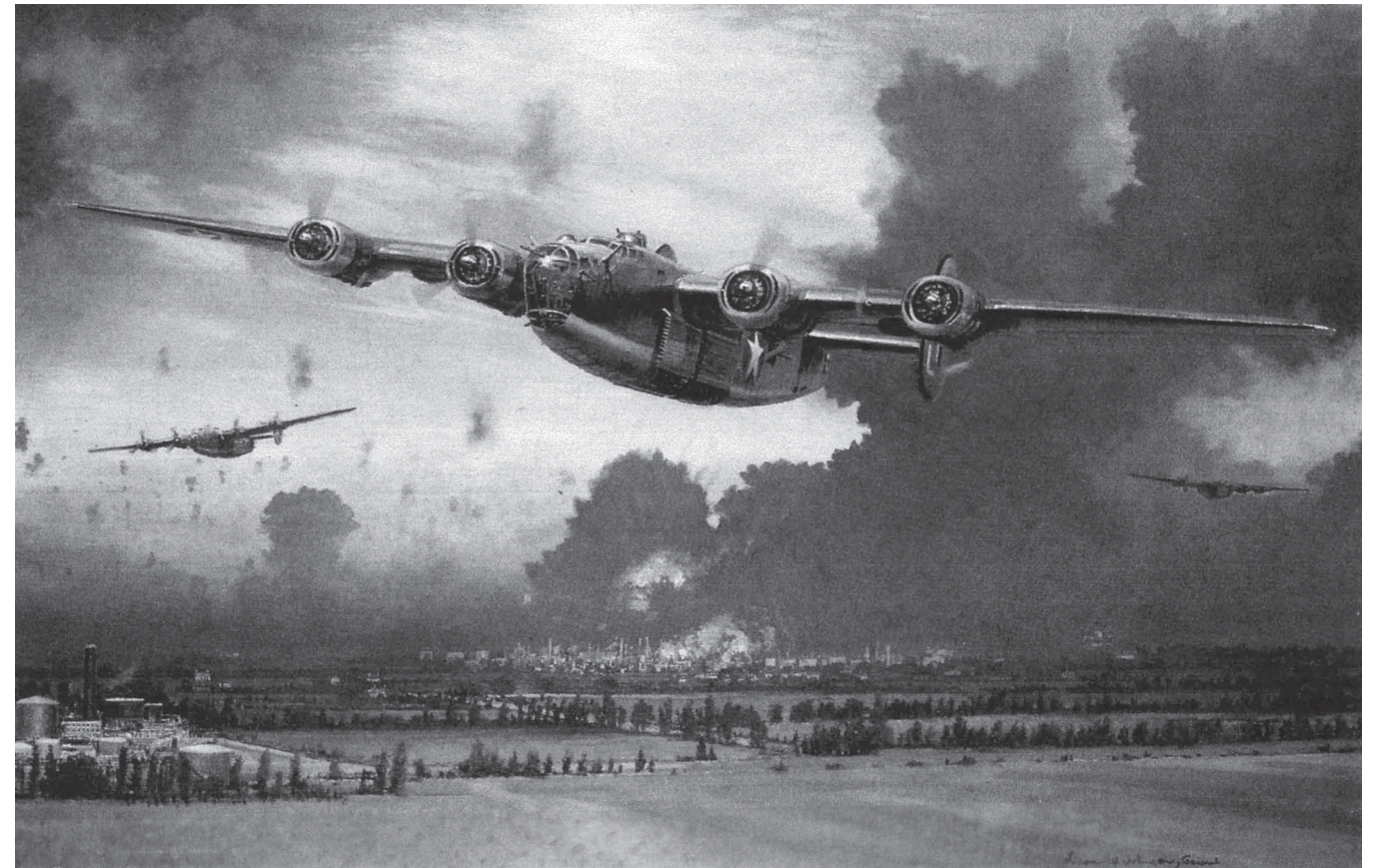
The tracers melted away into the smoke and fire of the refinery. Murphy cut loose in the top gun turret with the twin 50s. I wanted to shoot him — he was ruining our bomb run!

Wham! More bullets through the cockpit! The emergency windows blew open, giving us a 225-mile-per-hour blast of air in the cockpit.

But now we were down to almost ground level, lined up and anxious to go. We came up to the target chimney height and through the smoke, over the other bomb explosions. Then, bombs away! Our plane was suddenly 4,000 pounds lighter.

In front of us, Mooney’s bombs had released beautifully, but he was veering off to the right, and we were supposed to hit the same building! [Captain R.C. Mooney’s plane, *Hitler’s Hearse*, had taken several direct hits. Mooney himself had been killed instantly by groundfire.]

Through the smoke, down on the deck we scooted. Mooney and Stan and Sparrier were above us, too



Having run a gauntlet of fighters and anti-aircraft fire to bomb their target — but with their ordeal far from over Liberators begin the long journey home, in *Into the Fire and Fury*, by William S. Phillips.

high. “Come on down, boys,” I prayed. “Fighters can’t dive on you when you’re on the deck.” We hang right below them, with ol’ Heimie’s plane so close, he was sticking his right wing through my waist window.

Then we noticed Bob’s engine was feathered, but then he started it windmilling to fool any fighters looking for cripples. Sure enough, there was a Me-110 circling over us. He had already shot down two 24s, but for some reason he didn’t close with our tight-flying “Purple Heart Squadron.” Neither did any of the other fighters. We knew we’d never be able to reform with the main group, and we were afraid to break radio silence for fear of drawing fighters, so we followed Bob as he headed home, sticking close together, to protect us against fighters.

Three minutes after “bombs away,” the boys told me we had been hit pretty hard and that Van was bleeding badly. An anti-aircraft cannon shell had hit his knee as he was turning the automatic camera. Miller, in the tin-can, tail-turret, called to say that the bombs we dropped had exploded and our target was flattened and burning fiercely.

Finally, Mooney’s No. 2 engine was feathered, but his bomb bay doors wouldn’t close, so the boys began tossing out everything that wasn’t permanently nailed down. They had to get rid of all excess weight in order to keep the big bird flying. They even tossed out most of their .50-caliber machine guns and ammo. It was the only way they could keep flying and save gas. It would be a long haul to any safe haven and they knew it, but at least we were sticking together and that must have cheered them some.

James broke radio silence after about 10 minutes and told me he wouldn’t have enough gas to get home so I told him to head for the nearest neutral landing spot.

He was afraid to mention places over the radio, so I asked him if he wanted to go to “gobble gobble land.” I dropped back and flew on his wing so he could save gas. He was so slowed down that the other three crates were almost out of sight.

While this was going on, navigators on both planes were busy making our courses for Turkey. We realized

continued on next page

The Vagabond King

continued from previous page

that Mooney was making for Turkey, too. So I told James to pour on the coal and catch up with them.

This was when James' plane started doing acrobatics. I didn't know what was up, but I followed him and all of a sudden I saw a lot of flak puffs. We were passing over Bucharest inadvertently, and they [the enemy anti-aircraft artillerymen on the ground] had blood in their eyes.

We didn't get hit as we continued our chase after the other three. Van was being cared for with morphine and tourniquets. All he said was, "Here's where I get one medal you guys won't get."

He was right. No one else did get hit except the old *Vagabond* itself. After about 45 minutes we were back in formation heading for Turkey in a strange procession. Fighters were our huge worry. We expected them every mile of the way, and we had climbed high enough, to about 8,000 feet, to be duck soup. But no fighters came. Finally we hit the Sea of Marmara, and since the country was neutral from then on, we decided it was best to let the others do as they please.

We were going to friendly territory and get Van to a hospital. We turned for Cyprus and the navigator began working in earnest.

We were right in the Turkish Mountains, busy transferring fuel, when all four engines cut out at the same time. I damn near died! We had only about 1,000 feet of clearance, and there wasn't a flat spot within 50 miles big enough to park a [Stinson] L-5 in.

Van couldn't jump, and we weren't about to jump without him. I figured I'd have to put it down somewhere, the best I could, and take our chances. But with a roar and a lurch, those good old Pratt and Whitneys took hold again. Just as we shared a big smile, all four engines died again.

Dave Shattles moved faster than any man I'd ever seen. He jumped down into the bomb bay and switched gas valves to break the air lock in the lines. And this time those wonderful engines roared back to life, as we scooted between peaks and resumed our course to Nicosea Airport on the island of Cyprus, which was still 300 or 400 miles somewhere to the south of us.

Our nerves were sure taking a helluva beating. We'd been in the air for 10 hours already. Now we were all alone, over rough, unfriendly terrain, even if it wasn't the enemy. And now we had to sweat out our gas supply. Mendy called to tell me we had just run off the edge of his last, good Air Corps map. From now on, we would have to figure by time, distance, compass, and dead reckoning.

Nobody bothered us as we flew over Turkey. At least they didn't hit us! So we made it to the seacoast and wondered if we would be able to find Cyprus. It was getting late in the afternoon, haze was forming, and our only map was an old, schoolbook Mercator map.

We finally reached the blue water of the Mediterranean Sea. I looked longingly at the flat sand beaches of the Turkish Coast. I considered plunking her down there, but I wanted to get medical help for Van...and I knew none of us wanted to be interred in Turkey for the length of the war. Anyway I thought if we failed to find Cyprus, and if we had enough gas, we could come back and find a nice soft beach to set her down on. A big if...as I looked at the needles of the gas gauges hovering near zero.

I headed for Cyprus. Mosco was taking good care of Van. We swung out over the water, squeezing every mile out of every drop of gasoline. We were flying slowly to save what little gas we had left. But still, it shouldn't have been this long until we saw some solid land out there. Cyprus was a big island, but we couldn't find it!

"Mendy, let's turn in on our E.T.A. Maybe it's just off to our right, in that haze," I said. So we turned and, holy smokes! There it was. Just off our left-wing. We made a direct course for Nicosea. Our gas gauges showed we were on our last 100 gallons. Ten precious, gas-eating minutes went by and still no Cyprus! It had suddenly disappeared — 10 minutes wasted chasing a mirage. Our "Cyprus" had been nothing but cloud shadows, and now we were really lost to boot.

We listened to our radio, hoping to get in touch with the air base at Nicosea, the only airport on the island. We could hear other planes in distress. One was going down near us, into the sea, but we couldn't help.

We continued on, looking for land — any beach or piece of good solid dirt. A B-24 doesn't "ditch well" if you have to put her down on water. It breaks up, and you don't have much chance of getting out.

I wanted to land at Nicosea Air Base. It was growing dark when I finally saw the airport beacon. There were three other planes milling around the area, trying to find the field and get up enough nerve to go in and land, in their damaged condition.

I gave the tower my call letters with "wounded aboard" and was immediately cleared to land. The gear came down OK. Then the flaps came down without faltering. Props OK. Turbos OK, all controls working fine. It was getting dark, but I could still make out the runway, so I lined up and sailed in.

The damn runway was uphill and almost fooled me, but the tires screeched, and I "stuck" the landing... we were down in one piece! I coasted to the end...and turned down a little road off the runway, to keep it clear for the other planes trying to land.

No one came out to meet us so we taxied up the road. "Cripes," I thought. "This is sure good camouflage, but that ditch was real enough," so I pulled up onto an embankment and cut the engines.

The silence was deafening. We were back on the ground! We were alive! We were safe!

I unfastened my safety belt. It had been 14 hours and 30 minutes since I'd sat down in the pilot seat and started out in that cold, damp morning, which now seemed so long ago.

As soon as we had cleared the runway, the commanding officer of the 98th Bomb Group, Colonel "Killer" Kane, came in for a landing in his shot-up crate with one engine feathered. He misjudged the uphill runway and didn't have enough power left to pull it up. He washed out his landing gear, nosed up, and smashed up his plane. No one was hurt and Colonel Kane beat us to Tel Aviv, leaving his wrecked plane to be salvaged by us!

Now, finally, safe on the ground, we were the happiest, tiredest, hungriest boys you've ever seen! We all kissed the ground we landed on.

There was a doctor working on Van when I got aft, and soon he was taken to a hospital. He's OK now and back in the States. I haven't seen or heard from him since.

We worked on old *Vagabond* using any scavenged parts we could find and soon had it flyable — barely — but flyable. We lumbered down the bumpy runway, pulled her into the air, and headed back to Libya.

Well, that is the story of my part in the big Ploesti air raid. What others did must remain secret for a while longer. I'll tell you all about it when I get back home.

I know I may have distorted the story to appear like I was the only person on the raid, but I feel the emotions and experiences I went through were so vivid, that I want to pass them along.

I can tell you, there wasn't a man among us who will ever be the same after that 14-hour jaunt to Ploesti. I am happy to be able to tell this story. But, I am sad for the many who were there, on that mission to Ploesti, who'll never be able to say they were even there.

The Vagabond King and her crew were later reassigned to England. Although it is unclear what happened to John McCormick and many of the other men later in the war, we do know that 1st Lt. Marvin Mosco was reported missing in action after a mission aboard the same plane three months later. The notification received by Mosco's family reads, in part:

"Under date of November 29, 1943, The Adjutant General notified you that your son, First Lieutenant Marvin Mosco, had been reported missing in action... since November 18, 1943. Further information has been received indicating that Lt. Mosco was a member of a B-24 Liberator bomber which departed from England on November 18, 1943, on a bombardment mission to Norway. Full details are not available, but the report indicates...our planes encountered enemy aircraft and in an ensuing engagement, your son's Liberator was seen to sustain damage and to fall into the sea...."

Lyndon Shubert's wife, Betty, was related to Marvin Mosco, the *Vagabond King's* bombardier. For further reading, try: **BLACK SUNDAY: PLOESTI**, by Michael Hill; and **LIBERANDOS**, by James Walker.



John Riley Kane

Colonel, United States Army Air Corps
Congressional Medal of Honor

World War II is remembered as one of the most contentious United States conflicts resulting in the approximately 292,131 Americans killed in action. However, America remained strong and resilient and was a free country. It was the greatest generation that responded with skill and determination.

Throughout the United States young men approximately 18-21 years of age volunteered to fight to keep America free. They came from farms, businesses, colleges and various occupations to join military units. As Tom Brokaw states in his book, **THE GREATEST GENERATION SPEAKS**, this was a period when duty, honor and sacrifice were essential attributes. The greatest generation produced a number of heroes and Medal of Honor winners. Notable military leaders like Colonel John Riley Kane are remembered for their perseverance, skill and willingness to sacrifice their lives in dangerous missions.

Operation "Tidal Wave," one of the most dangerous combat missions of World War II, earned Colonel Kane the Congressional Medal of Honor.

John Riley Kane was a Colonel in the United States Army Air Corps and also later when it became the United States Air Force. He was known during the war years as "Killer" Kane and is remembered as one of our exceptional military leaders. It is obvious he was willing to risk his life in extremely hazardous missions.

Colonel Kane was born in MacGregor, Texas, January 5, 1907. He passed away at the age of 89 on May 29, 1996 in Coatsville, Pennsylvania. During his youth he attended Baylor University in Waco, Texas where he was a star basketball player. At a later date he moved to Shreveport, Louisiana and joined the United States Army Air Corps in June 1931. He began his career as a flying cadet at Randolph Field in San Antonio, Texas and received



his commission and wings in 1932.

Following a period of time in the reserve he returned to active duty at Shreveport, Louisiana at Barksdale Field at Bossier City. In approximately 1942 as a Major he was assigned to the 98th Bomb Group known as the *Pyramidiers* flying missions in North Africa. He flew 43 combat missions and was promoted to full Colonel.

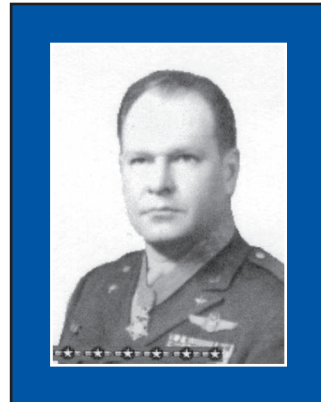
Legent relates that the title "Killer Kane" was given to him by German pilots who witnessed his fearlessness in the cockpit. It was during this period that his nickname "Killer Kane" became permanent among his men and the enemy. The nickname stuck because of his courage and stubbornness.

In planning the Ploesti mission General Prereton, the 9th Air Force commander, greeted his men in anticipation of the impending raid. "Gentlemen, I am the only person I know of who has held a commission in both the Army and the Navy. I have seen the fleet steam up the Hudson and I have seen the corps of cadets pass in full dress parade. These sights are soul-stirring. But today, as I saw your 175 four-engine bombers come roaring across the African desert at 50 feet altitude, bringing dust from the ground with your mighty roar, I enjoyed the great thrill of my entire life.

"Tomorrow, when you advance across that captured country, you will tear the hearts out of them. You are going in low level to hit the oil refineries, not the

houses, and leave your powerful impression on a great nation. The roar of your engines in the heart of the enemies's conquest will sound in the ears of the Romanians and yet, the whole world — long after the blasts of your bombs and fires have died away."

Colonel Kane's career remained inconspicuous until 1943 when he



led the attack on the Ploesti Oil Fields. It was well known that Hitler depended on these fields to fuel his tanks, battleships, submarines and aircraft. Germany protected this oil with gunners guarding the entire area. As many as 200 big anti-aircraft guns protected the refineries. Despite some misfortune in planning the mission that plagued Operation "Tidal Wave," the mission was successful. American airmen responded with such courage and initiative that even the German forces were amazed. On August 1, 1943 Killer Kane had mounted nose guns in his aircraft *Hail Columbia* that could be fired from the pilot's seat. In a minute and a half, Kane unloaded 2500 rounds on enemy positions. At this junction of the raid, the lives of Col. Kane and everyone in the 98th Bomb Group were at stake.

Hail Columbia, Col. Kane's aircraft, managed to fly through smoke, explosions and anti-aircraft fire. After being hit more than 20 times it was still airborne and managed to head home. His Navigator, Major Whalen plotted a route over Greece to avoid neutral Turkish airspace. "To hell with Turkish neutrality" Kane shouted. Losses for the *Pyramidiers* were staggering, eighteen were lost to anti-aircraft fire and enemy fighters over and around Ploesti. Kane crash landed in Cypress and fortunately his crew walked away unscathed. Only nine of Kane's forty-seven Liberators that departed Benghazi on August 1, 1943 returned home safely. Every man who flew the Ploesti mission was awarded the Silver Star.

The smoke and flames from burning oil lit the skies of Ploesti. The Axis had lost 40 percent of its critical oil production. The Medal of Honor was approved for heroes of the Ploesti raid. Colonel John Kane returned to Benghazi on August 3, 1943. His Medal of Honor was presented to him at Gezira Sporting Club in Cairo, Egypt. In his remarks to historian Michael Hill (for his book **THE DESERT RATS**), Colonel Kane stated "I still recall the smoke, fire and B-24s going down. Even now I get a lump in my throat when I think about what

we went through. I didn't get the Medal of Honor, the 98th Bomb Group did."

Ode to Ploesti

The following was written by John Riley Kane, Colonel USAF (former Cmdr 98th BG)

TO THE FALLEN OF PLOESTI



"To you who fly on forever I send you that part of me which cannot be separated and is bound to you for all time. I send to you those of our hopes and dreams that never quite came true, the joyous laughter and showery tears of our boyhood, the marvelous mysteries of our adolescence and glorious strengths and tragic illusions of our young manhood, all these that were and perhaps would have been, I leave in your care, out there in the blue."

The citation for Colonel Kane's Medal of Honor is as follows:

Kane, John R. (Air Mission)

Rank and organization:

Colonel U.S. Army Air Corps, 9th Air Force

Place and date: Ploesti Raid, Rumania, 1 August 1943

Entered service at: Shreveport, Louisiana.

Birth: MacGregor, Texas.

G.O. NO. 54, 9 August 1943:

For conspicuous gallantry in action and intrepidity at the risk of his own life above and beyond the call of duty on 1 August 1943. On this date he led the third element of heavy bombardment aircraft in a mass low-level bombing attack against the vitally important target of the Ploesti oil refineries. En Route to the target, which necessitated a round trip flight of over 2,400 miles, Col. Kane's element became separated from the leading portion of the massed formation in avoiding dense and dangerous cumulus cloud

continued on next page

John Riley Kane continued from previous page

conditions over mountainous terrain. Rather than turn back from such a vital mission he elected to proceed to his target. Upon arrival at the target area it was discovered that another group had apparently missed its target and had previously attacked and damaged the target assigned to Colonel Kane's element. Despite the thoroughly warned defenses, the intensive antiaircraft fire, enemy fighter airplanes, extreme hazards on a low-level attack of exploding delayed action bombs from the previous element, of oil fires and explosions and dense smoke over the target area, Colonel Kane elected to lead his formation into the attack. By his gallant courage, brilliant leadership, and superior flying skill, he and his formation under his command successfully attacked this vast refinery so essential to our enemies' war effort. Through his conspicuous gallantry in this

rendered most distinguished service in the furtherance of the defeat of our enemies.

Colonel Kane retired from military service in 1956. He was buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia on June 18, 1996.



Pictured here: Col. John Riley "Killer" Kane.

Pictured below left: Col. Kane's aircraft Hail Columbia.



Effective February 2, 1998, Barksdale Air Force Base named its B-52 combat crew training school after Colonel John Riley Kane.

Submitted By:

Dolores J. Haritos, Editor

Contributors:

Herb Harper, Historian

Robert Sternfels, Ploesti Bombing Survivor

Peter Haritos, Ploesti Bombing Survivor

Rainer Kleimann, German Historian, Member,

Luftwaffe Association

most hazardous action against the enemy, and by his intrepidity at the risk of his own life above and beyond the call of duty, Colonel Kane personally contributed vitally to the success of this daring mission and thereby

New Members, February 2011

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	M.I.	STREET ADDRESS	CITY	ST	ZIP	AC	SQ
Pressley	David		4245 Oakview Drive	Forest Park	GA	30297	B-47E	OMS
Ekwall	Dr. Ralph	W	4801 N 52nd St #H207	Omaha	NE	68104-2229	A	B-24

New Members, May 2011

LAST NAME	FIRST	MI	ADDRESS	CITY	ST	ZIP	AC	SQ
Driscoll	Wynne & Jerry		PO Box 1244	Perry	FL	32348		
Kakaska M.D.	George	H.	PO Box 287	Farmersville	TX	75442-0287	B-24	780
Olynyk	Frank	J.	207 Chelmsford Dr	Aurora	OH	44202-7834		
Pilkenton	Morgan		9055 E. Catalina Hwy, Apt 8203	Tuscon	AZ	85749	B-24	343

Address Changes through May 2011

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	M.I.	STREET ADDRESS	CITY	ST	ZIP	AC	SQ
Ashwill Jr.	Nelson	A.	501 W. 107th Street, Apt 350	Kansas City	MO	64114-5916	B-29	343
Fernstrom	Grant	H.	16530 Silver Pine Rd	Pioneer	CA	95666-9633	B-24	343
Katz	Bernard	P.	1545 W Greenleaf Street	Allentown	PA	18102-1216	B-24	344
Moore	Jack	W.	8500 Royal Palm Blvd, #B325	Coral Springs	FL	33065	B-24	345
Page	Russell	B.	3009 Dartmouth College Highway	No Haverhill	NH	03774-4537	B-24	344
Resh	Ronald	E.	6500 Rock Spring Dr, Suite 200	Bethesda	MD	20817-1182	ATLAS	551
Rutledge	Robert	T.	PO Box 2759	Lake Arrowhead	CA	92352-2759	B-24	343
Swisher	Chester	L.	7306 Goddard Street	Shawnee	KS	66203-4526	B-24	345
Dean	Mrs. John	J.	2711 27th Street #B	Nitro	WV	25143-1701	H	B-24 344
Estes	Mrs. Charles	H.	388 Dogwood Drive	Yazoo City	MS	39194-9025	H	B-24 415

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	MI	ADDRESS	CITY	ST	ZIP	A.C.	SQD
Arnold	Edison (Pete)	F.	1320 S Miller St Apt 113	Wenatchee	WA	98801-4201	B-29	345
Baker	William	C.	PO Box 223	Mount Vernon	VA	22121-0223	B-24	415
Carmody	Kenneth	A.	55007 E Bobcat Ln	Strasburg	CO	80136-9302	B-29	344
Kalous	Paul	J.	PO Box 15	Eureka	WI	54934-0015	B-47	343
Laniga	Kenneth	G.	53 Old Mill Dr #7	Holland	MI	49423	B-29	345
Leazer	Stephen	D.	5669 Cahuilla Ave	Twentynine Palms	CA	92277-1419	B-47 /	K A&E
Powell	Devon		10382 Green Mountain Circle	Columbia	MD	21044		
Rosenberg	Joseph	E.	3304 14th Ave Apt 115	Eau Claire	WI	54730-3632	B-24	415
Shrader	Don	J.	1058 Sweetbrook Way	Orlando	FL	32828-8627	B-29	344
Steele	Arthur	D.	5700 Fremont St Apt 55	Lincoln	NE	68507-1672	B-29	345
Swain	Robert	B.	81142 Avenida Vidrio	Indio	CA	92203-3702	B-29	344
Timmerman	Tom		620 S Washington St	Alexandria	VA	22314-4110		

Badger	Mrs. Clara	A.	73 Prospect Sy	St. Johnsbury	VT	05819-2242	B-24	344
Bettencourt	Mrs. Eunice	E.	300 Westminster Canterbury Dr Apt 319	Winchester	VA	22603-4278	B-24	415
Braemer	Lucille	M.	5550 Pioneers Blvd Rm 122	Lincoln	NE	68506-5322	B-47	344
Brown	Mrs. Ruth	T.	27034 N 145th Ave	Surprise	AZ	85387-6257	B-29	HQ
Clark	Mrs. Jane		15223 Fontana St	Overland Park	KS	66224-8711	B-29	344
Jenkins	Mrs. Mavis	R.	817 John D Odom Rd #204	Dothan	AL	36303-9347	B-24	345
Just	Mrs. Carmella	M.	8741 Pebble Creek Ln	Sarasota	FL	34238-3386	B-24	415
Makar	Mrs. Helen		12591 Desellem Rd	Lisbon	OH	44432-9649	B-24	344
McKenzie	Mrs. Marian		10430 Stone Canyon #134N	Dallas	TX	75230-4865		
Piper	Janelle	M.	2092 Willow Run Cir	Enon	OH	45323-9786	B-24	343
Taylor	Mrs. Robert	M.	1073 Old Oak Park Rd	Arroyo Grande	CA	93420	B-47	345
Webber	Mrs. Bonna Mae		3819 Laurel Ct	Saint Paul	MN	55122-1622	B-24	345

Bidwell	Jason		346 Congress St #509	Boston	MA	2210	B-24	343
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Recently Deceased Members

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	M.I.	STREET ADDRESS	CITY	ST	ZIP	AC	SQD	DOD
Burlace	Thomas	J.	2 Whitfield Court	Boonton	NJ	07005-9537	B-29	345	October 18, 2008
Carter	Robert	D.	5339 Fairbanks Court	Monticello	IN	47960-1578	B-24	343	June 2010
Horney	William	M.	5295 Pokii Lane	Princeville	HI	96722-5102	B-24	415	October 30, 2010
Lanzel	Frederick	L.	5111 Brenda Drive	Orlando	FL	32812-8716	B-24	415	
McSparron	James	J.	850 Locust Street Apt. 232	Philadelphia	PA	19107-5749	B-29	344	January 2, 2011
Salmon Jr.	Walter		P. O. Box 97	Lutherville	MD	21094-0097	B-24	345	October 19, 2010
Turner	Harold	A.	1224-C Citrus Gardens Drive	Orlando	FL	32807-2063	B-24	343	October 8, 2010

Albritton	Mrs. Alberta		2846 West Main Street	Wauchula	FL	33873-8718	B-24	345	January 7, 2011
Chism	Mrs. Josephine		132 North White Station Road	Memphis	TN	38117-2874	B-24	345	
Kipp	Mrs. Stella	M.	1572 Horseshoe Trail	Chester Springs	PA	19425-1909	B-24	343	

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	M.I.	STREET ADDRESS	CITY	ST	ZIP	AC	SQD	DOD
Forster	Raymond	E.	415 Prince Frederick St	King of Prussia	PA	19406-1806	B-29	345	January 19, 2011
Pekala	Casimir	J.	628 Begonia Street SE	Demotte	IN	46310-8872	B-24	343	October 18, 2010
Fields	Arthur	W.	4904 Links Ave	Banning	CA	92220-5255	B-24	343	January 2, 2011
Umberger	Arthur	L.	7206 Pinetree Pl	Tyler	TX	75703	B-24	415	February 4, 2011
Morgan	Raymond	J.	434 E. McWilliams St	Fond Du Lac	WI	54935-2616	B-24	343	November 25, 2010
Richey	Jesse	L.	1039 Deerbrush Dr SE	Olympia	WA	98513-2159	B-29	345	
Hartzell Jr.	Ralph	J.	311 Old Airport Rd	Douglassville	PA	19518	B-47	A&E	

Holmes	Jean		3669 Boston Ave SE	Warren	OH	44484-3714	B-24	415	
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Reunion Schedule • October 17th – 21st, 2011

98th Bomb Grp/Wing Veterans Association

Ploesti Raiders

Registration Fee \$100.00

- Day 1 – Monday** **October 17th**
 2:00 PM Meeting with Hotel staff (Pre-Con)
 4:00 PM Association executive board meeting
 6:30 PM Cash Bar opens for Welcome Dinner
 7:00 PM Welcome Dinner, greet old friends and make new ones.
 We will have the latest news and any schedule updates.
- Day 2 – Tuesday** **October 18th**
 9:30 AM City Tour & Lunch
 Learn the reasons Shreveport came to be and how it got
 it's name. Where did Elvis get his start???
- Day 3 – Wednesday** **October 19th**
 9:30 AM Barksdale AFB Tour & Lunch
 Learn why Barksdale is so important to the 98th???
 Today it's on the National Register of Historic
 Places!!!
- Day 4 – Thursday** **October 20th**
 9:30 AM Join us in the Hotel Ball Room to hear the story of
 of the Ploesti raids from those **who were there!!!**
 A discussion period will give everyone an opportunity
 to participate, so rehearse your best **war stories!!!**
- Day 5 – Friday** **October 21st**
 9:00 AM Ladies event
 9:10 AM Executive Board Meeting
 9:30 AM Association Annual Business Meeting
 6:00 PM Depart for Association Banquet at Barksdale AFB

Reunion Hotel

Holiday Inn Downtown

102 Lake St • Shreveport, LA. 71101

(318) 222-7717

Our rates are \$98.00 inc until August 15, 2011.

Directions to Hotel:

From Interstate 20, use Exit 19A. Hotel is on the right.

Reunion Registration • October 17th – 21st 2011

98th Bomb Grp/Wing Veterans Association

Ploesti Raiders

Ladies & Gentleman, please understand the importance of registering ASAP. This is for everyone's benefit and especially the one putting this event together. Remember, all money is refundable for illness or good reason if you can't attend!!!

Last Name _____ First _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Ph# _____ E-Mail _____

Bomb Grp _____ Sqdn _____ Year _____ Location _____

Spouse/Guest Last Name _____ First _____

Name as you want it to appear on the name badge _____

Spouse/Guest name as you want it on the name badge _____

Banquet Food Request Two (2) Choices Per Person:

#1 Chicken Piccata #2 Beef Medallion in Mushroom Sauce #3 Salmon in a Citrus Glaze

Your Choice # _____ # _____ Guest Choice # _____ # _____

Oct 17 th	Day 1	6:30 PM	Welcome Dinner	x _____ persons	
Oct 18 th	Day 2	9:30 AM	Depart – Tour & Lunch		
			Tour Historic Shreveport \$45.00	x _____ persons	= \$ _____
Oct 19 th	Day 3	9:30am	Depart – Tour & Lunch		
			Barksdale AFB \$35.00	x _____ persons	= \$ _____
Oct 20 th	Day 4	9:30 AM	Join us in the Hotel Ballroom for a day of Remembrance and the stories of those “Who Were There”		
Oct 21 st	Day 5	9:00 AM	Depart Ladies Event \$25.00	x _____ persons	= \$ _____
		9:15 AM	Association Executive Board Meeting		
		9:45 AM	Association General Meeting		
		6:00 PM	1 st Bus departs for our Banquet at Barksdale AFB		

This year we will be shuttling the Bus to our Banquet (it's football time in LA) no Buses on Friday or Saturday unless it's Football !!!

Registration \$100.00 x _____ persons = \$ _____

For 98th Association Members Annual Dues \$15.00 x _____ persons = \$ _____

Total Amount Paid = \$ _____

Please make all checks payable to: 98th Bomb Group/Wing Veterans Association

Please mail all completed Registration Forms and Payments to:

Suzanne Mioduszewski 98th Secretary, 1137 Joyce Ln, Ann Arbor MI 48103



SHREVEPORT

The Pyramidiers is the newsletter of the 98th Bomb Group/Wing Veterans Association. If you would like more information about our Association, visit our website at: <http://www.pyramidiers.com> or THE PYRAMIDIERS.