



THE 380TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION 5th AF - RAAF

AFFECTIONATELY KNOWN AS

The Flying Circus



NEWSLETTER #40

Fall 2009



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Gary L. Horton

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Theodore J. Williams

2009 REUNION COORDINATOR

Barb Gotham

LOCATION: Savannah, Georgia

DATES: October 14-18, 2009

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Barbara J. Gotham

Phone: 765/463-5390

Email: bjgotham@gmail.com

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Air Force ROTC

George C. Marshall Foundation

Air Force Memorial Foundation

Next issue: Winter 2009/10 (to
be mailed in December)

380th Bomb Group Association, 130 Colony Road, West Lafayette, IN 47906-1209 USA

<http://380th.org/>

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2009 REUNION INFORMATION

The 2009 Reunion will be held in Pooler/Savannah, Georgia, October 14-18, 2009 at the Holiday Inn-Pooler

We are gearing up for the 380th Reunion in Savannah October 14-18. If you haven't registered yet, please do so immediately.

The Holiday Inn Pooler has graciously extended the deadline for our block of rooms to October 4th. After that, they will honor our rate as long as they still have rooms available.

Head counts and final payments for our events are due on October 9th - therefore, **October 9th is the deadline** for sending in your registration form.

Registration forms were mailed to all 380th members and were also included in the Summer FLYING CIRCUS newsletter.

You can download the agenda and forms from our website at
<http://380th.org/REUNION/2009Reunion/Reunion.htm>

Please contact Barb Gotham at 765/463-5390 (home) (between now and October 9) or 765/412-5370 (cell), or by email at bjgotham@gmail.com for any questions regarding registration, the agenda, etc.

PHOTOS: If you are attending the reunion and take photographs, please send copies (either prints or electronic/computer files) to Barb Gotham by Thanksgiving (November 26) so that they can be included in the Winter newsletter.

Mon, Sep 21, 2009 at 8:04 PM
Re: 2009 380th Reunion in Savannah

Dear Barb,

Thanks for the e-mail regarding October's reunion. Bob and I were going for sure this year until I found out I will be having surgery that very week or the week before. We are truly disappointed. Savannah was where I first joined my Mom and Dad at the reunion, so it holds a very special place in my heart. I truly hope you and all of the 380th members have a wonderful time.

Sincerely, Anne Dee Watson

Mon, Sep 21, 2009 at 4:45 PM
Re: 2009 380th Reunion in Savannah

Hi Barb,

Sure wish we could go, but I think it would be too difficult. It would be just too sad. Dad always looked forward to these reunions and it was such a special time for our family. Mom is doing OK, just trying to adjust, but she is very tough. My son is now a 1LT in the Army and is with the 101st Airborne div at Ft Campbell, and is in an infantry unit. He will be deployed to Afghanistan in April. He also completed Ranger school this summer. His grandpa would have been soooooo proud of him. I enjoy getting the emails and maybe next year my brother and I will try to come. We talked about it this year, but it is just too soon for us. Take care.

Regards, Debbie Schoenemann Campbell

380th GEAR

PATCHES (Mark on line # requested)

Squadron/Group patches: \$10.00 ea.

Group: _____ 528th: _____ 529th: _____ 530th: _____ 531st: _____

Wings patches: \$3.00 ea.

Pilot: _____ Navigator: _____ Bombardier: _____ Gunner: _____

Air Crew Member: _____ RAAF: _____

Shoulder patches: \$4.00 ea.

5th Air Force: _____ USAAF: _____

JACKETS: Blue nylon: \$25.00 ea.

(Mark on line # requested) Small _____ Medium: _____ Large: _____ XL: _____ 2XL: _____

CAPS: \$8.00 ea. One size: _____

VISORS: \$15.00 ea.

Pink with blue lettering _____ White with blue lettering _____

REUNION PATCHES: \$3.00 ea.

Savannah/2009: _____ Tucson/2008: _____ Dayton/2007: _____ Washington/2006: _____

Older: Year _____ Place: _____

See our webpage at <http://380th.org/Gear.html> for color photos of each item.

Barbara Gotham
130 Colony Road
W Lafayette IN 47906-1209

Checks payable to: 380th Bomb Group Association (no credit cards)

FEATURED CREWS



TRAFTON CREW (108) 531st

from: Bill Gould
date: Mon, Aug 17, 2009 at 5:34 PM

Found a pic of my uncle w/crew so ended up on your web site & found info on him & the rest of the 380th. My uncle was Sgt Robert J Benson of Trafton's Crew #108 of the 531st.

Bill Gould
Stuart, Fl
psbg@bellsouth.net

Bottom row (L-R):

- Lt. John Branney (Bombardier)
- Lt. John Garland (Navigator)
- F.O. Guenther Kuehnel (Co-Pilot)
- Lt. Sherman Trafton

Back row (L-R):

- Sgt. Edward Bogan (Tail Gunner)
- Sgt. Robert Benson (Armorer & Turret Gunner)
- Sgt. Robert Barone (Nose Gunner)
- Sgt. William Kral (Asst Engr. & Gunner)
- Sgt. John Ronk (Radioman & Gunner)
- Sgt. John Matthews (Engr. & Gunner)

SINNOTT CREW 529th

from: Al Clark <woodcarver@roadrunner.com>
Sat, Aug 8, 2009 at 2:45 PM
subject: Sinnot Crew

This is a picture I have of my father and the crew of the "Alice J"

.....Alan Clark, son of Byron W. Clark engineer on Sinnot's crew

Standing (L-R):

- Edward J. Sinnot---"Ed" (Pilot)
- Charles E. Carples---"Chuck" (Co-Pilot)
- Arthur S. Wiener---"Art" (Navigator)
- Charles W. Donohoo---"Charlie" (Bombardier)

Kneeling (L-R):

- Byron W. Clark (Engineer)
- Albert C Morse---"Al" (Waist Gunner)
- William M. Negro---"Bill" (Nose Gunner)
- Ambrose R. Hunt---"Ross" (Radio Operator)
- Walter S. McElhannon---"Mac" (Tail Gunner)
- Jack H. Knapp---"Jack" (Sperry-ball Gunner)



“A Godforsaken Spot”

from: Arnhem Contracting (NT) Pty Ltd <povaroo@bigpond.com>
date: Wed, Aug 12, 2009 at 11:28 PM

G'Day,

I'm in the process of writing a book on the WW2 involvement of 2 Northern Territory of Australia airstrips, namely RAAF Fenton and RAAF Long.

I am aware that the 380th was the main operator of the bases and I was hoping to gather some information from you guys regarding these strips.

I'm looking for personal diaries/photos/publications etc. of the life and operations out of Fenton and Long; any help and or leads would be greatly appreciated.

Many Thanks,
Regards,

Phillip Hoare, Managing Director
Arnhem Contracting (NT) Pty Ltd
ABN: 20 136 985 969
ACN: 136 958 969
PH: 0413727133
povaroo@bigpond.com

This email was forwarded to our members with emails, and to date, Phillip has received several emails back in response to his August request. If you would like to share your experiences with him, please feel free to contact him (see bottom of next page).

Part of the Preface to Phillip's book follows here.

“A Godforsaken Spot” by Phillip Hoare

Preface

I headed out one Saturday morning to a small private airstrip just south of Darwin, to those of you whom served in the NT, half-way between Straus and Sattler Fighter Strips. Upon arrival, I pulled out the small Cessna 150, preflighted it and taxied out for take-off. I had a rough idea of where to find Fenton, to the extent of finding Adelaide River and heading directly south, overflying the flat top mountain range approximately 10 nm to the south of the township.

Here I am at 1500 ft doing 85 kts over the ground trying to find a 6000 ft runway. You would think that it would stick out like a pimple on a pumpkin, but to no avail. I eventually saw a very distinguishable twin hill, with two peaks about 1/4 mile apart. I blasted straight towards the hill thinking it may be close by and then bam!, there she was, 6000 ft by 100 ft wide, sealed runway, looking as good as the day she was built. I joined upwind on the western side of the strip and did a few low level passes to check the condition of the runway. “Perfect,” I said to myself, except for the piles of manure scattering the strip, so I reefed the plane round for a short final, dropped 20 degrees of flap for the approach followed by 40 for the landing, flared, stall warning, and bang! I locked the brakes on the loose gravel and pulled her up to a walking speed in about 25 m. I taxied under power to the old tower site, pulled off the runway into the remains I believe of the emergency vehicles park and pulled the mixture.

I sat around for a few minutes, drank some water, strapped on my 45 and then went for a bit of a wander. I was hoping to find the old tower but I didn't fancy walking through waist-high grass in snake and wild pig ridden country on my own, so after about 30 minutes, I returned to the aircraft and checked the fuel. Hmmmmm, perhaps I don't have enough, 25 lph and I've got 35 l on board. I need 45 fixed reserves to remain legal and I'll punch back probably at 95 kts due to tailwind. “Hmmmmm, let's just go,” I told myself, so I jumped in, started her up and taxied out to join the imaginary centre line once followed by aircraft whose engines weighed more than my whole plane. Full brake, full forward deflection, 10 degree of flap then release, slowly I picked up speed. 30 kts, 40 kts, 50 kts, rotate, ground effect, flaps up, barely hitting 65 knots and then reefing her up of the pillow, through 500 ft as the speed washed off. I pictured myself at the controls of a B-24, with all 4 twin wasps singing in harmony.

I turned right and levelled out at about 650 ft and did a few circles around what I now know to be Fenton camp. I leaned the engine out to conserve fuel and headed direct to MKT strip. I picked up the GPS and hit the DCT button, only

“A Godforsaken Spot” (continued)

for it to flash low battery and then quit on me. So I picked up the chart, measured 80 nm and put some of those old, nearly-forgotten dead reckoning skills to the test. As I watched the fuel gauge hit empty on the right wing, I looked at my watch and said a quick prayer, “please make this 11 minutes to run go quickly.” Sure enough at 5 miles final I called traffic inbound and landed. I’d made it and I survived. After packing away the aircraft and stopping at the bottle shop to grab some beers, I pulled over on what remains of Sattler Strip and thought to myself: “Imagine how the boys of the 380th felt. Flying with no GPS, probably very little radio comms, the threat of getting shot down and aircraft with uncertain engines and equipment. Wow... and think, I thought I had it tough!”

That night I sat at home listening to the rubbish on TV these days and decided that it was time to escape all of that and get out and do something worthwhile with my time. It was at that moment that I decided that there was a story to tell, one that probably hasn't been revealed, one that needs to be written so that the future generation can see what their forefathers endured, for whatever price, at that God forsaken place. So that draws me here to you, the remaining brothers and sisters that keep alive the rich history of the men of the 380th BG.

Wed, Sep 16, 2009 at 12:21 AM

I am writing a book, which I hope will portray the part of your lives that you spent on my soil, defending my country and my freedom. I want this not only to portray the 380th, but the 82 Wing RAAF and the support units as well. A timeline from conception to disposal of the Airfield and surrounding assets. Something that people can read and appreciate the hardships and the joys that you all experienced.

Just my two cents worth; I hope I didn't bore you and I look forward to hearing from you in the future.

I am looking for any info whatsoever in the form of memoirs, anecdotes, unit histories, photographs and anything else relevant. At this stage I am aware of the following unit present in the Fenton area at the time:

Fenton: 380th BG (528th and 530th)
 404th Quartermaster
 1/310th, 309th, 319th Radar
 895th Chemical Company
 82 Wing Raaf
 21st and 23rd Squadron RAAF
 808th Engineering Construction

Long: 380th BG (529th and 531st)
 24th Squadron RAAF

Brocks Ck: No 1 BIPOD
 77SQ BIPOD

Burrells Ck/Green Ant Ck/88 Mile:
 No 5 Supply Depot Chemical Warfare Unit

I'm also looking at organising a 7-10 day trip next year combining a road tour vehicle and aircraft from Darwin through the bases and locations of the 380th. Some of your members may be interested; there is a lot of interest from the Aussie contingent already.

Many Thanks and God Bless

Phillip Hoare
povaroo@bigpond.com
telephone 61 0413 727 13
PO BOX 36217, Winnellie, NT, 0821 Australia

MAIL CALL

from: Glenn Horton <glennngwen@msn.com>
to: Barb Gotham <bjgotham@gmail.com>
date: Sat, Aug 22, 2009 at 12:58 PM
subject: B-24D Kathy

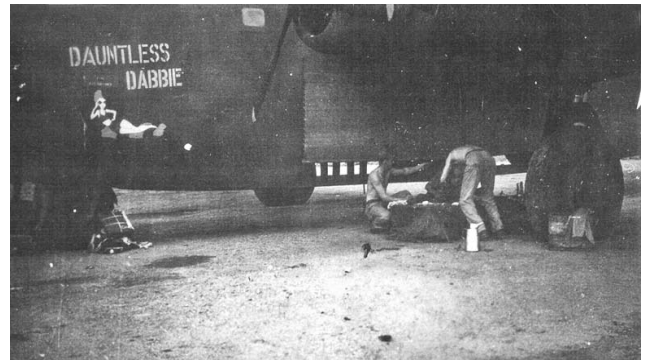
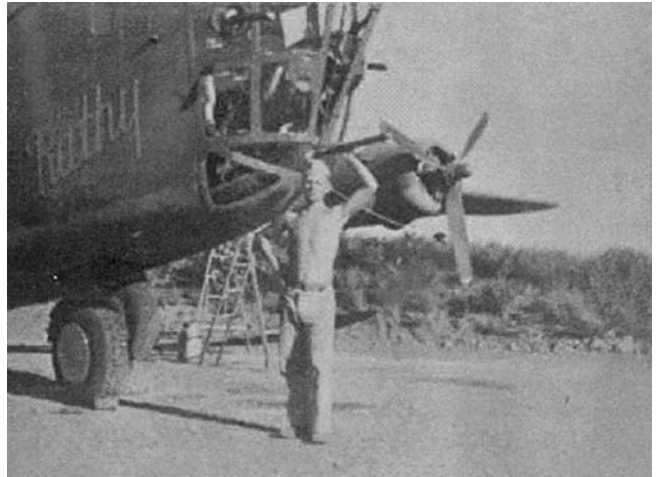
Barb:

The last newsletter had an amazing photo in it of a 531st B-24D named Kathy sent in by an Aussie. Its serial number is 42-40517 and was lost in a mid-air collision between Ben Parker-531st and Phil Doornbos of the 530th. Doornbos's plane, Dauntless Dabby, 42-40528, had been shot up by flak over Rabaul 15 June 43 when, on the return flight, Parker wanted to take a closer look at the damage. Badly misjudging his position, he collided with Doornbos and then plummeted into the sea, all killed. Doornbos and Harold Mulholland, his CP, were able to effect a reasonable ditching. Two of his crew died.

I've never seen a picture of Kathy before, sure wish that I had been able to put it into the book.

As for the identity of the man standing there, I would assume that it is probably one of Parker's crew members or a ground crew.

Glenn



from: Ken <khayes60@comcast.net>
to: bjgotham@gmail.com
date: Thu, Aug 6, 2009 at 7:19 PM

Kenneth Hayes
9703 Salzburg Court, Humble TX 77338
Email=khayes60@comcast.net

To date, we have found no photos of MISS ELISE - if anyone has any, I'd appreciate a copy also for the 380th aircraft history.
Barb Gotham

I am trying to locate any photo of the nose art for the B-24M with the name "Miss Elise." If you can point me in a specific direction or help me to locate someone that might know of the artwork, I would greatly appreciate it.
Thanks- Ken

Wed, Sep 2, 2009 at 6:55 PM

Thomas R. Duflo
5564 Highland Ave., Lowville NY 13367
Email=tduflo@twcny.rr.com

Wondering if you could help with some information? I am looking for information on the 86th Station Hospital, which was attached to the 380th in Australia. Have been searching Google and other than the 380th connection can find no other information. Thank you for your time. TOM

MAIL CALL

from: Doug Tilley <dtalley5@bigpond.com>
to: Barbara Gotham <bjgotham@gmail.com>
date: Tue, Aug 18, 2009 at 7:10 PM
subject: from NEWSLETTER #37

Barb
Have since learnt they are Flaming Furies (Latrines), contents were doused in fuel and burnt every couple of days,
<http://380th.org/NEWS/News37/MysteryDrums>

Find attached a photo of a single Latrine complete with a lid that I found at the site of the huge US hospital that was here at Adelaide River. I have walked the whole area and GPS marked every old foundation numbering 154, and I think there are more yet; I also have a Google Earth KMZ file with those points overlaid from the Garmin GPS, if you are interested.

In the next couple of weeks I will be going down to Fenton and marking the Base Camp concrete pads too.

Doug Tilley
Adelaide River



From: Ron Harris <rdharris@casscomm.com>
Date: Sun, Sep 6, 2009 at 1:25 AM
Subject: John C. "Jack" Calhoun

FYI ...

"Jack" Calhoun, 90, is alive and well in Virginia, IL. **[Editor's note: John C. Calhoun served with the 528th, and he was Jack Banks' pilot before becoming Aircraft Commander of his own crew (3)]**

Over 30 years ago, he started a prairie restoration and rebuilt an antique log cabin on the prairie's edge. We are now working on the third log cabin and the prairie contains over 100 species of plants native to this area.

I have heard many stories from Jack regarding his time in northern Australia.

One of the better ones was a flight out of Adelaide. Apparently, the antenna on a B-24 was a weight of some sort suspended from a long wire. Someone forgot to reel in the weight and the weight went through a building or two in downtown Adelaide. Jack says the headline in the Adelaide newspaper a day or two later was, "Yanks Bomb Adelaide!" I would be interested in further information about the "bombing" should you have any.

Jack is still in contact with Jack Banks. I think those two are the last of their group still living.

To read an article about Jack from Northern Illinois University about the prairie state deer, go to:
<http://www.lib.niu.edu/2000/oi001216.html>

Ron Harris
rdharris@casscomm.com

MIRROR MAN FLIES ON DARING RAID

I've been going through my mother's memorabilia and turned up this news release from The Daily Mirror of Sydney, Australia. Jim Smyth, war correspondent, flew with me to the Celebes where the Japanese were preparing for the invasion of Australia. I flew more missions (daylight) to Timor on the Celebes where my navigator (Barney Apfel) was credited with sinking two troop carrier transports. ... Dexter Baker(528th)

Sydney, Australia

The Daily Mirror, Thursday, June 17, 1943

Jim Smyth, Australian War Correspondent

MIRROR MAN FLIES ON DARING RAID

FIRST TIME OUT

The mission marked the first occasion which Australian war correspondents have been allowed to accompany allied crews on combat missions. The briefing of this mission took nearly an hour. It included weather, assigned altitude, the target, and where the ack-ack and zeros could be expected. Our target is a big Japanese supply base on the east coast of the Celebes. It will take us more than twelve hours to and from the target and we will be over enemy occupied territory and enemy patrolled seas most of the time. We used all the available runway for take off. There are twelve of us aboard this liberator which bears the name "Golden Goose." The skipper is 23 year old Lt. Dexter Baker of Salt Lake City, Utah. These liberators are massive ships and one of the biggest heavy bombers in the world. The ship bristles with guns. There are more liberators to our right and behind us.

The sound like a jack hammer blows up in front and gets my attention, the smell of gun powder follows. The waist gunners have swung their guns out of waist windows. Could there be zero guns about? Each fires a short burst downwards and the tail gunner and the top turret join in, and the whole ship shakes and vibrates. Now it is all quiet aboard and I am wishing the target wasn't so far away. I'm not scared, just anxious. We are going in over the target singly and at intervals. We still have a long way to go yet. I came aboard the Golden Goose with a parachute with a one man life raft attached. Lights are out in the cabin, but the moon is shining in through the windows. A great bomber's moon. The gunners are getting ready for action at their guns. The tension is terrific as we wait. Over on our left we see flares dropped by our formation leader and almost immediately there are bursts of ack-ack. We are banking to the left now, for the target. My pulse is quickening faster. Up forward, our bombardier is at work on our bombsight. It shouldn't be long now. The bombardier, Lt. Barney Apfel, has taken over. He advises the skipper that we are locked on target.

The order "open bomb doors" comes through. The ship is flying steadily and we are not a mile off the target.

After what seems an hour, the bombardier releases the bombs. We dropped nine thousand-pound bombs in a few seconds.

FIRES BURNING

Then out goes a flare for the following B-24. The Golden Goose has laid its eggs. We look back to assess our bomb damage. Several fires are observed and search lights are frantically crisscrossing the sky. Japanese radio chatter indicates they are trying to get their zeros in the air. There is no relaxation in the watch for zeros until we fly into heavy blind rain and sleet. Despite the weather, the Golden Goose is riding as smooth as a Rolls Royce.



DREAM TIME - A WAR STORY

Installment #10 by Roger W. Caputo

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 tell 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.

There were lighter sides to the War, such as the movies and the one USO show that stumbled into our area in Northern Australia. We did not have movies every night, but did have them no less than once a week. Of course, they were outdoors after the fashion of the drive-ins back home, except there were no cars, or popcorn, or girls! Using mostly scrap materials, a big screen was erected and a projection booth, much needed during the rainy season to keep the projector dry. The audience had options during the rain of either leaving, sticking it out under some improvised rain gear, or just sit there and get soaked. When it rained, various soldiers could be found exercising all of the above choices. The attached Aussie Engineering Battalion could always be counted on to appear in force, bring their homemade stools, chairs, and whatnot to sit on. We office types would borrow the canvas folding chairs from the office and could view the movie in total comfort. It was as entertaining to watch the group assemble as it was to watch some of the sorry movies. Very few, if any, first runs were shown, but the Aussies drank in the experience and contributed a constant running commentary on the action on the screen. There is no way, in a civilized society, to reproduce their comments as they were more salty than salt! If a member of the audience felt the need for refreshments, he usually brought his own quart-sized bottle of that strong Aussie beer which sometimes added considerably to the level of festivity!

Cinema



USO Show



We got what was left over as far as the USO shows are rated. I can remember at the time as feeling insulted. We dumb soldiers were supposed to feel grateful and elated beyond measure because some beat-up, worn-out, has-been movie personalities found time to come and display themselves; and display themselves is all they did, and I don't mean bare female bodies! With one exception, that being Gary Cooper (a longstanding favorite of mine), the rest could have stayed home. The intent is not to

USO Show



demean their effort, after all, they did volunteer. In my opinion, it was the fault of the management: poor planning and programming. The shows were not on the scale of the Bob Hope Shows! There was only one such show, so I was only disappointed once.

General George C. Marshall, making an inspection tour of the theater, called in on us just once for a very brief visit. General Marshall, Chief of Staff of all the military forces, was in my opinion a man placed by providence, into the history of the United States, on about the same scale as George Washington was during the Revolution in 1776. Given the many problems of not being ready, difficult Allies to work with, and a global war on a scale never before experienced, he pulled it all together almost to perfection! After the war, when he was Secretary of State and devised the Marshall Plan for Europe's economic recovery, he struck the first blow in the Cold War against Communism! Once in awhile, the United States gets lucky.

It was not possible to get very close to the General, what with everyone crowding around close to him, most wearing at least a silver leaf (Lt. Colonel), but I got close enough to him to look into his eyes, over a couple of shoulders between him and us, and I had a feeling of assurance!



General George C. Marshall
Photo credit:
americaslibrary.gov

When I entered the military service, I thought I had good teeth, at least nothing hurt! However, while I was in Australia, things started to come unglued and a bunch of molars developed cavities that needed filling. Believe it or not, the 380th Group had two

DREAM TIME - A WAR STORY (continued)

dentists and they were kept busy full time using Field Dental Equipment and set up for business under whatever cover was available. What they didn't have was running water or electric power. The water thing was no big problem because water-cooled drills were not yet in use. The absence of electric power was another matter. They had a piece of field equipment that the assistant could pedal and it generated a token amount of electric power (or pneumatic, I'm really not certain which). Of course, the power source could only drive the drill comparatively slow and it was torture to get teeth worked on. When the War was over and I returned home, it was with a mouthful of patched up teeth. The dentists were first-rate people who had given up a civilian practice (they were substantially senior to most of us) to help out with the war effort. No fancy dental work was accomplished, such as bridges or gold crowns or root canals or dentures. The military's intention was to fix the teeth so they didn't hurt the soldier because if his face hurt, he likely would not be able to shoot straight. The idea was to fix the problem just good enough so that the soldier could function, but not too well, because he might be dead tomorrow. I think it was a rather cold-blooded approach, adopted out of necessity!

Wallabies!



While we were at Fenton, 100 miles south of Darwin, right in the middle of the "Outback," we would from time to time do a little exploring of the countryside. Anthills were the big thing, literally! Most times, a Jeep was available for a few hours and it could go anywhere the driver was daring enough to take it. Some of the hunters tried their luck without much result. The little wallabies, the small kangaroos, were all over the place like rabbits in North America. They were fun to watch and harmless. If a person was brave enough to venture into the swampy areas, it was possible to meet some crocodiles (the Aussies called them Crocks) but there weren't many takers. There were also big old lizards, but they were not dangerous as they always ran. There were a couple of small rivers, more like big creeks, that were within commuting distance of the base by Jeep. They were called the Daly and the Adelaide (no relation to the town) and a suitable swimming hole was soon found and used, but only by the bravest! In the tropics, or semi-tropics, the lands are filled with creepy crawly things which the white man's body doesn't recognize and has no immunity to.

Anthills in the Outback



There were many many evenings with little to do and in the evening life often centered around the tent and one's tent buddies. I can no longer remember the process that led to the selection of one's tent mates, but was almost like a marriage; sorta like forever and there was little or no shifting around. So if one made bad choices of tent mates in the beginning, relationships could be difficult for a long time. I was very fortunate and had wonderful tent mates. We were quite a mix and lived together for almost the total period of Foreign Service. We learned how to stay out of each other's way without being aloof and yet provide comradeship.

In the military, like everywhere else, a pecking order develops. My tent mates were: my friend Ralph Finch, M/Sgt Mulholland, my immediate supervisor; T/Sgt Renwick M. Ballenger, of S-1, and one other whose name has been forgotten (he was also of the S-1 section and took First Sergeant). Gamble was one of the original five in the tent (he didn't stay long with the Group, maybe 6 months). Mulholland, Ballenger and Gamble were at least 10 years older than Finch and me. These three were heavy drinkers and preferred whiskey, which was hard to get and then only Australian brands. One in particular I remember was Milnes; drinkers would mix it with Coke, lots of it available, and they would sip and mix all evening. Finch and I would just sit and listen to the three senior mates tell yarns. Mulholland, having been a Coca Cola distributor in civilian life, had hung out in a lot of bars in the course of his workday and accumulated a lot of stories.

Finch and I spent a lot of evenings in the office building where there were electric lights, as the only illumination in the tents were a candle or a small kerosene lamp, not enough to read or write letters by. All the letters I wrote were by hand and the struggle was to say something of interest when all things about the War were strictly forbidden. The Officer in each Section had to read our letters; they were the censors. A soldier often hesitated to get into personal matters in the letters as all forms of privacy were non-existent. That didn't leave much to write but "I'm fine, how are you?"!



Tent Buddies
Renwick M. Ballenger (left)
Ralph J. Finch Jr. (right)



Sgt "Mully" Mulholland
The CocaCola distributor

More to come in 2010!



"Mully" checks out the Fenton Camp area

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/RAAF, David Fotheringham Miller, Aircraft Commander, Miller Crew (20), DOD May 18, 2009, Adelaide, Australia, reported by Cal Killingsworth

528th, Ralph Fred Pauly, Asst Flight Engineer/Gunner, Synar Crew (18), DOD March 26, 2009, Portland, Oregon, reported by Loyd Oakes

528th, John V. Rader, Gunner, Bisson Crew (27), DOD May 20, 2009, Loma, Colorado, reported by his widow, Betty

528th, Betty Jean Synar, Widow of Joe Synar, DOD August 1, 2009, Dallas, Texas, reported by Loyd Oakes

529th, Mahlon A. Benson, Aircraft Commander, Benson Crew, DOD October 16, 1998, reported by Bryce Neff

529th, Leonard F. Markstrom, Gunner, Gay Crew (49), DOD August 26, 2009, South Haven, Michigan, reported by his widow, Mae



529th, Daniel E. ("Eddie") McIntyre, Bombardier, Janssen Crew, DOD Jan/Feb 2009, Brooksville, Florida, reported by Dr. Frederick T. Mickler

530th, Bernard B. ("Yorkie") Meyerson, Ball Turret/Waist Gunner; Ground Staff, Engineering, Maintenance, Combination Welder; Adm and Tech Clerk, DOD August 6, 2009, White Creek, New York, reported by his son, Jonathan Mercer

531st, Francis ("Frank") Xavier Boudreau, Gunner, Haas Crew, DOD August 18, 2009, North Tonawanda, New York, reported by his daughter, Bonnie Boudreau

Group, William H. Lee, Ground Staff, Intelligence, Topographer, DOD January 1, 2008, Dover, Massachusetts, reported by Paul Tedesco (Historian with the Dover Historical Society)

Please send all TAPS listings to:

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