

# 380<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GROUP



HERKY-528, LIL BEAVER-529, BUGS BUNNY-530, DONALD DUCK-531 SQUADRONS

*Francis Penot*

*This Newsletter is Dedicated to:*

*Forrest E. (Tommy) Thompson, Lt. Col. USAF (Ret.)  
and  
Helen H. Thompson*

*They had the foresight, perseverance, and love of the 380th  
Bombardment Group (H) and its history, traditions, and person-  
nel to organize, succor, and guide the*

*380th Bombardment Group Association, Inc.*

*our predecessor organization, for the past eighteen years  
(1982-1999).*

*Our everlasting thanks and love go out to them.*

**THE 380TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION  
5th AF - RAAF**

AFFECTIONATELY KNOWN AS

*The Flying Circus*  
208 CHIPPEWA ST.  
WEST LAFAYETTE IN 47906-2123



528<sup>TH</sup>



529<sup>TH</sup>



530<sup>TH</sup>



531<sup>TH</sup>

**NEWSLETTER #27**

June 2006

Compatriots and Friends:

Great things are in store for us in the coming days as outlined in the pages to follow.

First, we have the dedication of our new Memorial Plaque at the Memorial Chapel of the Hill Air Force Museum on August 15th.

Second, our Reunion in Washington, D.C., coincides with the Dedication and Memorial Services for the new USAF Memorial in Arlington, Virginia.

We hope many of you can attend both events.

Pat has arranged a very nice program for the Reunion and the hotel is in a spectacular setting. We look forward to seeing you there!

To preserve the memory of the 380th.

Sincerely,

Theodore J. (Ted) Williams

**HISTORIANS**

Glenn R. Horton, Jr.  
Gary L. Horton

**HISTORIAN, AUSTRALIA**

Bob Alford

**EDITORS, HISTORY PROJECTS  
AND QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER**

Barbara J. Gotham  
Theodore J. (Ted) Williams

Phone: 765/494-7434

Fax: 765/494-2351

Email: [tjwil@ecn.purdue.edu](mailto:tjwil@ecn.purdue.edu)

[http://www.ecn.purdue.edu/  
IIES/PLAIC/380/380.html](http://www.ecn.purdue.edu/IIES/PLAIC/380/380.html)

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## 2006 REUNION INFORMATION

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Much of this information is repeated here from the March newsletter, for the benefit of any new members, but it has also been updated with current schedule changes --

Pat Carnevale has received a proposal from the Holiday Inn in Rosslyn, Virginia. They quoted her \$109 + tax but can only do it if we arrive on Thursday and depart on Monday. Otherwise the Wednesday night would be at \$169 and the other nights at \$109. They also offer free parking which is hard to find in the DC area. The Washington subway is only a block away for those who want to use it. Pat says she used it to get to the airport last year and it was great -- only took about 15 minutes and she was right at the terminal of the Washington National (Reagan) Airport.

Reunion dates: October 12-16, 2006.

Here's the schedule:

Thursday	Registration in morning/afternoon; optional tours in afternoon; welcome dinner in evening
Friday	Memorial Service in morning; lunch; WWII Memorial and Air & Space Museum in afternoon
Saturday	Members meeting in morning; USAF Memorial activities in afternoon; tour of Arlington Cemetery
Sunday	USAF Memorial activities in morning/afternoon; C&CO Canal trip; 380th banquet in evening
Monday	Departure

*If you would like to visit Washington earlier than Thursday for extra sight-seeing or other reasons, arrivals at this Holiday Inn prior to the scheduled Thursday hotel check-in can be booked but would be at the \$169 rate.*

The hotel and event registration forms are contained with this issue, and you will also be able to print them from our website at:

<http://fairway.ecn.purdue.edu/IIES/PLAIC/380/REUNION/2006Reunion/Reunion.html>

The highlight of this Reunion will be the dedication of the new USAF National Memorial on the ridge above Arlington, Virginia. It is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, October 14-15, 2006. The Memorial design is a three plane "bomb burst" with the remaining contrails of the planes becoming the Memorial object (a picture of the model is included in this issue). A major fly-over of USAAF and USAF planes will be included with the Collings B-24 and B-17 featured. It should be "some show."

Associate Member Art Prest, who is in charge of the Collings Foundation visits to the Washington Area, has been informed by them that their aircraft will be in the fly-by at 1:00 PM Saturday along with the Dedication. The accompanying Memorial Service will be on Sunday morning, tentatively for 10:30 AM. The Collings aircraft will be based at Gaithersburg MD after the fly-over and will stay there until Tuesday (so our group can see it Saturday afternoon, Sunday afternoon, and Monday).

Art is also planning on bringing in some news press people to talk with members of the 380th on Thursday and/or Friday.

More info follows on the next few pages!

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## **KNOWN DETAILS OF THE USAF MEMORIAL DEDICATION PROGRAM**

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Joe Wells, who is a Charter Member of the Air Force Memorial Foundation, along with Jim Bejoian, has put us in touch with Mr. Pete Lindquist, who is Vice President for arrangements for the USAF Memorial. He has told Ted Williams the following regarding our visit there.

### **I. The Dedication on Saturday afternoon:**

1. They will have only 1,400 seats at the Dedication because of the small area and need for space for the media, etc.
2. They have promised tickets to Congress, media, other DC notables, and the Charter Members of their Foundation.
3. Therefore, he could not set out a block of seats for an organization like ours since we would need about 100.
4. They have reserved the South Parking Lot of the Pentagon, which is just down the hill from the Memorial location (1/2 mile). They will have 14,000 seats there with real-time video and sounds on multiple screens of the ceremonies. It will be open from 09:00 AM to 05:00 PM. The Memorial is visible from the larger viewing area.
5. He stated the track of the Fly-By will be directly over this area.
6. They will have the Air Force Band there all day plus other nationally-known entertainers.
7. He said he could assure us of seating there.
8. They will be running shuttle buses up to the Memorial Site immediately after the ceremony until late afternoon to let the people in the lower seating area get a chance to see the Memorial up close.

### **II. The Memorial Service on Sunday morning, also up at the Memorial Site:**

1. It will start at 10:30 AM.
2. He thinks he can get us seating there since there will be more seats without the lighting, sound, etc., of the previous day.
3. Ted Williams will call him monthly to check on how the program is progressing.

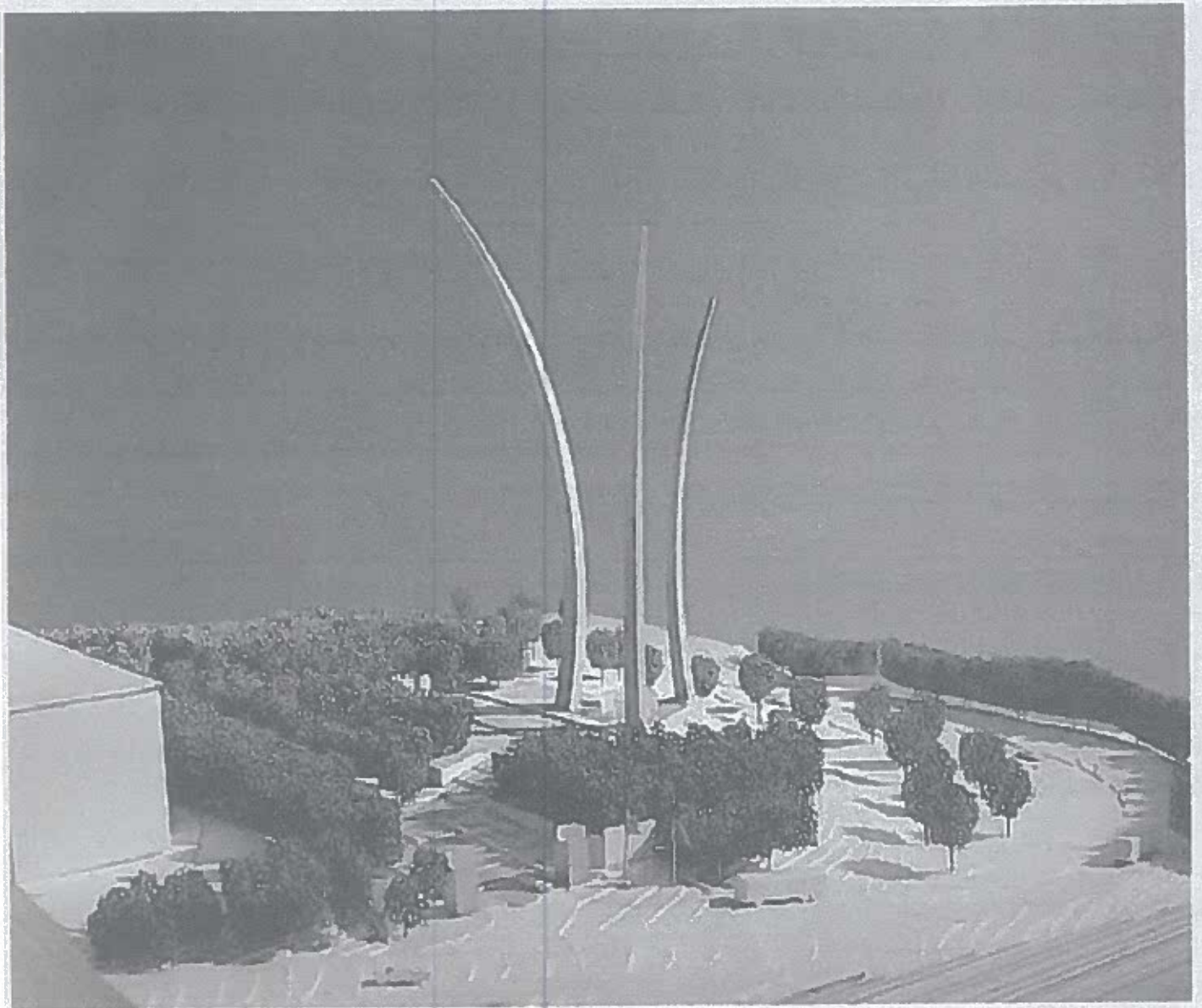


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## *AIR FORCE MEMORIAL*

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### *MODEL OF MEMORIAL*



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## 2006 REUNION INFORMATION

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380th Members Signed up for the 2006 Reunion as of June 19:

Dexter Baker w/Jo Berrett, Dexter Baker Jr, Gregory and Crystal Baker  
Richard and Claire Benson  
Bill Bever  
Joseph and Irma Brooks  
Joe Dally and Sharon Miller  
Lloyd Fry and Bettie Morrison  
Tom Hunt  
Marie Johnson (Anderson)  
Janice and Frank Knafelc  
John and Dolore Lento  
Milton Markowitz  
Lauraine Nash, Janice Nash, Christopher Nash, Peter, Kim and Tyler Nash  
Lyle and Clara Sears  
Edward and Barbara Walford  
Ted and Isabel Williams

John ("J.D.") and Julia Kiggins have joined the 380th. J.D. is the second cousin to Leslie C. Kiggins who flew in the 529th with the Horton and Steele Crews on LIL' NILMERG. J.D. works in the film and television industry and would be very interested in recording some oral histories from the remaining members of the 380th and their families. If possible, they'd like to do this during the October Washington Reunion. Please let us know if you interested in participating.

**Carnevale & Associates Inc.**  
**PO Box 1230**  
**Sonoita AZ 85637**

*Need help with travel plans? Complete request below or phone (800) 659-8808*

380th Bomb Group Association  
2006 Reunion, Washington D.C. - October 12-16, 2006

Travel dates \_\_\_\_\_ Departure City \_\_\_\_\_  
Aisle or Window seat (circle choice)  
Preferred Airline \_\_\_\_\_ Frequent Flyer Number \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

(Note: a modest service fee applies to all airline tickets)

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## **2006 REUNION INFORMATION**

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### **TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR 380<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GROUP REUNION ARLINGTON, VA OCTOBER 12-16, 2006**

#### **Thursday – October 12**

12:00 – 6:00 pm

Registration in Hospitality Room

Free time to explore area on your own

6:00 pm

Welcome Dinner –

8:00 – 10:00 pm

Hospitality Room Open

Sign up for table reservations at Banquet

#### **Friday – October 13**

9:00 am

Buses leave for Memorial Service  
at Andrews Air Force Base

10:00 – 11:00 am

Memorial Service at Chapel

11:30 am

Lunch at The Club at Andrews AFB

12:30 pm

Depart for WWII Memorial and other DC sites

4:30 pm

Bus returns to hotel

5:00 – 10:00 pm

Hospitality Room Open

Dinner on your own

#### **Saturday – October 14**

9:00 am

Member's Meeting in Hospitality Room

11:30 am

Buses depart for USAF Memorial Dedication  
(meet in lobby at 11:15 am) (2 buses)

1:00 – 2:00 pm

Dedication of USAF Memorial and Fly Over

2:00 – 3:00 pm

To hotel for lunch on own, then back on buses

3:00 – 5:00 pm

Tour of Arlington Cemetery by tram (can get on & off at sites)

5:30 pm

Buses return to hotel

5:30 – 10:00 pm

Hospitality Room Open

Dinner on your own

#### **Sunday – October 15**

9:00 am

Buses depart for USAF Memorial activities  
and C&CO Canal trip (handicap accessible)  
(lunch on own near canal) (2 buses)

12:00 – 5:00 pm

Hospitality Room Open

6:00 pm

No-host cocktails –

7:00 pm

Banquet –

#### **Monday – October 16**

Departure day



## 380<sup>th</sup> BOMB GROUP EVENT REGISTRATION FORM

**October 12-16, 2006**

**Holiday Inn Rosslyn at Key Bridge  
Arlington, VA**

Registration Fees:	Members	\$10.00 pp	x _____	\$ _____
	Spouses/Guests	\$10.00 pp	x _____	\$ _____

**Thursday** – Welcome Dinner at Hotel \$35.00 pp x      \$

Entrée Choice(s)

Roast Pork Tenderloin # \_\_\_\_\_ Chef's Crab Cakes # \_\_\_\_\_

**Friday** – Memorial Service at Andrews Air Force Base w/lunch and Afternoon visit to WWII Memorial and Air & Space Museum (transportation included)

\$34.00 pp      x      \$

**Saturday** – Dedication of Air Force Memorial in afternoon and  
Tour of Arlington National Cemetery – transportation included

\$25.00 pp      x      \$

**Sunday** – USAF Memorial Service/ Canal Boat Trip  
(transportation Included) \$12.00

Banquet \$34.00 pp x \$

Banquet	\$34.00 pp	x	\$
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Entrée Choice(s)

Prime Rib # \_\_\_\_\_ Filet of Flounder # \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL: \$

Member Name (for name tag)	Squadron/Hdqtrs
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Guest/Spouse (for name tag)

Other guests (as printed on name tag)

**Refunds:** No refunds will be made if cancellation occurs **after Friday, October 6th**

Please make checks payable to : Carnevale & Associates Inc.  
Mail form to: PO Box 1230, Sonoita AZ 85637

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**2006 REUNION - WASHINGTON, D.C.**  
**October 12-16, 2006**

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**HOTEL REGISTRATION FORM**

**Holiday Inn Rosslyn at Key Bridge -- Arlington, VA**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse or Guest \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Priority Club# \_\_\_\_\_

Rate: \$109 (single or double occupancy) + 10.25% room tax (Total \$120.17 per night)

Please note: Group rate is only available for the 4 nights of the reunion. Other nights will be at a higher rate.  
Please call for quotes.

Arrival Date \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date \_\_\_\_\_

Room type: \_\_\_\_\_ Single (one person, one bed)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Double (two persons, one bed)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Double/Double (two persons, two beds)

Special Needs: \_\_\_\_\_ Handicap facilities \_\_\_\_\_ Non-smoking \_\_\_\_\_ Smoking

Guarantee by credit card # \_\_\_\_\_ exp date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name on card \_\_\_\_\_

Please print

Credit card will be used for guarantee only. Your card will not be charged until arrival or unless you fail to cancel on time. If making hotel deposit by check, please make check payable to *Holiday Inn Rosslyn* and include tax (\$120.17).

Cancel policy for this event: 48 hours prior to arrival to avoid penalty  
Reservations made after **September 21st** are subject to availability and possible rate change.

Please mail or fax reservation form to: Carnevale & Associates, Inc.  
P. O. Box 1230  
Sonoita, AZ 85637 Phone: 800-659-8808  
Fax: 520-455-5866 E-mail: carne@dakotacom.net

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As full service travel agents, we are also able to assist you with your travel arrangements. A modest service fee will be charged for airline tickets.

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## 380TH PLAQUE DEDICATION - HILL AIR FORCE BASE MUSEUM, UTAH

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As discussed in the March issue of *THE FLYING CIRCUS*, the 380th Bomb Group Memorial Plaque will be the first of many to be installed in the 5th Air Force Memorial Garden being installed in front of the Memorial Chapel at the Hill Air Force Museum at Hill Air Force Base, Ogden, Utah, where we held our 2002 Reunion.

CWO4 James M. Chastain, Jr. (USAF Retired), Custodian and Guide of the Memorial Chapel and the 5th Air Force Memorial Garden, along with Col. Nathan Mazer (USAF Retired) of the Aerospace Heritage Foundation of Utah, Mr. Robert E. Lindquist, President of Lindquist Mortuaries, who made the plaque, and Mr. Scott Wirz, Director of the Museum, have developed the planning for the 5th Air Force Memorial. Mr. Chastain has installed the plaque in the garden as noted in the following pictures and decorated it for Memorial Day.

We want to thank them all for their great interest and help. We hope you all will agree that it is beautiful and, while looking a little lonely in its setting as the first arrival, will be great when the other 5th Air Force units join us!

### DEDICATION CEREMONY

The Dedication of the 380<sup>th</sup> Plaque at the developing 5<sup>th</sup> Air Force Memorial Garden in front of the Chapel at the Hill Air Force Base Museum, Hill Air Force Base, Ogden, Utah, is now finalized.

The Dedication is scheduled for **11:00 AM, Tuesday, August 15<sup>th</sup>**. We suggest we plan to have the group meet at the Museum at 10:00 AM. We plan to have a luncheon afterwards and will be through at about 2:00 PM. If you have any questions about the Dedication, please contact Ted Williams. A sign-up form for this event is included on the next page. Please be aware that those attending will be responsible for their own travel and lodging arrangements.

Two points should be called to your attention. A dedication date of September 1988 is already on the plaque. This is the Wright Patterson Memorial Garden date. Since our plaque is copied from the former because Ted Williams asked them to use that wording and since our dedication date was not yet set at the time it was poured, we decided to use that date, since the inscription otherwise is the same.

Originally we had wanted the plaque on an axis from the Chapel to the Museum. However, they wanted to align it with the sun dial itself, i.e., North-South, and we agreed. This latter would be more symbolic than the former request.

This plaque is somewhat larger than the Wright Field one, being 14" x 14" on a 19" x 19" granite slab. Wright Patterson's is 11" x 12" on a 15" x 15" slab.

Additional photos will be available on our website by mid-July at:

<http://fairway.ecn.purdue.edu/IIES/PLAIC/380/NEWS/News27/News27.html>



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## 380th PLAQUE DEDICATION - HILL AIR FORCE BASE MUSEUM

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### SIGN-UP FORM

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I'm interested in participating in the 380th Plaque Dedication Ceremony at Hill Air Force Base Museum, Utah, on August 15, 2006:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse and/or Additional Guests \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Squadron \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to Ted Williams:

By mail: 208 Chippewa St., W Lafayette IN 47906-2123

By fax: 765/494-2351

*Please be aware that those attending will be responsible for their own travel and lodging arrangements.*



This is the 5th  
AF Plaque.  
It reads  
LEST  
WE FORGET.



## 380TH PLAQUE DEDICATION - HILL AIR FORCE BASE MUSEUM, UTAH





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**380TH PLAQUE DEDICATION - HILL AIR FORCE BASE MUSEUM, UTAH**

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## REQUEST FROM AUSTRALIA

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**From:** PJTrewin [mailto:pjtrewin@optusnet.com.au]  
**Sent:** Saturday, June 17, 2006 12:39 AM  
**To:** Gotham, Barbara J.  
**Subject:** My Father's Service

Hello Barbara,

I came across your website when doing some family history searches for my father. I am proud to say that my dad, Sydney Trewin, was a RAAF pilot on B-24s in Australia during 1944, and was a member of FLTLT Parson's crew in 531st Squadron.

Dad, now almost 83, is currently in a nursing home in St Marys in western Sydney. His health is fading gradually, but his memory of his times in the RAAF are still very clear, I'm pleased to say. He will be delighted to know that I have found your website.

I would be keen to hear from any of your members from that era who may remember my Dad.

Sincerely,  
Pat Trewin

AUSTRALIA

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## B-24 LIBERATOR SQUADRONS OF AUSTRALIA

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The following Editor's Note is from the most current issue of the B-24 Liberator Squadrons of Australia Newsletter. A copy of the letter we sent to them in response regarding our Association follows on the next page.



### EDITOR'S NOTE

The B-24 Liberator Squadrons of Australia held a Committee Meeting at the Canberra RSL Club in Canberra on the 15<sup>th</sup> February 2006. At this meeting it was decided that because of our ageing membership and scarcity of material and photographs that only one more Newsletter would be issued. This issue will be issued free of charge. Also it was decided that all

remaining monies in our account, after all outstanding costs had been met, would be donated to the B-24 Liberator Restoration Group at Werribee.

As Editor I would like to thank the Committee for their support, those subscribers who have provided anecdotes and photographs which have made the Newsletter possible, my wife Anne for typing the

material and last but not least my son Rox who prepared and arranged the format of the Newsletter. All these services were provided at no cost to our organisation.

Finally I would like to say that I have enjoyed editing the Newsletter and I do hope that it provided our subscribers with an interesting and enjoyable quarterly.





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## **HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!**

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Enclosed with Paul Beilstein's Father's Day card was the following note from his grandson and his family. Paul and Barbara are sharing this note with the 380th because they thought we would be interested in the honor being paid to the 380th Bomb Group by a small community in the foothills of central California. In their words, "It is marvelous to find such respect and interest among a younger generation for World War II history." We agree!

**To one of our favorite  
Veterans on Father's Day.**

**On July 4, 2006  
there will be two flags raised in  
Burson, California.**

**One flag is being raised in your  
name and in the honor of your  
service to your country in the  
Army Air Corp during WWII.**

**The second flag being raised is in  
the name of the  
380th Bomb Group.**

**This is our way of honoring all the  
brave men that served in the 380th.  
You may think that your not a hero,  
but you can just leave the thinking  
to us, because...we know you are!**

**All our love,  
David. Kathy, Tyler & Jared**

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## THIS AND THAT

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### RESEARCH FUND CONTRIBUTOR

Mrs. Doris A. Campbell, in honor of her husband, John Campbell

### CORRECTION

Mrs. Pat Roth has the following correction to the 528th Squadron's photo entitled "Herky's Hangout" contained in Bill Shek's article from our March 2006 issue:

The picture incorrectly identifies Joe Roth as Col. Miller. The others in the picture are:

Left to right: Joe Roth, Calhoun (no first name), Jack Banks, Bill Shek, Louis Caine, and "Chick" (Joe couldn't remember his last name).

Thanks, Pat! If anyone can identify "Chick" in this photo, please let us know!

This photo was shown recently (February 2006) on eBay. It was only labeled "Bombardier." If anyone can identify him, please let us know!



Here's another picture of the 380th Plaque at the Hill Air Force Base Museum, Ogden, Utah. We hope you can join us for its dedication on **August 15th!** Details are given in an earlier article in this issue.





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## LAST FLIGHT OF THE "LADY JEANNE II"

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*As told to Lynn Rogers by her father,  
Lt. Col. Clifton R. Toepperwein  
(submitted by Bill Bever)*

At the end of December 1943 my crew was sent to Dobadura as part of a push to get the Japanese out of New Guinea. Our mission was to bomb targets of opportunity to confound the Japanese build up of extra planes in that area. We were to provide extra effort and air power.

The Liberator B-24 that we were assigned to was the *Lady Jeanne II* which had been Capt. Soderberg's plane. His crew, except for George Platt, had each completed his missions. George was assigned as navigator, in place of Chaussee, our usual navigator, to fly with our crew in the *Lady Jean* for this mission to complete his missions too. This was to be his last mission before heading home.

We were briefed early in the morning and then assigned to our planes shortly thereafter. We took off from Dobadura about 4:00 AM assigned to the position on the left wing of the lead plane. We were to go up and bomb the airfield at Madang-Alexishafen to make it inactive. The formation was mostly made up of newly put-together crews (except for our crew) to train them for formation flying. Our crew was a fill-in crew to make up the sixth plane in the formation.

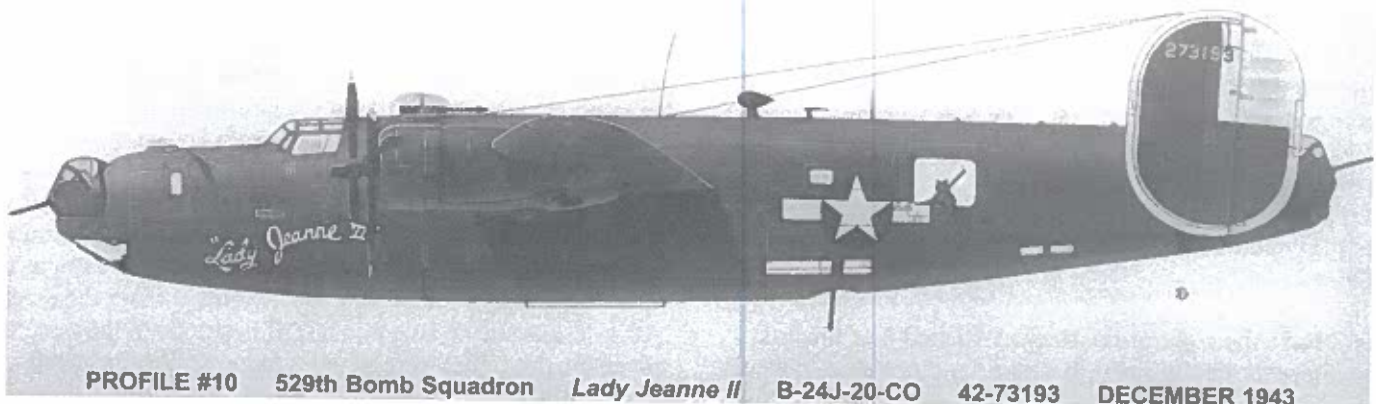
George Platt replaced the navigator on our crew. My co-pilot, Conway, was flying the plane on the left wing of the lead aircraft. I told Gordon, my bombardier, that Conway and I would be sure to keep his altitude and corrections if we could. He was making his own run and we were following his instructions.

As we flew over the Japanese air base at Madang-Alexishafen, we turned on the cameras and dropped our bombs. Simultaneously, the whole plane shuddered and the inboard right engine blew apart. The plane had been hit by flak. We didn't know all the damage right at that time, but

the right engine had been hit and exploded, controls were severed on the right side of the plane, the bubble at Conway's right blew away, a round had gone right up between Conway's back and the metal bulkhead and taken away part of Conway's seat, and there was a gaping two to three foot hole above and straight across from Platt in the right fuselage. I shouted to Conway who had been flying the plane that I had the controls now. He released his controls, grabbed his rosary and began to recite his Hail Marys! We had to shout over the noise of the wind and the engines as we battled to keep the plane flying, and hopefully return to base.

We had dropped our bombs as the formation dropped theirs. They started a right turn to head back to the base, but we flew straight ahead to assess our situation. In seconds we had to decide the best thing to do for our crew's survival. Was the plane capable of staying in the air? We knew if we turned toward the sea to crash land, the Japanese would probably capture us. If we turned left toward the jungle, maybe we could survive there and avoid Japanese capture. We lost contact with our group, which returned to base, but we had contact with a fighter group that congratulated us for blowing up the anti-aircraft gun that had been one of our targets. (Cameras later confirmed the hit.) The fighter group offered to escort us ahead for a short distance, but then they had to return to base. I think that they might have mentioned that there were airfields recently recaptured from the Japanese beyond the mountains where we could land if we could stay airborne long enough to reach them ... I decided to have the crew stay with the plane and find a place to land.

Our severely damaged plane would easily turn right toward the ocean. The extra power from the two functional port engines made us have to work hard even to keep the plane flying straight ahead, but we wanted to turn left over the jungle because we figured our survival chances were better there. I wanted to cut back the power on the outboard engines that I had less control over. If I did, though, I



PROFILE #10    529th Bomb Squadron    *Lady Jeanne II*    B-24J-20-CO    42-73193    DECEMBER 1943



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## LAST FLIGHT OF THE "LADY JEANNE II" (continued)

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probably wouldn't be able to regain lost airspeed and altitude if I needed it, and I was sure I would. So I lowered the left wing and tried to give it full left rudder. I needed my co-pilot's help to depress the rudder pedal. Conway had finished his Hail Marys by this time. Together we had the strength to push the sluggish rudder and turn the plane left toward the mountain.

I asked Platt, as navigator, if he knew of any field close by and back toward our base where we could land. When we got hit, we were flying at about 10,000 feet. Dropping the weapons and being hit increased our altitude. Platt, being the navigator, was more familiar with the terrain, mountain elevations and base locations than any other crew member. We weren't sure of the exact elevation of the mountains, but we thought that we were probably flying below the highest peaks. (Actually, we were higher than the pressure altitude indicated that we were). Our thought was to fly through a pass if we could find one. The fighter group that we were in contact with had also given us the idea that we might find a friendly base on the other side of the mountains.

Now we tried to find a base so we could land. I left it to my navigator to navigate. I depended on the navigator on any mission to get us back on the base. Thank goodness Platt had special knowledge of the area. I knew he was everyone's favorite navigator and gave us the best chance of finding a landing site.

The rest of the crew looked for airfields while Conway and I tried to keep the plane in the air. We had three engines at 70% power. The two engines on the left were working, but only one on the right wing was. To keep the plane headed straight ahead I had to lower the left wing slightly. I couldn't cut the power to the engines on the left to equalize the engine power from both wings, because the air speed would drop and the plane would go down faster. Any air speed that we lost, we wouldn't be able to regain. Conway and I had our hands full keeping the plane on course and keeping our altitude.

We were desperately hoping there was a base to land. We tried to radio a base, but couldn't raise one. We didn't know the frequency. We finally happened upon an airfield. We had to circle in. With the speed we were flying there was only one chance to land. There was construction equipment all over the runway. The tower tried to signal the grader operators to clear the runway, but the grader stayed on the runway anyway. The trucks looked like our equipment so I was mostly sure that it was our airfield, but we still weren't 100% sure that it was not held by the Japanese.

The area to the right of the runway looked like the next best alternate landing site. It was a field covered in three-

foot-high kunai grass. I told the gunners that I'd decided to land in the grass. I needed them to get to the back of the plane so their weight would help keep the nose up. We started letting down at about 170 mph. I lowered the landing gear and began to cut power to get our speed down and to prevent a fire upon crashing. We landed at the end of the runway, crossed it and went into the open field. We hit a drainage ditch, which was hidden by the grass. That put the nose into the ground. The men who had been thrown forward got back again. As we hurtled ahead, we hit a second ditch and the plane nosed in again. Then the tail went up into the air and the nose bent around to the left.

My rudder pedals were pushed up under my seat with my feet on them. The instrument console, usually a few feet away within arm's reach, was now inches from my chest. I was pinned in. I couldn't move forward and couldn't move my legs to get out. I thought that the plane might catch fire. The windshield had flopped onto Conway's head and cut him. The ground equipment personnel who originally came to the plane, typically, were more interested in getting souvenirs from the plane than getting anyone out since they were not familiar with aircraft. The MPs there were interested in collecting up our 45s. (They had rifles, but wanted to keep our side arms if they could.) Their priority was to collect up the crew's 45s. I told them that I was going to keep mine until I was out of the plane. If it caught fire, I wasn't going to burn alive.

The gunners got out. Crew members who were injured were Platt, Kopel, Conway, Gordon, Bieber and me. Gordon, though scratched up and bruised, and Bieber, who had his eyes, chest and legs hurt in the crash, also got out. Gordon shouted to the ground crew (sightseers and souvenir seekers) to get their cigarettes out. He didn't want any extra chances for the plane to explode. He helped get the ground crew organized to get the rest of us out of the plane. We were still afraid then that it would explode or catch fire.

Platt reached into my medical kit and got out morphine. He took some for the pain in his legs that had been crushed by the gun turret that had broken off in the landing. He shared the rest with me and Conway. Our rescuers took Kopel and Platt out of the plane and then helped Conway. Kopel and Platt being more severely injured were taken to the hospital with others who had been shot up in a B-25 that had just crashed on the runway. That's when I lost contact with Platt. He was on Soderberg's crew so I wasn't notified of his condition. Kopel was evacuated to Port Moresby the next day. Conway was taken to get stitches for his head wound. He later told me that a dentist sewed his wound together. He then came back to the plane to see about me. They were still trying to get me extracted from the nose. After about two to two and a half hours from the time the plane crashed, they finally got a piece of construction equipment and pulled the nose away from me.

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## LAST FLIGHT OF THE "LADY JEANNE II" (continued)

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Medics at the crash tended to my cut calf that had been sliced between my seat and the rudder pedal. The pressure between the console and the seat kept me from bleeding too much, though. They bound my calf tightly with bandages to hold the cut pieces together. I couldn't put my foot down and had to walk on the ball of my foot.

MP's then took my 45. A corporal assured me that my crew and I could get our weapons back at MP headquarters when we left Gusap. They collected everyone's 45s...those of the B-25 crew too. Since Platt was the most injured of our men, I was led to believe he was one of those evacuated with the B-25 crew the next day.

That's about the time Conway arrived back, and we shared some beers. It happened this way. People checking the airplane found two beers which had been hidden some place in the nose compartment with the ground crew equipment. The ground crew back at the base in Australia may have sent the beer up with us expecting to enjoy some cold brews when we got back. Beer was forbidden in New Guinea. The man wanted to know how to dispose of it. I took one and handed the other to Conway, and we disposed of the beer.

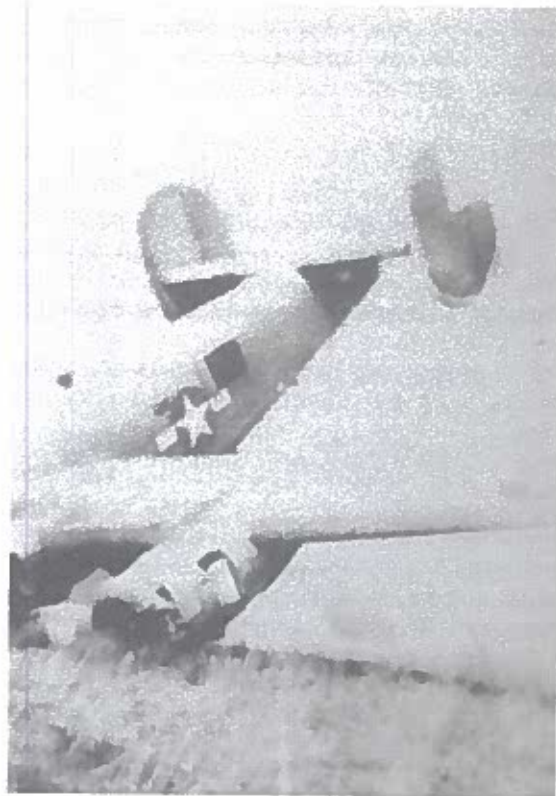
Conway and I were hungry. It was about 1:00 PM now and we hadn't eaten since morning. One of the MPs drove Conway and me up to the mess tent. A mess sergeant coming out of the tent told us the mess tent was closed until 6:00 that evening. Then he got in his jeep and left us standing there. Our MP ride had left too. Conway and I hobbled back a half mile toward the hospital tents. The morphine and beer we'd taken earlier did their job. His head and my leg didn't even ache.

That afternoon we listened to the short bursts of gunfire exchanged between our troops and the Japanese some of whom were still hanging around firing at targets of opportunity. That night all hell broke loose. Guns were firing all over the place. A corporal who was our protection from the enemy came into our tent, flashlight shaking in his hand, stuttering, "I...I...I...I'll protect you." We thought the Japanese were trying to recapture the base, but were told, after 15 minutes, that seemed like at least an hour, that it was only our fellows celebrating New Year's. The next morning we heard that three fellows had been killed by falling ammunition.

I've thought about how I felt as all this was happening. I was too busy trying to figure out what was best for my plane and crew and taking actions to keep flying to be aware of feeling anything. We approached the targets. Just as we dropped our bombs, the engine on the right wing exploded and controls on the right side of the plane were severed. We started to lose altitude and dropped out of formation. We had just seconds then to begin making decisions and taking actions to keep our plane in the air, turn it, fly it and get across the mountains. We didn't waste any time finding a safe place to land at the Gusap strip. Since there were men and trucks all over the runway, I opted to land in the field. Without brakes, flaps or the use of the nose wheel, we brought our plane down for a landing even though we were traveling at 140-180 miles per hour. Then, once we were on the ground, we had to get people out of the plane and worry about whether it was going to explode or not.

I was too busy doing what had to be done to think much about how I was feeling at the time. I relied on my men to do their jobs, and they did. I was sort of a fatalist. If I was going to die, it would happen. If it was fate for me to live, I would. I do know that facing the flak guns on the next mission that I flew was one of the hardest things I ever did in my life. I'm grateful the Lord was flying with me.

*Lt. Colonial Clifton R. Toepperwein was assigned to the 5<sup>th</sup> AAF, 380th Bomb Group, 529th Squadron, when this aircraft accident took place.*



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## DREAM TIME - A WAR STORY

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by Roger W. Caputo  
Installment #1

This is a story of one person's experience in World War II and the title grows out of the time served on the Continent of Australia (The term "Dream Time" is borrowed from the Australian Aborigine use of the term to describe the distant past of mankind.). The writing was done because of the urgings of one family member and was completed in 1995. No claim is made that the story is one of a kind or especially unique, no more than each of us is some different from the other. Reproduced here by permission of the author.

Because of the length of the manuscript, we will Roger's story in various installments, in succeeding issues of THE FLYING CIRCUS Quarterly, as page space permits.

Roger Caputo was an NCO who was assigned to Group Headquarters, Administrative Section, in Intelligence.

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"Daddy, what did 'ya do in the War?" The answer, "Not very much!"

The question and answer have been repeated over and over again, generation after generation, because it seems all humankind can do or knows how to do is wage war. While the question never seems to change, the answer does because some contributed a lot in their respective wars including giving their all, their life! For me old soldiers are a special breed by virtue of their experiences. Most, if not all, are just ordinary people thrown into special circumstances not of their own making and as a result became history.

My war was World War II, the biggest and bloodiest to date and was literally waged around the world, which made it unique, but not any more acceptable.

World War I was the first really big war fought overseas by Americans and for those who traveled to Europe and survived to return, their eyes were opened concerning other lands and other cultures. This was really the first large-scale comparative experience that Americans had obtained since we were a people isolated from the rest of the world by two big oceans. The social concern of that time was expressed as, "How ya gonna keep 'em down on the farm after they've see Patee?" Our WWII experience generated no similar question largely because most of the world we had seen didn't rank with the culture of Paris: the deserts of North Africa; the jungles of Southeast Asia; India; China; the Arctic; and the Islands of the Pacific, most of which didn't come close to the idyllic Bali as portrayed in the musical, *South Pacific*!

What we did do is travel and lots of it, involving numbers of people and distances as never before in history. Most of us had not been out of our own home State and some not even out of their home towns and all because of the depression of the 1930s kept us home. There was no money except for subsistence! In addition, it was not easy to travel; no interstate highway system; the airlines were just getting started and were not particularly fast (compared to modern jets); there was one transcontinental highway, route 66 of musical fame; but there were railroads, the thread that connected America together and made it possible to move people and things around to support the War effort.

My 9 months and 17 days of Continental service plus 2 years, 3 months, and 18 days of Foreign service involved traveling a total of 48,230 miles, by various methods: car, rail, ship, truck, bomber, and by air. My travels took me from Bethalto, Illinois, to Scott Field, Illinois (for assignment), Mineral Wells, Texas (for basic), Salt Lake City for school, to El Paso for assignment, Denver for unit training, and from there to San Francisco to ship out to Sydney, Australia, to the war zone. From Sydney I traveled to Fenton by way of Darwin; while serving with the 380th, I traveled to Nadzab, New Guinea, Brisbane, and Adelaide. Towards the end of the war, we changed bases from Fenton to Mindoro in the Philippines. I returned home by air from Leyte to San Francisco, and then took the train from San Francisco by way of Chicago. The total miles traveled is almost equal to around the world twice! My actual exposure to combat could be measured in minutes in to bombing raids by the Japanese. The greater hazard was being killed by friendly transportation people moving me around the world twice!

I was one of many small town boys jerked up by his roots and taken to foreign lands by sea and air and experienced sensations, dimensions, and cultures never dreamed possible. It was a maturing experience coupled with over 36 months of sheer boredom, anxiety, and time for reflection. When those who were fortunate enough, did return, we were no longer



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## *DREAM TIME (continued)*

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kids, but fully adult and could not and would not be put off. Don't ever underestimate a veteran's confidence or determination; it could be surprising! We knew what we wanted and most of us got it, thanks to favorable domestic circumstances which may never exist again.

Many of us took advantage of the GI Bill and returned to school. The college professors were accustomed to working with kids and then my generation, well matured, was different to work with. A professor would make a statement ... we'd say how so; show us; prove it; they never worked harder or produced so much good. No effort was wasted and we demanded full summer programs and got them. More than once I've seen a professor shake his head in wonderment at the new breed of students. We all had a large sense of accomplishment!

In the school year of 1941/42, I was back to my studies at a nearby private liberal arts college, paying my way through by working the midnight shift. It was almost an impossible battle. There was never enough time and energy and I was getting very weary having had my nose to the grindstone for over a year. That summer I turned 21 and we were at war and all the young men 21 or better were registered for the draft. As a matter of fact, the spring PE class had been conducted by a regular Army Sergeant and we learned to do close order drill using broomsticks for rifles. We wore coveralls for uniforms. The handwriting was on the wall and it appeared likely the draft would catch up with me either before the fall semester started, or I would be jerked out of school during the fall term. These possibilities coupled with the problem of my gruelling work-school schedule prompted me to decide in favor of volunteering on the chance that I might get an assignment of choice, like the Army Airforce. I had never lost my love of flying although I knew the military would never let me fly because of my corrected vision ... there would be plenty of ground assignments and I would be around airplanes.

The recruiting Sergeant assured me that, if I volunteered, the Military would do everything in its power to assign me as I requested. I accepted his assurances and signed on and was given the serial number 16073115. All who volunteered carried a serial number which began with the number one and thus the number "one" always labeled me as a patriot having volunteered. Whether the volunteer status ever worked in my favor, I never knew, but I was proud of it and from time to time some officer, reviewing my file, would remark, "I see, Sergeant, that you volunteered." I always stood taller with that recognition.

Within a week or so of signing on, I was sent a notice of a train departure to Peoria where I was to stand a physical examination and be sworn in. The Center was jammed with young men undergoing processing. In hindsight, it is difficult to imagine a young man having anxieties about passing the physical exam. I was never a strong robust specimen of manhood; thinned boned; bad vision; skinny; low upper body strength; but I had good strong legs having been a 1/4 and 1/2 miler in high school track. I was basically healthy. The thought of failing the physical and having to go home, and all during the war years explain I was 4-F, was more than I could bear. So when I passed the physical exam, I was very much relieved!

The last thing we did was take the oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States and to defend it against all enemies. The oath was taken in a large group with an upraised right hand and repeating the words after the Officer conducting the ceremony. I was now a soldier and belonged to Uncle Sam!

We boarded another train as a group that took us to Scott Army Airforce Base where we would get our famous first GI haircut (translated scalping), an issue of clothing, and an assignment to some point for basic training. The date was August 5, 1942, and it was hot, so the uniform issued was the lightweight tan khaki.

Wonder of wonders the Scott Army Airforce Base was the same one I had visited as a young Boy Scout and about 30 miles from home. I cannot remember how I got home for the weekend pass nor how I got back to the Base, but I did and there are a couple of photos taken with my mother and father; the new soldier in his new uniform. It would be the last visit home until February 1943, or about 6 months later, and then I had to travel 1700 miles round trip by rail for a couple of days from Denver.

When the assignment was posted on the bulletin board for Roger W. Caputo to go to Camp Wolters, Texas (very near Mineral Wells, a wide spot in the road about 20 miles west of Fort Worth), my heart sank ... it was an Army Infantry Basic training post. I had been lied to; I wasn't going to the Army Airforce!

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## DREAM TIME (continued)

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Nothing to do, but make the best of it and hope later for another chance. I lucked out, the experience at Camp Wolters was a good one. It was a well-established permanent base; good barracks; good PX and movie house; and best of all staffed by regular Army training Sergeants all 10 to 20 years older than the recruits. They projected a fatherly and caring image, but no coddling. You had to measure up, but there was never the feeling that the Sergeants had to prove how tough they were. All the emphasis was on how tough they were going to make us and they did. I never got to town once in the six weeks I was there. Why go, it was overrun with soldiers and just like the base, only with more loose rules. We could buy all the beer on base that one could drink; besides, by evening and on the weekends we were dead tired from training in the hot Texas sun. The terrain in and around the base was dusty, hard, and full of stones; no grass. There were no cigarette butts lying around and most of us smoked. A soldier learned to snuff out the butt; tear it apart dumping the ash and unburned tobacco on the ground; grind it into the ground with the sole of his boot; and wadding the remaining white paper into a little bitsy wad and stuff in his pocket. Look closely, and if you observe some old guy in his 70s or 80s performing the ritual of disposal, you'll instantly know where he got his training!

The interior of the barracks was just like those portrayed in the movie, "No Time for Sergeants," starring Andy Griffith. It's hilarious and a must see for the younger generation as it will provide insights to the military life as nothing else can!

Infantry Basic Training lasted only 6 weeks. We were hardly the same people when finished as compared to that when we began. We were tanned; in prime physical condition; we were confident; and ready for most anything, we thought. We were lonesome for home and longed for the love that could only be found there! We knew we were destined to travel by ship as we had practiced climbing down a rope net from a high platform into a small boat. The platform simulated the deck of a troop transport and the rope net dangling along the side of the ship's steel hull. Somebody was trying to get us ready for something!

With the training completed we lingered a few more days awaiting the posting of our next assignment. There were about 1,000 men in the training battalion and we would check the bulletin board almost hourly to see if our name was posted. It was a chore to find one name among one thousand and there was always a crowd, pushing and shoving to get close enough to see. When my name was finally posted, I found that I was to be sent to Salt Lake City to the Army Airforce training school, but for what I didn't know. The Army Airforce needed men to build up its strength and the procedure was to place an order with the Army Training Command for the number of bodies. Never mind any details of qualification or any other criteria, just send them the number requested. When the recruits were inducted into the military, each one was required to take a written intelligence test and the score attained was put into the recruit's permanent record. I scored something like 135 with the genius level beginning somewhere around 150. I can only suppose that the combination of the IQ scores and the long-standing request for the Airforce resulted in my being assigned as requested. The down side could have been some training sergeant's assessment that I'd never make it as an infantryman because of my 20/400 vision and a spindly body, "so let's give him to the Airforce." Whatever the logic behind the assignment, I won!

*More to come in future issues! Stay tuned!*



Back from the Twenty Mile Hike  
Camp Wolters



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**380TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION**  
**2006 MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM**

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Date \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Squadron \_\_\_\_\_ 380th Duty \_\_\_\_\_

Please check if you are a \* Regular Member \_\_\_\_\_ or an \*\* Associate Member \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Associates:** 380th Veteran's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Sqdn: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

*\* Regular member* means an original member of the 380th Bomb Group.

*\*\* Associate member* means a family member (or other affiliation) of an original member. If you are an Associate, please give the name of the original member, your relationship to that person, and his squadron number.

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*Membership runs from Reunion to Reunion.*

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## TAPS

*Day is done, gone the sun, from the lake from the hill  
from the sky. All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.*

*Thanks and praise for our days 'neath the sun, 'neath  
the stars, 'neath the sky. As we go, this we know  
God is nigh.*

## LEST WE FORGET



**528th, Osburn, Mack A.,** Co-Pilot, Hill Crew (25),  
DOD April 8, 2006, Murfreesboro, Tennessee, reported by  
Tilford Brunner (from conversation with his widow, Wilma  
Osburn)

**529th, Isaacson, Neal R.,** Asst Flight Engr/Gunner, Fry  
Crew (28), DOD February 8, 1994, La Grande, Oregon,  
reported by his daughter, Penelope L. Huntsinger (widow,  
J. Anne)

**529th, Morabito, Vincent J.,** Acft Cmdr, Morabito  
Crew (41), DOD April 15, 2006, Wildwood, Florida (burial  
in Buffalo, New York), reported by Will Moran (widow,  
Julie)



Please send TAPS information to:  
Theodore J. Williams, 208 Chippewa St.,  
West Lafayette IN 47906-2123  
Phone: 765/494-7434, 765/463-7828

**529th & 531st, Nielson, Albert O.,** Asst Radio Opr/  
Gunner, Fleming Crew (16) (in 529th), Gunner, Fleming  
Crew (29), and Hahn Crew (31) (in 531st); DOD August  
31, 1994, Staten Island, New York, reported by his  
daughter, Arlene Giudice

**529th & 531st, Nielson, Hilda K.,** Widow of Albert O.  
Nielson, DOD March 9, 2005, Staten Island, New York,  
reported by her daughter, Arlene Giudice

**530th, Bratton, Andrew J., Jr. ("Jack"),** Acft Cmdr,  
Bratton Crew (21), Squadron Commander, DOD May 9,  
2006, San Antonio, Texas, reported by James Elam (widow,  
Lucille)

**530th, Kascak, Frank J.,** Radio Opr/Gunner, Quinn Crew  
(57), DOD April 13, 2006, Denver, Colorado, reported by  
his niece, Janice Knafelc

**530th, Kascak, Opal Ruby ("Pat"),** Wife of Frank J.  
Kascak, DOD March 11, 2000, Denver, Colorado, reported  
by her niece, Janice Knafelc

**530th, Martinez, Conrado H.,** Asst Radio Opr/Gunner,  
Ross Crew (57), Connery Crew (25), Gardner Crew (78),  
DOD March 4, 2006, reported by his son, Andrew Martinez  
(widow, Juanita)

**531st, Hock, Mary A.,** Widow of Martin L. Hock, DOD  
January 25, 2006, West Sacramento, California, reported by  
her daughter, Marcia Bevins

**531st, Wenzel, Robert G.,** Ground Crew, Electrical  
Specialist, DOD June 18, 1981, Evanston, Illinois, reported  
by his daughter, Ann Beilke (widow, Ruth)

**531st, Wilson, Joel R.,** Acft Cmdr, Wilson Crew (102),  
DOD May 8, 2006, Delhi, Louisiana, reported by Joe  
Burdick (widow, Helen)

