



# 95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Newsletter

THE 95<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GROUP MEMORIALS FOUNDATION, INC. is a 501(c)3 organization whose purpose is to educate the public regarding the history of the 95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group (H) and its role in the air campaign over central Europe during WWII.



◀ Cover Photo by Janet Norman-Philips  
 Re-enactors at the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
 celebration at Horham.



95<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GROUP

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8<sup>TH</sup>  
AIR FORCE



13<sup>TH</sup> COMBAT  
WING



334<sup>TH</sup>  
SQUADRON



335<sup>TH</sup>  
SQUADRON



336<sup>TH</sup>  
SQUADRON



412<sup>TH</sup>  
SQUADRON

**The continued lifeblood of this Foundation rests with our younger family members and friends, who are engaged and active in keeping the memory alive of the sacrifices made by each of our 95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group airmen.**

# Notes from the President



**TOBY MUMFORD**  
PRESIDENT

Here we come Philadelphia! The 2018 Reunion is right around the corner, so make certain you have October 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> marked on your calendar. The hotel in Valley Forge has been reserved and plans for daily activities are progressing. I encourage each of you to consider attendance at the Reunion as the beginning or the culmination of a holiday in the Philadelphia area. Plan on visiting such sites in Philadelphia as the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall, Elfreth's Alley, or the Museum of the American Revolution. The history in the area is fabulous when you consider that Gettysburg is a little over two hours west of Philadelphia. Combining the Reunion activities with a historical revisit can make for a wonderful family holiday. Susan and I look forward to seeing and visiting with all of you in Valley Forge.

We have placed all the Reunion registration information on our website and have included a registration form with this

newsletter. You will also find additional information posted as it becomes available. Great thanks to Vanna Walker for her hard work on the Reunion and to Rod Hupp for his help with the website Reunion updates.

It would be wonderful to see each of our members invite one new family member or friend to join us at the Reunion this year. The continued lifeblood of this Foundation rests with our younger family members and friends, who are engaged and active in keeping the memory alive of the sacrifices made by each of our 95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group airmen.

In the coming months we will be completing a review of our website with the intent of making it even more user-friendly. We want the site to be attractive and inviting to new viewers so that they will want to visit the site regularly and become even more engaged in our Mission. I am encouraging our younger potential members to take part in this review

process, which will enable us to create the best platform to tell our story and attract new members.

The 95<sup>th</sup> BGMF continues to have an ever-growing relationship with the 390<sup>th</sup> BG. Our thanks to them for the fine working relationship surrounding the Tucson Museum and their willingness to accommodate our occasional requests to enhance the experience of a visit to the 95<sup>th</sup> BG Room. We look forward to cultivating this relationship in the coming years.

Our congratulations to the Heritage Association for their wonderful celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 95<sup>th</sup> BG's arrival at Station 119, Horham. We've also gotten great reports back on the Americana Day events on June 24<sup>th</sup> and the wonderful dance party on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, with The Devil's Cut Combo.

See you in Philadelphia!

H. Griffin (Toby) Mumford, Jr.

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Sara R.W. Olson  
editor@95thbg.org  
Granddaughter of Ray B. Waters  
Tail Gunner, 335<sup>th</sup> Squadron



By Vanna Walker

Join us in the greater Philadelphia area for the 95<sup>th</sup> BGMF 2018 Reunion. This year, we will meet at the DoubleTree by Hilton, Valley Forge, from October 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>. We will visit the Valley Forge National Historical Park, which is, as its website explains, “the site of the 1777-1778 winter encampment of the Continental Army. The park commemorates the sacrifices and perseverance of the Revolutionary War generation and honors the ability of citizens to pull together and overcome adversity during extraordinary times.”

When we go to downtown Philadelphia you can choose to see the Liberty Bell Center, Independence Hall, the Franklin Institute Science Museum, Rittenhouse Square, or any of the many other places to visit. You can take a city sightseeing “Hop-On, Hop-Off” double-decker bus tour, or walk through the historic areas. If you decide to venture out on your own, the hotel shuttle will take you within five miles of the hotel, and that includes the Norristown Elm St. train station.

We will be remembering all of those who have gone before us in the Memorial Breakfast and Service, and don't forget all of the great fireside chats, meals, and the Gala Dinner/Dance.

Ending our time together will be the Sunday Fun Day lunch cruise on the Spirit of Philadelphia along the Delaware River. See Philadelphia from a different point of view!

We are looking forward to seeing all of you in the greater Philadelphia area this October! Travel safely!

**For all the latest information  
on the 2018 Reunion visit:  
[www.95thbg.org](http://www.95thbg.org)**



## Philadelphia Reunion October 4 - 8, 2018 Philadelphia, PA



GUEST 1: NAME, ADDRESS, EMAIL , PHONE
GUEST 2: NAME, ADDRESS, EMAIL , PHONE
GUEST 3: NAME, ADDRESS, EMAIL , PHONE
GUEST 4: NAME, ADDRESS, EMAIL , PHONE
RELATIONSHIP TO 95 <sup>th</sup> <i>(Please include Vet's Name, Squadron / Unit, Crew Position, Rank)</i>

SPECIAL NEEDS:

DAY	Time	ACTIVITY & TIME	COST	GUEST 1	GUEST 2	GUEST 3	GUEST 4
Thu 4 <sup>th</sup>	TBD	Bus: Airport to Hotel <i>(Space Limited)*</i>	\$30				
Thu 4 <sup>th</sup>	6-8pm	Meet & Greet Reception	\$30				
Fri 5 <sup>th</sup>	8-11am	Memorial Breakfast / Service	\$30				
Fri 5 <sup>th</sup>	11-4pm	Valley Forge National Historical Park	\$20				
Sat 6 <sup>th</sup>	9-4:30pm	Trip to Downtown Philadelphia	\$30				
Sat 6 <sup>th</sup>	6:30-12am	Gala Dinner / Dance	\$65				
Sun 7 <sup>th</sup>	11-4pm	Spirit of Philadelphia Lunch Cruise	\$70				
Mon 8 <sup>th</sup>	TBD	Bus: Hotel to Airport <i>(Space Limited)*</i>	\$30				

<b>Per Person Reunion Registration Fee Required * *</b> <b>Veterans and their Spouses/ Widows DO NOT pay the registration fee!</b> <b style="color: red;">REGISTRATION FEE INCREASES TO \$75 AFTER SEPT 5<sup>th</sup></b>	\$50/\$75				
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<b>BALANCE DUE by SEPTEMBER 10, 2018</b> <i>(Registration, Membership(s), Donations, Transportation Fees)</i> <b style="color: red;">REGISTRATION FEE INCREASES TO \$75 AFTER SEPT 5<sup>th</sup></b>	\$355/ \$380	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
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<b>NOT A MEMBER YET? JOIN US!</b> <b>MEMBERSHIP: Individual \$35 Household \$50</b> <i>Gift membership(s), please add information on the back.</i>		<b>Mail registration form to:</b> <b>Beth Rosenzweig, Asst Treasurer</b> <b>95<sup>th</sup> BG Memorials Foundation</b> <b>PO Box 55032</b> <b>Seattle WA 98155-0032</b>  <b>Make checks payable to:</b> <b>95<sup>th</sup> BG Memorials Foundation and</b> <b>mark "Mission Philadelphia Reunion" in memo.</b>  <b>SEE YOU THERE!</b>
<b>DONATIONS: ____ In loving Memory, ____ In Honor of</b> <i>(Include Vet's Name, Squadron, Position, add info on back.)</i>	\$0	
<b style="color: red;">TOTAL DUE BY SEPTEMBER 4, 2018</b>	\$0	

<b>**Non-Refundable Registration Fee:</b> This fee covers additional hotel costs (i.e. meeting rooms, AV equipment, etc). <b style="color: orange;">QUESTIONS: PLEASE CONTACT VANNA WALKER REUNION CHAIR:</b> <b style="color: orange;">reunions@95thbg.org or 214-725-1942.</b>	<b>DoubleTree by Hilton Valley Forge:</b> The block name for the hotel reservations is "95BGMF". Use the block name if you call for your reservations at 1-610-337-1200 or the central reservations at 1-800-774-1500. If you prefer to use the website, please follow this link: <a href="http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/P/PHLVFDT-ANN-20181003/index.jhtml">http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/P/PHLVFDT-ANN-20181003/index.jhtml</a>
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<b>*Arriving by plane:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>train:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>bus:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>car:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>parking / hotel:</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Date of Arrival, Airlines &amp; Flight #:</b> _____	
<b>Date of Departure, Airlines &amp; Flight #:</b> _____	
<i>(Please remember to fill out your flight information above for bus to and from the hotel)</i>	

# CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Dear Members, Friends and Family  
of the 95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group:

Do you or your family have

- **PICTURES & STORIES**
- **WARTIME LETTERS**
- **NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS**
- **UNSOLVED MYSTERIES**
- **PROJECTS OF REMEMBRANCE**

that you would be willing to share  
with us?

**OUR NEWSLETTER NEEDS YOUR  
SUBMISSIONS!**

Contributing a submission is a great  
way to memorialize your loved one  
and create lasting connections with  
the 95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group community.

We can assist with editing stories or  
scanning pictures or documents if  
needed. Please contact Sara Olson  
with any questions you may have.

Submission deadlines are as follows:

SPRING: **FEBRUARY 1<sup>ST</sup>**

SUMMER: **MAY 1<sup>ST</sup>**

AUTUMN: **OCTOBER 15<sup>TH</sup>**

Sara R. W. Olson, Newsletter Editor  
editor@95thbg.org, 612-387-2123



Follow Us:  
95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group  
Memorials Foundation

# You Too From Our Members & Facebook Friends

## Gardner Family Seeking Crew Contacts



Posted by Phil Samponaro

### **334<sup>TH</sup> SQUADRON REQUEST:**

Lee and Marie Gardner want very much to connect  
with family members of Clair Wyrick's crew on which  
Lee flew as left waist gunner. Lee will be 94 years old  
in September and would especially enjoy learning  
more about the post-war lives of his fellow fliers. In  
addition to Lee, the Wyrick crew included:

Clair E. Wyrick – Pilot

Robert Gross – Co-Pilot

Alois T. Braje – Navigator

Hollie J. Flippen – Bombardier

Abner C. Barfield – Radio Operator

Kenneth C. Bennett – Top Turret / Engineer

Frank Los Calzo – Ball Turret Gunner

Carl J. Woodward – Right Waist Gunner

Willard C. Dale – Tail Gunner



# How To Build an 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Heavy Bomber Base: The Story of Station 153: Parham, England

After its activation in January, 1942, the Eighth Air Force had to quickly devise a plan for housing its aircraft, equipment and personnel. It moved swiftly. During that same month, the British Air Ministry began surveying land for US airfields. The construction that unfolded in the months to follow comprised one of the largest civil engineering programs ever undertaken in the United Kingdom.



**Eighth Air Force base construction was often accomplished without the heavy equipment we would expect to see today.**



**An 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force heavy bomber base was like a small town in which everyone had a job to do.**

Original plans for the US airfields called for three concrete runways; a perimeter track and concrete standings for up to 50 aircraft; two or three massive hangars; workshops; utilities including fuel storage, electrical generation, water supply and sewage; and accommodation for up to 2,500 personnel.

Speed was the dominant factor in construction, as well as rapid site preparation. Construction of

## Planning a WWII Heavy Bomber Base

Initially, the typical B-17 heavy bomber base would be established to accommodate the following:

**Four flying squadrons plus a Service Group or Squadron**

**72 B-17s including reserves**

**96 air crews and 2,500 total personnel (average)**

**144,000 gallons of fuel storage**

**3,000 tons of bombs**

each heavy bomber base equated to building a small town in less than six months. The presence of US air bases would forever change the English countryside and the lives of locals who resided there.

## Local Lives and Landscape Were Changed Forever

In February, 1942, Percy Kindred and his younger brother, Herman, were served requisition papers: their farm was assigned to be the home of US Air Base Station 153.



**Massive bomb storage sites like these were located on 8th Air Force air bases all over the English countryside. 21,223 bombs were loaded onto 390th aircraft during the month of March, 1945, alone.**



Preparation for the arrival of 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force heavy bombers comprised a stark contrast to the norm of horse-drawn carts like these, used to farm the English countryside.

As work began just three months later, their land—Crabbes & Park Farm—and their lives were transformed. In preparation for construction, the area was cleared of nearly eight miles of hedgerows and 1,500 trees. A large reservoir, supplied by the river Ore, was dug so that water would be available for mixing the vast amounts of concrete called for in the plan. Bricks and other hardcore rubble were obtained from bombed-out buildings in London and Birmingham. Shingle was gathered from nearby beaches.

Trains and lorries ran night and day into Parham Village, carrying essential supplies. The nonstop parade of vehicles comprised a stark contrast to what had been quiet country roads and lanes just months before. At the work site prior to construction, the major form of transport had been a horse and cart.

### Anatomy of a WWII Heavy Bomber Base

Station 153 was built to a specification known as class “A” standard operational airfield. At a total cost of what would be \$4 million US dollars in 1943

(approximately \$54 million today), plans called for 500,000 square yards of concrete; 4.5 million bricks; 32,000 square yards of tarmac; 20 miles of drains; six miles of water mains; four miles of sewers; 10 miles of roads (20 feet wide); an additional 15 miles of smaller roads and pathways; and 10 miles of electrical conduit.

Station 153 was designed to accommodate 1,500 personnel. It eventually housed over 3,000 people. The base design necessitated the building of dispersed living quarters; communal sites; recreation, training and storage facilities; and basic utilities such as water, sewage disposal, electricity and telephone.



A Station 153 latrine. The Eighth Air Force air base project comprised one of the biggest civil engineering projects ever undertaken.

### Station 153: A US Air Base Among Many Others

A total of sixty-seven bomber bases were built for the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force. Most were located in East Anglia, an area approximately the size of the US State of Maryland. The remains of many wartime airfields can still be found throughout the countryside.

Today, Station 153 is home to the Parham Airfield Museum (PAM). The original control tower is



The Station 153 Control Tower continues to be maintained and is open to the public.

maintained, and the PAM consists of two museums: the 390<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Memorial Air Museum as well as the Museum of the British Resistance Organization. The Parham Airfield Museum is presided by Peter Kindred, son of Percy Kindred. His family still maintains the surrounding land.



Story by Jodi Gonzales. All photos courtesy of the Joseph A. Moller Library. Originally published by the 390<sup>th</sup> Memorial Museum. [www.390th.org](http://www.390th.org)

**The Parham Airfield Museum is located approximately 13 miles southeast of Horham. Station 153 was the original home of the 95<sup>th</sup> BG.**





# IF NOT ME, WHO? IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

By Gerald W. Grove  
Son of 95<sup>th</sup> BG, 335<sup>th</sup> BS Tail Gunner  
Ronald W. Grove  
Past president, 95<sup>th</sup> BG Memorials  
Foundation

Should we choose to learn from history I suspect we'd find this question has been asked at least once of every generation. Whether the challenge is found in world events, work opportunities, human rights causes, or just day-to-day living, the call to action is an individual's opportunity to invest time and service in a purpose beyond self—contributing to community and intentional living, in today's vernacular.

The 95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Memorials Foundation always has needs and opportunities for volunteers to participate in its mission of educating the public regarding the history of the 95<sup>th</sup> BG (H) during WW2 as well as maintaining the Foundation's original memorials. This charge is never more important than as we look to the immediate future and the legacy of the then-young men who were willing to sacrifice every one of their tomorrows for our freedoms of today.

Our challenge for the Next, Next Generation ("NextNext Gen") of the 95<sup>th</sup> BG Memorials Foundation and its interested observers is to now step up to the task(s) of leading this organization into the

future. Life experiences seldom provide the right or perfect timing for increased involvement to a selfless cause, but without this commitment, our organization and the legacy of the brave men represented are at risk. As much as technology can assist with our organization's charter, it cannot replace the investment of person-to-person contact required to carry these veterans' legacy and memories forward.

As 95<sup>th</sup> BG Memorials Foundation president Toby Mumford aptly commented in our March 2018 newsletter, "The best way to maintain those memories (veterans' service, sacrifice, experiences) ... is for the next generation to get involved." Looking at our own 95<sup>th</sup> BG and a fellow 13<sup>th</sup> Combat Bomb Wing member, the 390<sup>th</sup> BG, some examples of NextNext Gen commitment are found in extended family such as Kaitlyn Hammesfahr, Travis Behrens, Sara Olson, and Kevin Drain (390<sup>th</sup>). Kaitlyn and Travis have been involved in the Memorials Foundation since the early 2000's, serving in various leadership roles during our annual reunions. Sara has recently taken on the Newsletter editor role, which fits quite well with her chosen vocation. Kevin is investing his time and service by working with the 95<sup>th</sup> BG and the

100<sup>th</sup> BG Foundations in order to set direction and make plans toward increasing 13<sup>th</sup> CBW bonds for the future among the three groups. Our individual Group's heritage and that of the Combat Wing are remarkable: seven Distinguished Unit Citations in WW2 across our three Bomb Groups AND living museums at each of the main WW2 air bases in England—Horham, Parham, and Thorpe Abbots!

We began the "Fireside Chats" at our 95<sup>th</sup> BG reunions around the year 2000; the purpose was for our veterans to share their memories and life experiences from WW2 in order to preserve their legacy, creating an extended family across generations. Their foresight and commitment led to the 95<sup>th</sup> BG Memorials Foundation organization and its five original memorial sites—have you visited some (or all) of these special locales to honor our veterans? It is up to the succeeding generations to pass this torch forward. To borrow a quote, slightly altered, from the late president John F. Kennedy, "Ask not what your Foundation can do for you—ask what you can do for your Foundation." Please consider reaching out to a 95<sup>th</sup> BG Memorials Foundation Board of Directors member to volunteer today!

# A Letter from the 493<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group



Dear Editor,

According to 95<sup>th</sup> BG web page, LT Leo H. Harsh was attached to the 95<sup>th</sup> BG and flew 2 combat missions, 1 Chowhound mission and 1 Victory Tour flight. His pilot, LT Benny J. Radzevish and the rest of the crew were then transferred to the 493<sup>rd</sup> BG reporting on 19 May 1945. Based on information on your web page, you know of the crash of this crew while they were on their way home to the States.

I connected up with Leo back in 2012 and he joined the 493<sup>rd</sup> BG Association. I did some research about the crash, finding a 2-page Air Traffic Control document about the ditching. Leo also sent me a copy of his story about the crash. Both were included in our newsletter.

Earlier this summer, we found out that Leo passed away on February 12, 2018. As I was pulling together information, for our newsletter, about Leo's time with the 493<sup>rd</sup> BG and his article in my "In Memory" article, I thought it would be appropriate to pass on this information to the 95<sup>th</sup> BG.

David Schmitt  
493<sup>rd</sup> BG Historian and Newsletter Editor


## The BIG SPLASH

by Herb Harsh  
December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007

This is my detailed account of events leading up to ditching a B-17 bomber in the Atlantic Ocean on July 5, 1945.

Back in December 1943, I enlisted at Wright Patterson Air Force Base to enroll in the Aviation Cadet Program. This was to be a nine-month training effort (actually, 10 months, counting a one month basic training stint). Due to a big snafu among the top brass, we were informed that there were no facilities to train us (500 cadets, would you believe?). They finally decided to send us to the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa. Our quarters were the men's dorms; there were only a few male students on campus. But, the good news for us was that there were 1,500 coeds (they loved those men in uniform and we were given very special treatment). We studied college courses and flew 10 hours in a (Piper) Cub. We were there 5 months.

Finally, we were assigned to single-engine training in 3 phases: Primary, Basic and Advanced in three locations: Fort Stockton, San Angelo and San Antonio, Texas. The training was rigorous, patterned after the Air Force Academy. After graduation, we received our Silver Wings and were commissioned as 2nd Lieutenants. My instructors nominated me to go to Instructor School, which took several months more training. Believe me, I was in no hurry to be sent to combat. Here I was, allowed to live off-base with my new young wife, Sarah, whom I married in



**This adventure was the most dramatic event in my life and I remain ever thankful that the Lord brought me through this experience.**

Tuscaloosa (no, not one of the coeds—my fiancée from my hometown). We were living the "life of Riley," and content in our circumstances. Well, "Shangri-La" didn't last but 5 months, and I was called to take 4-engine B-17 bomber training, which took another 2 or 3 months. Deployed in March 1945, I ended up in the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force, heading for Ipswich, England.

One of the exciting events while there was a weekend pass, staying at the Red Cross. The Queen, Elizabeth I, came to visit the troops, and in going around the room, stopped in front of this Ohio farm boy, extended her white-gloved hand to shake mine. Additionally, the Princess, now Queen Elizabeth II, was with her, but did not say anything. She, too, was a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant.

Now, on to do what we came to do: our first scary bomb run over Germany. Then, in succession, only 2 more missions. VE-Day came in June 1945 and the peace treaty was signed with Germany. Praise the Lord! I had not enjoyed dropping bombs on Germany.

Well, soon thereafter, we were scheduled to fly home. Our crew of 9 and 10 passengers, a total of 19 aboard, took off, stopping at the Azores Island Base. Our 1<sup>st</sup> Pilot, 2<sup>nd</sup> LT Benny Radzovich and I were at the controls. The date: July 4, 1945. While there, we were briefed and informed of the dangers of flying over the Atlantic, the possibilities of having to ditch the plane (this plane, with proper ditching procedures, could stay afloat for 5 minutes, ample time to get out the life-saving equipment). Additionally, we were told about barracuda and sharks, which would strike if they smelled blood.

Takeoff from the base was 2400 hours. This is midnight, very dark. Everything was going fine until

1 hour later when the #1 engine began to windmill, causing excessive vibration. I was instructed to feather the propeller (where the propeller was pointing directly into the wind, and the vibration ended). In no time, it began to windmill again and feathering was not possible. Then, all of a sudden, dangerous sparks came from the engine nacelle. By this time, we had radioed back to base, informing them that we were in trouble. Then, the inevitable: the sparks turned into huge tongues of flame, shooting back across the fuel tanks (this was high-octane gas, mind you).

This situation called for ditching immediately. We began the normal descent speed of 105 mph. There was panic, shouting, praying. Our pilot was panicky as well and, evidently trying to get down soon, increased the gliding speed (when I looked at the air speed indicator, it read 170 mph, a very dangerous angle of descent). He called for landing lights; I turned them on: there was thick, dense fog over the water. Then, came the inevitable SPLASH, as we hit the water hard!

Having been unconscious briefly from hitting my head on the instrument panel, I was awakened by our engineer, beating furiously on my back, wanting me to get out so that he could follow. After struggling and praying, I finally opened the escape window. Salt water was up to my neck when I exited and I came to the surface in deep water.

In the dim light of the moon, the first thing I saw was the huge tail of the plane, sinking very slowly. We concluded that the plane had broken like a cracker into 2 pieces—the heavier front portion was going down first and the lighter tail portion next. It was very dark, water was 65 degrees, depth 6500 feet. Panic

ensued. Everyone left was shouting, screaming, hanging on to anything that floated, buoyed up by the Mae West jackets we were all wearing.

Counting noses, we realized that the 1<sup>st</sup> Pilot, myself, the engineer, and one waist gunner had survived from our crew. Four passengers also survived, making 8 of us safe, out of the total of 19. The waves were 3 feet high, and the Mae West jackets tended to keep us on our backs, making it necessary to paddle constantly to keep us face down and to keep from inhaling the salt water.

The rescue raft on board was to be activated by the radioman from his mid-ship position. Evidently he was killed on impact. So, there was no life raft to be seen. I guess I owe my life to "Mae West". I'll never forget "her". The time was 0100 hours, dark, foreboding, only a sliver of a moon. We decided we would all try to stay close together. Unfortunately, each time someone kicked or bumped us, we immediately shouted "Shark!" Luckily, no shark or barracuda came by. One of our crew had a serious leg injury and bled quite a lot, making the inevitable "strike" even more frightening.

The night was long! Much praying ensued. It would be at least 6 or 7 hours before sunrise, when possible help might come. During those hours, three more of our comrades went under. Undoubtedly, they died from exposure. Dawn finally came, the fog lifted, we could see search planes on the horizon (but they were some 30 miles from us). Evidently, the radioman's position before the crash was incorrect (we did not hold him responsible, what with all the excitement and panic).

At 1200 hours, a commercial plane flew our direction and flew right over us. We automatically released the sea packet dye attached to the Mae West. Immediately the water turned a brilliant green. But alas, no one in the plane saw us. This was our last hope. But then, praise the Lord, someone DID see us, the pilot flew a chandelle back over us, wagged his wings and radioed our position back to the base. Then, sadly, before the rescuers came, our pilot went under. Now there were 4 left.

Within an hour there were all kinds of planes skirting around us, one of which was a British Wellington

with an air-sea rescue boat attached. He dropped it very close to us and we clambered aboard with what little strength we had. The cold water, after 11 hours, had taken our strength. Soon thereafter, a naval craft came by, picked us up and took us back to the Azores Base Hospital. We were fed, hydrated, examined and allowed to sleep the rest of the day and night. Soundest sleep I ever had.

The next day we boarded a commercial plane heading back to the U.S.A. As thrilled as we were to be on solid ground, we didn't even think of kissing the ground. We were loaded onto Greyhound buses, mine heading back to Wapakoneta, my hometown, where my wonderful wife was waiting with open arms at the terminal (the happiest day of my life). What a meaningful and joyous time! A 30-day furlough was granted and I was discharged soon after.

This adventure was the most dramatic event in my life and I remain ever thankful that the Lord brought me through this experience. He had a wonderful plan for me, allowing me to spend 50 years with my Sarah, to raise 3 responsible, loving children, to have steady employment all my years and to have 6 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren. Then, he allowed me to marry a new, wonderful second wife who has brought untold happiness to me.

The Lord has surely blessed me these 86 years [*he lived another decade after writing this story*], and I shall ever be thankful. Coming to live at Otterbein has been so very happy. Why me, Lord, and not fifteen of my fellow service men and thousands of others who did not make it back?

That is my story. You have all read it, and I am sure each of you has a story to tell as well. The Lord is good, indeed!



▲ B-17G 42-32087 Heavenly Body / Ain't Misbehavin

## 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY MEMORIAL PROGRAMS

Oct. 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 10am  
Museum of the United States Air Force  
Dayton, OH

Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 1pm  
Nat'l Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force  
Dayton, OH

# From the 95<sup>th</sup> BG Research Team:

By Rod Hupp  
rodhupp52@verizon.net

### CONTRAILS REQUEST

The 95<sup>th</sup> BG "Contrails" book that was published after the war contains hundreds of photos of 95<sup>th</sup> personnel. Unfortunately most do not identify the person in the photo.

I would like to ask if anyone has a Contrails book in which the veteran has made notations about who people are in the photos. Thought some might have done that shortly after the war. If so, we would like to work on getting that information so we can add those photos to our website with names.

### SPRING NEWSLETTER RETRACTION:

## A Rare Encounter with a 95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group B-17

Email correspondence and additional research has led the 95<sup>th</sup> BG Research Team to conclude that the Lonesome Polecat featured in the Spring Newsletter is not the 95<sup>th</sup> BG Lonesome Polecat 42-29693.

The B-17 aircraft parts belong to the B-17 42-38160 from the 385<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group. Internet photos of the aircraft prior to the crash validate this fact.



▲ **CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS PERSON?** French author and USAAF historian, Gregory Pons, is trying to identify this 95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group airman. Please email Phil Samponaro at: [philip.samponaro@utrgv.edu](mailto:philip.samponaro@utrgv.edu) if you can identify this person.

## New 95<sup>th</sup> BG Crew Photos Acquired

Thanks to Mark Henderson, son of Bruce Henderson, the 95<sup>th</sup> BGMF has acquired three new crew photos of several 335<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron crews that were missing. This included the John B. Campbell crew, Melvin B. Dunham crew, and Robert E. Beatty crew. These have been added to the 95<sup>th</sup> BG website and archives. Mark was also kind enough to provide additional photos for the Clay Burnette, Peter V. Milward, and the William P. Kelley crews. ►



**CAMPBELL CREW**

BACK ROW (L-R): Carl R. Keiper – Waist Gunner, James E. Knag – Waist Gunner, Alvin S. Janeczko – Ball Turret Gunner, James D. Keefe – Tail Gunner, James H. Prather – Radio Operator

FRONT ROW (L-R): Sydney Abramson – Navigator, Howard M. Baumgartner – Co-Pilot, John B. Campbell – Pilot

MISSING FROM PHOTO: William J. Wilson – Bombardier, Allen S. Schmieder – Top Turret/Engineer



**DUNHAM CREW:**

BACK ROW (L-R): Marvin D. Anderson – Top Turret/Engineer, Warren A. Thompson – Radio Operator, Frederick W. Bittner – Tail Gunner, Vincent Aiello – Waist Gunner, Lawrence I. Pifer – Ball Turret Gunner

FRONT ROW (L-R): Melvin B. Dunham – Pilot, Robert T. Renner – Co-Pilot, Everett R. Lund – Bombardier, Clarence H. Barstow – Waist Gunner

MISSING FROM PHOTO: John B. Matthews – Navigator



**BEATTY CREW:**

BACK ROW (L-R): Milton C. Spangenberg – Top Turret/Engineer, Douglas J. Miller – Waist Gunner, Augusto Pereira – Ball Turret Gunner, Arthur E. Klemp – Waist Gunner, John M. Gallo – Tail Gunner, Albert G. Laney – Radio Operator

FRONT ROW (L-R): Robert E. Beatty – Pilot, John B. Kernochan – Co-Pilot, Joseph C. Forand – Bombardier

MISSING FROM PHOTO: David E. Goss – Navigator



© Linda Woodward

# A Visit to Horham

By Nancy Freemantle

Although I wasn't here for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, I was fortunate to watch a video of the Jeep run, wreath laying, and church service. It was a moving experience. The Jeep run was held on Saturday and included over ten vehicles. They went through Stradbroke, passing the church which was covered in flags to remember the Americans who arrived 75 years ago. They then drove on to Thorpe Abbots for breakfast. A few more Jeeps joined in and they headed to Parham for lunch. They tried to follow the same route as they did 75 years ago on the drive from Parham to the Horham runway. Allan Johnson headed the Jeep convoy back to the Red Feather Club.

Sunday began with a wreath laying, which was incredibly moving. How fortunate we are to have the local people honor and remember our veterans. After the wreath laying, the bells in the church tower heralded the group into the church for another moving and emotional service. They also sang the National Anthems of both the United States and England! Someone said "Even with no Americans over we had a good rendition of the Star-Spangled Banner!" After the church service, they headed back to the RFC for a picnic. Entertainment was provided by The Knightingales—I must say,

the best 1940's singing trio I have heard! Another person said "We had marked the historic occasion of 75 years since the small village somewhere in England made such bonds to last the years and hopefully many more!" I couldn't have said it any better!

I was here for Americana Day. What fun! Saturday night started off the festivities with a wonderful dance at the Red Feather Club. I spent a large portion of my night walking through the museum. Such a fantastic display of the 95<sup>th</sup>! Even with the sounds of the dance going on, there was a special reverence in the museum itself. The displays are well cared for and everyone was working hard to make sure the weekend went well for all attending. I think there were more people working together than I have ever seen.



© Linda Woodward



© Linda Woodward

On Sunday, Americana Day was in full swing with a car show, music outside, and a lot of visitors. There were vendors, great food, lots of local families, and a great time was had by all. I was fortunate to be able to go through the woods with my husband, Bob, to the site of my dad's barracks. There were two other groups of Americans that attended.

I was fortunate to again go to the Red Feather Club to meet up with Phil Samponaro on July 4<sup>th</sup> to witness the return of Benjamin Roujansky's jacket to the museum for permanent display. I want to thank Ben's children, Dan and Sue Roujansky, for sending Ben's jacket back to England. It was incredibly moving to be there for the jacket's return to Horham! Ben was such an important part of the 95<sup>th</sup>, serving on the Board of Directors and being

the consummate storyteller! We can now go to Horham and see Ben's jacket and trailing wire on display!

This was the best trip I've had at Station 119 and I am here to report that the museum is alive and well! Just as we in America are dedicated to the Mission of the 95<sup>th</sup> BGMF, the people of Horham are equally dedicated. The museum is being cared for and run by a stalwart group of volunteers who are working together to continue to make the Red Feather Club one of the best living museums in East Anglia. I know my father would be very happy to see the Red Feather Club being such an important part of this community all these years later! They continue to remember, with a quiet reverence, the men who served in Horham 75 years ago!

**TOP ROW (L-R) ►**  
75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ceremony  
outside St. Mary's Church  
© Jon Wilson

The Knightingales Trio with  
committee members  
Linda Woodward, Reg Bradley  
and Beverly Abbott  
© Jon Wilson

Alan Johnson  
© Linda Woodward

**MIDDLE ROW ►**  
Youngsters  
© Linda Woodward

**BOTTOM ROW (L-R) ►**  
Brian Chapman  
© Linda Woodward

George Roper  
© Linda Woodward

75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ceremony  
by the Memorial to the  
95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group  
© Jon Wilson





1943 - 2018  
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
**75**  
YEARS ON





# Press Release:

## Celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 95<sup>th</sup> BG Arrival at Horham

© Jon Wilson

A weekend of events celebrated the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group arriving at Horham in Suffolk.

The “Friendly Invasion” of 1943 saw thousands of American servicemen come to sleepy East Anglian villages bringing with them swing music, chewing gum, and forging friendships that would stand the test of time. The events were in honor of

American servicemen arriving in Horham and surrounding villages on June 15, 1943, at the height of WW2.

On Saturday a convoy of period vehicles and re-enactors in period-perfect costumes and uniforms visited the 95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group’s sister groups, the 100<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Memorial Museum at Thorpe Abbots and 390<sup>th</sup> at Parham Airfield Museum, before spending the evening at the Red Feather Club.

The Red Feather Club museum is a faithfully restored NCOs club operated and run by the 95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Heritage Association to commemorate and honor the men of the 95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group.

Sunday saw a special service at St Mary’s church in Horham where the bomb group’s colors were rededicated and a wreath was laid at the 95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group memorial in the village.

The museum complex was open on Sunday afternoon with visitors enjoying picnics and the 1940s-themed songs of The Knightingales.

95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Heritage Association committee member Linda Woodward said: “It was a great weekend with lots of people enjoying the hospitality of the Red Feather Club and commemorating a momentous moment in local history.

“The arrival of the 95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group at Station 119—the official name for Horham Airfield – was an amazing event. The surrounding villages—Horham, Denham, Redlingfield, and Hoxne—had a few hundred inhabitants and suddenly there were thousands of American servicemen here.

“Many friendships were forged between the locals and Americans and while we’re celebrating this and their arrival we’re also



remembering the fallen and the sacrifices they made. More than 550 men from the 95<sup>th</sup> were killed during WW2 and more than 800 were taken prisoner of war.”

She added: “The Red Feather Club was the NCOs’ club and it really comes alive when we have big events and dances.”

And this Sunday, June 24, the annual Americana Day will celebrate all things American from 10am to 4pm with the museum open for the day, vintage stalls, music, bar, food stalls, re-enactors, and a car and bike show.

On Saturday, June 23, the Red Feather Club is also holding a dance with the The Devil’s Cut Combo performing an “infectious beat of authentic early 50’s R&B, Rockin’ Blues, and Boogie Woogie” alongside guest DJ Slimboy.



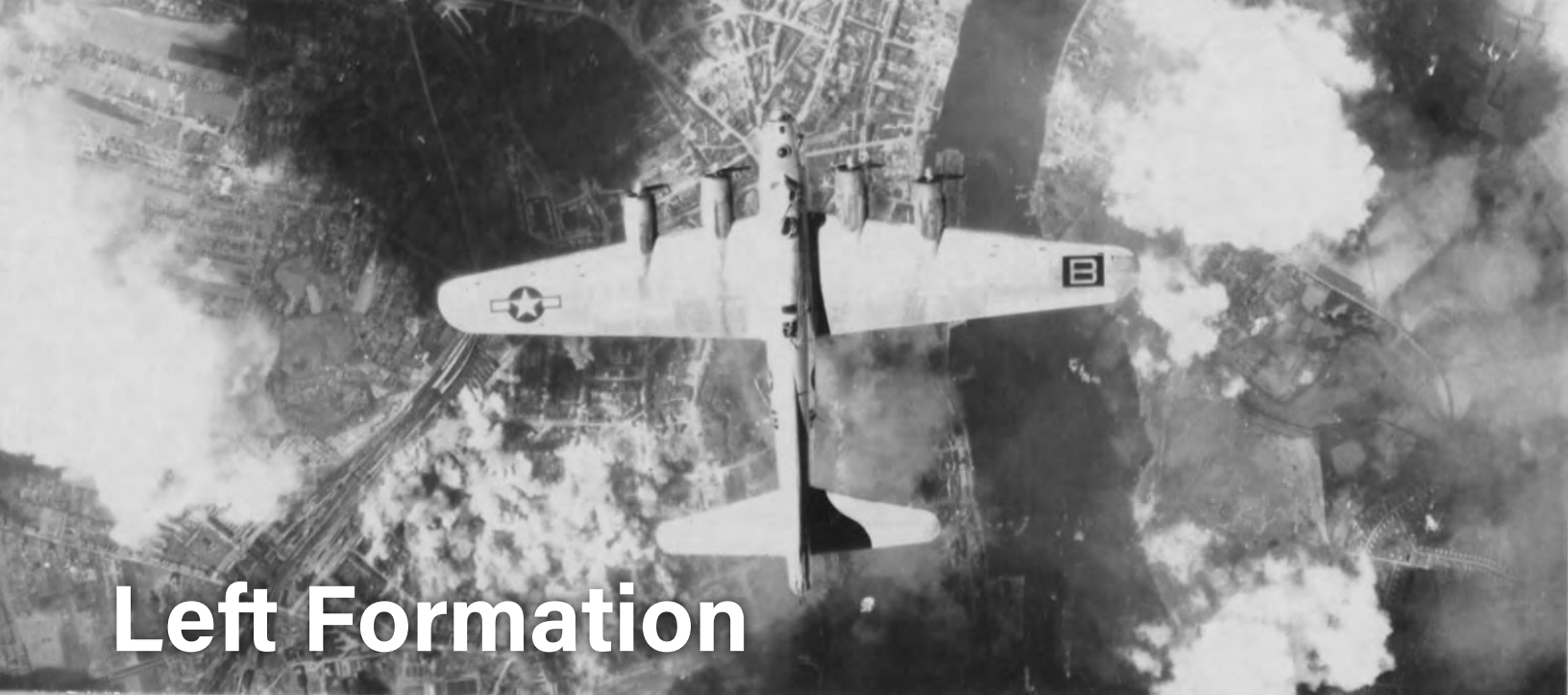
© Janet Norman-Philips

▲ Dancing to The Knightingales



© Jon Wilson

▲ 75th Anniversary Ceremony outside St. Mary's Church in Horham.



# Left Formation

**IN RECOGNITION AND HONOR OF ALL THE 95<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GROUP VETERANS WHOSE STORIES WE HAVE NEVER HEARD**

VETERAN	SQUADRON	POSITION	PASSED
John William Vilberg	336 <sup>th</sup>	Pilot	1 Mar 2017
Leo H. Harsh	412 <sup>th</sup>	Co-Pilot	12 Feb 2018
Joseph J. Cihon	336 <sup>th</sup>	Top Turret/Engineer	15 Apr 2018
Robert C. Newman, Jr.	412 <sup>th</sup>	Pilot	24 Apr 2018
Edward J. Schroedter, Jr.	334 <sup>th</sup>	Tail Gunner	29 Apr 2018
John Campbell	334 <sup>th</sup>	Top Turret Gunner	19 May 2018
Richard W. Tyhurst	334 <sup>th</sup>	Navigator	1 Jun 2018
Robert G. Boudon	334 <sup>th</sup>	Pilot	16 Jun 2018
Roger G. Rand	412 <sup>th</sup>	Pilot	6 Aug 2018



**Military Funeral Honors express our nation's gratitude to the veterans who gave so much to defend our freedom. To make arrangements for Military Funeral Honors, call your nearest Air Force Base and ask to be connected to their Honor Guard. More information can be found at:**

**[HTTPS://MFH.DMDC.OSD.MIL/MFH](https://mfh.dmdc.osd.mil/mfh)**

# We Will Remember Them

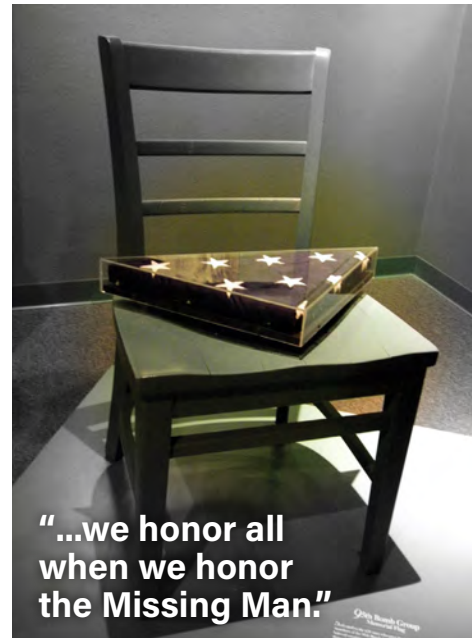
Since our last newsletter, the Foundation has received the following donations “In Honor Of” living veterans, and “In Loving Memory” of those who have Left Formation. To make a donation, contact Nancy Freemantle at 707-442-8624 or email treasurer@95thbg.com.

## IN HONOR OF

Jack Bertram  
Bob & Gloria Faye  
Frank P. Hawk  
Curtis C. Stone

## IN LOVING MEMORY

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Henry C. Bozard, 96th BG Gunner  
Joseph Cihon  
Harry Conley  
Gerald Engler  
Charlie Gallagher  
John H. Gibson  
Sidney Goldstein-Gracen  
James B. Gregory  
Robert W. Hare  
Adam & Annie Hinojos  
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7	<b>First B-17's Over Berlin Patch</b> (Small Rectangle)	\$6		
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13	<b>"We Flew For You" Bumper Sticker</b>	\$3		
14	<b>95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group (H) Notepads</b> (package of 5)	\$20		
15	<b>"You Can Make It, Friend" Notecards</b> (5 notecards with envelopes)	\$10		
16	<b>95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, Station 119 Horham Pen</b>	\$2		
17	<b>Red Feather Crest Coffee Mug</b>	\$10		
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