



The 380th Bomb Group Association

5th AF -- RAAF

Affectionately Known As

The Flying Circus

NEWSLETTER #59

NOVEMBER 2015

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Gear Order Form

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Glenn R. Horton, Jr.

Gary L. Horton

HISTORY PROJECT

Barbara J Gotham

2016 REUNION

Barbara J Gotham

Dates and Location - TBD

NEWSLETTERS –

WEBPAGES – FINANCIAL

Barbara J. Gotham

LINKS

Membership form:

<http://380th.org/2015Member-form.pdf>

Gear order form:

<http://380th.org/Gear2015.pdf>

Comments/TAPS notification:

<http://380th.org/form.html>

Blog:

<https://380thww2.wordpress.com/>

FACEBOOK

Search for the group *380th Bombardment Group (5th AF, WWII)* or go to

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/380th/>

380th Bomb Group Association

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West Lafayette, IN 47906-1209 USA

<http://380th.org/>

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Cell (texting preferred): 765-412-5370 (Eastern time zone)

THIS AND THAT

At least 25 years ago Hugh Bekkers (of Mount Gravatt, Queensland) found a US dog tag in a wartime dump in Darwin. He had been keeping it in a box all that time, and decided to do an Internet search to find out about its owner. Although the dog tag was difficult to read, having been subjected to the elements at the coastal dump site for the previous 45 years or so, Hugh could make out the name and service number to be Emanuel R. Kokes, 37119419, T-43, 44C.



Hugh wanted to locate Emanuel's family to return it to them, but found out that Kokes had died in 2008 in Nebraska. Recently Hugh sent the dog tag to Barb Gotham. If anyone knew Emanuel Kokes and is in contact with his family, please let her know so she can pass it along to them.

My name is Christopher Joseph Meehan from Duxbury, Massachusetts. My father, Sgt. Joseph Martin Meehan, served with the 380th Bomb Group, in various jobs in service to the country and the 380th. My father passed away in September, 1971, 3 days before he turned 50, but I happened to have kept his scrap book and pictures from those years, from some of your most trying times, and deepest memories.

Just some quick info on my father: Joe was born on September 30, 1920, and was the middle brother of 5 Meehan brothers, all born and brought up by their parents, Patrick and Helen Meehan, in Watertown, Mass, a town of about 28,000 people by 1940. As you can guess, these 5 brothers had plenty to do as they grew up in a vibrant suburb of Boston, and they lived in the fast lane. But, WW2 made these kids grow up all the faster.



My father's two oldest brothers joined the service, and Joe, wanting to jump in the service right away like his older brothers, ran out and joined the Army Infantry. But, according to family lore, as Joe's older brother Thomas quickly moved up in rank in the USAAF as a Pilot, his mother Helen asked him, "Tom, can you try to get your brother Joe out of the dangerous Infantry?" Well, before Joe knew it he had been transferred to the USAAF, and went to school and passed all mechanical classes for working on plane engines, and ended up on the roster of Group Headquarters Ground Staff, Supply and eventually became the Quartermaster Supply Technician, as Sgt. in Darwin, Australia, with the Flying Circus.

Joe returned home in time for Thanksgiving in 1945. In 1948, he married Edna May Skinner who was also from Watertown. They had 2 children, a boy in 1950 and a girl in 1952. Joe settled into working at the Hood Rubber Company in Watertown, a company that employed 25% of Watertown residents working with machines and on the dock. Hood Rubber was eventually bought out by the B. F. Goodrich Company. After several years he moved up into the offices of the company running both the purchasing and transportation departments. In 1968, the company began a steady movement of the factory to North Carolina, until in 1970, Hood Rubber closed down in Watertown, Mass.



Well, now you know about my father, Joseph Martin Meehan, and if anyone knew him or would like to make a comment, I would love to hear from you. I hope anyone seeing his pictures will enjoy and relive the good times remembered with life long buddies during those trying war years.



Chris Meehan
chrisdux1@verizon.net

Joe Meehan was in GRP HQ, Ground Staff, Quartermaster Supply Tech

As space permits, more photos will be shown in future issues!



2015 DALLAS REUNION PHOTOS



Bill Brew, Russ O'Day, Jim Meredith, Ed Walford, Dexter Baker



Bill Brew, Dexter Baker, Ed Walford, Jim Meredith, Russ O'Day



Russ O'Day and his daughter, Kathy



Ed Walford and his family: son David, wife Barbara, daughters Jill and Jenny



Bill Brew

2015 DALLAS REUNION PHOTOS (continued)



City Tour Crew
Thursday, October 15



With the "Diamond Lil"
Friday, October 16

All Dressed up for the Saturday
Banquet, October 17

2015 DALLAS REUNION PHOTOS (continued)



Jim Meredith
and family:
friend Cindy,
wife Jeanne, son
Martin



Donna Gioia



Carroll & Pat Boatwright



Ed Holley



Steve & Barbara Stadler



Krissy and Sharon LaFlech



Marie Anderson & Terry Knight



Vic & Vicki Ingram



Bill Randall



Karen & Steve Wassner



Diana & Bill Shek



Sharon & Dexter Baker Jr



Greg Baker, Dexter Baker,
Crystal Baker

2015 DALLAS REUNION PHOTOS (continued)



Barb & Doug Gotham



Dean & Peggy Baker



Spencer & Kathleen Rackley



Terry O'Day, Russ O'Day, Suzi O'Day

*Fun times at the
Thursday Wel-
come Dinner!!
Cowboy theme!*



Terry Knight



Martha & Ken Collins



Baker boys



Ingrams & friend Nick



Marie & Donna



Entertainer:
Yancey Stevens



Hospitality Room



*Thursday's Dallas
City Tour*

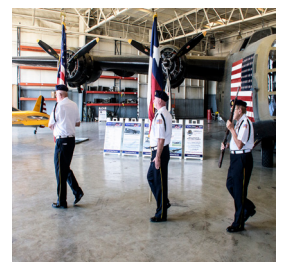


2015 DALLAS REUNION PHOTOS (continued)

**Thurs-
day's
Dallas
City
Tour**



**Friday Morning
at the CAF for
Memorial Service
& visit with the
Diamond Lil**



Our Vets with the CAF Crew



Friday afternoon at Frontiers of Flight Museum



Saturday morning meeting



**Ed Walford's presentation on
his recent Collings B-24 flight**



**Krissy Dulin's tattoo in
memory of her father,
Bill LaFlech**

MEMORIAL SERVICE PROGRAM, 2015 REUNION

380th Bomb Group Association ~ 5th AF – RAAF, World War II

Memorial Service Program

Friday, October 16, 2015

Commemorative Air Force (CAF), Dallas Executive Airport

Welcome / About the CAF

Toni Rabroker / David Oliver (CAF)

Posting of the Colors

American Legion Post 321, Plano, Texas

Pledge of Allegiance

All – Led by Bill Randall (380th)

Psalm 23

All – Led by Bill Randall (380th)

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff — they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

Reading of the Names of the Deceased

Doug Gotham (380th)

Those who have left us (reported 2014-2015)

528th

Alma A. Brew, October 27, 2014
Alberth T. Goga, January 14, 2015
Edwards C. Henry, June 21, 2015
Louis D. Joseph, August 4, 2013
John F. Lento, Jr., January 23, 2015
Murray C. Marks, August 2013
Irene Mioduszezski, October 2, 2014
Louis F. Mioduszezski, February 15, 2015
Arvid J. Olson, April 2014
William T. Stephens, January 5, 2015
Daniel G. Sullivan, January 25, 2015
James L. Sword, April 1985

529th

George Bechstein, February 27, 2015
Courtney H. Brewer, October 8, 1990
Lloyd A. Fry, February 25, 2015
Cliff DeForest Mansfield, September 17, 2014
Charles B. McGrath, April 25, 2015
Constance Plassman, April 10, 2015
Chester Selakowski, December 1, 2011

530th

Ralph Castillo, November 30, 1989
John L. LaShier, August 13, 2015
Harold Bernard Stiles, March 8, 1991
James C. Wright, Jr., May 6, 2015

531st

Harry J. Blum, October 8, 2014
Daniel T. Bruen, June 18, 2015
Teresa Hice Burdick, September 22, 2014
John W. Connley, May 10, 1985
Joseph R. Edinger, January 28, 2015
Marian E. Hritz, February 6, 2015
Don D. Hurley, February 8, 2015
Stanley E. Rychlicki, November 24, 2014
Joseph H. Wells, April 17, 2015
Helen Sexton Wilson, July 5, 2012
Harold Robert Winters, July 29, 2015

Group/531st

Mario S. Piantedosi, October 11, 2014

RAAF/530th

Richard B. Dakeyne, April 8, 2015



Anyone who would like to say a few words in remembrance of any of the deceased, you may do so now.

Moment of Silence

Firing Party, followed by TAPS

Closing Remarks

Retiring of the Colors

American Legion Post 321, Plano, Texas

Al Benzing (CAF)

ATTENDEES, 2015 DALLAS REUNION

528TH SQUADRON

Baker, Sr., Dexter
Aircraft Commander, Baker's Crew
Seattle WA
 Baker, Jr., Dexter (son) (& spouse Sharon)
 Baker, Greg (son) (& spouse Crystal)

Baker (Vance), Peggy (& spouse Dean)
Daughter, Bill Vance
Scottsdale AZ

Brew, Bill
Bombardier, Tiffany's Crew & Adjutant
Henderson NV

Collins, Martha (& spouse Ken)
Daughter, Houston S. Burkhart
Mount Pleasant TX

Ingram, Vic (& spouse Vicki) (& friend, Nick Benedetto)
Son, Walter Scott Ingram Jr.
Dover NH

Knight, Terry
Daughter, Thomas (Ike) Isaack
Bridgewater VA

LaFlech, Sharon (& daughter, Krissy LaFlech-Dulin)
Widow, William E. LaFlech
Highland IN

O'Day, Russ
Pilot, Vance's Crew/Aircraft Commander, O'Day's Crew
Gold River CA
 Curtis, Kathy (daughter)
 O'Day, Terry (son) (& spouse Suzi)

Randall, Bill
Son-in-law, Loyd Oakes
Corpus Christi TX

Shek, Diana
Daughter, William Shek
St Augustine FL

Shek, William
Son, William Shek
St Augustine FL

529TH SQUADRON

Gioia, Donna
Widow, Anthony (Tony) Gioia
Lockport NY

Holley, Ed
Cousin, Jimmie Dean Alexander
Burnet TX

Rackley, Spencer (& spouse Kathleen)
Friend, Al Busedu
Charlotte NC

530TH SQUADRON

Meredith, Jim (& spouse Jeanne)
Adjutant & Executive Officer
Athens TX
 Meredith, Martin (son) (& friend Cindy Luna)

Stadler, Steve (& spouse Barbara)
Son, Eugene Stadler
Stillwater OK

531ST SQUADRON

Anderson, Marie
Widow, Lt Robert J Anderson
Grand Rapids MI

Boatwright, Carroll (& spouse Pat)
Son, Carroll W Boatwright
Danville KY

Gotham, Barb (& spouse Doug)
Honorary (Ted Williams)
W Lafayette IN

Wassner, Steve (& spouse Karen Hinton)
Son, Bob Wassner
Carson City NV

Walford, Ed (& spouse Barbara)
Navigator, Sears' Crew
Colorado Springs CO
 Walford, David (son)
 Walford, Jennifer (daughter)
 Walford, Jill (daughter)
 Spade, Deborah (niece) (& spouse Sandy)

THE MCFERREN STORY

In April 1995 when I contracted with William McFerren, Jr. to write his experiences as an U.S. Army Air Force B-24 navigator with the 380th Bombardment Group during World War II, I thought it would be a short “vanity press” account that would not interest the general reader. A few days into the project, his wife Betty mentioned that they saved all their personal correspondence of the period. The box-full of hand-written and typed letters revealed that their story would be of broad historical interest. What I had to do was interview, transcribe and weave his personal and military story around their letters to set a context.

Then 80 years old, McFerren was afflicted with “Parkinson’s disease.” While his memory was excellent, he suffered a speech affliction that made his recounting of the time difficult. I resorted to a long series of taped interviews that were made during 1995. These were transcribed to make the original source notes for his story. I then edited and wrote his narrative and placed his and his wife’s letters at appropriate places to form the manuscript that follows. Since the war-time delivery of mail did not allow letters to be sequentially received and replied to, there wasn’t a way to order them in a direct logical sequence here.

After the manuscript was complete, in late 1996 McFerren suffered a debilitating stroke. He died a few months later in 1997. For personal reasons, his wife did not wish to proceed with publishing his account and their letters. She died in 2010.

Now their story deserves to be made part of the history of the period. After these many years, except for minor typographical corrections, I’ve decided not to further edit or revise the original narrative. I transcribed all their letters unabridged, and have left them unchanged. They are a unique collection of family wartime correspondence that reflect the personal and a general sense of the period on the United States war and home fronts.

Personal letters from combat zones were heavily censored about specific military operations, personnel, and details. It was only by hindsight that McFerren was able to fill the military details by his interviews with me.

Because of his superb navigation skills, 1st Lt. William McFerren was offered the job of 380th Group Navigator and promotion to Major in October 1943. He never assumed that position because he was shot down just a few days later on a mission to the Celebes. In 1992 he belatedly received a Silver Star for his wartime service.

The global Internet was in its infancy in 1996 when this was written. Today, for the discerning and experienced researcher, it is an excellent source of historical research and authentic records of military history. This includes a website for the 380th Bombardment Group of the Fifth Air Force. Those interested in the broader military context and details of the 380th, of which this account is a part, may consult: <http://380th.org>

Wm. A. Boas
Wray, Colorado
April 23, 2015

The Love Letters and Narrative of the McFerren story are published online at:
<http://380th.org/NEWS/McFerren/loveletters.pdf>
<http://380th.org/NEWS/McFerren/narrative.pdf>
“Loveletters” also contains references to many other members of the 380th.

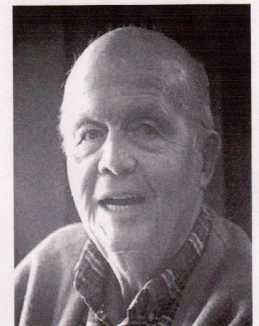
Printed with permission of the author, William A. Boas (telephone conversation, 16 November 2015)

Photographs by Wm. A. Boas.

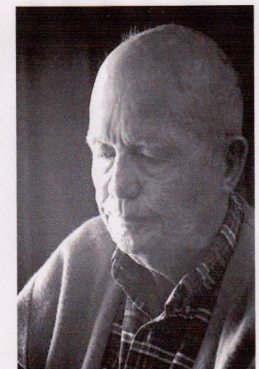
William McFerren, Jr., taken at the time of the 1995 interviews during a visit of Alfred W. Paris regular co-pilot of the B-24 'Fyrle Myrtle' who was not flying the mission of October 26, 1943 when the Liberator was shot down over the Celebes Islands in the South Pacific by a group of Japanese Zeros.



Bill McFerren Al Paris



McFerren



McFerren

“THAT RED CROSS DAME” AGAIN

By Muriel Patchen, *somewhere in Australia* (date unknown)

Dear Editor: I'd planned to write about an eleven-page letter, but the circumstances under which I'm able to write are most trying. It's 8:25 p.m. and the heat is frightful. It's a solid thing that closes in on your cheeks, body, legs, and wraps so tightly about every portion of you that movement requires the greatest physical exertion. Then, too, the mosquitoes are so thick and so eager for a taste of my Type-B blood that I am tucked under a mosquito bar, but all manner of insects manage to get in somehow.

I've already learned that the maxim here is, "Walk, do not run if you expect to survive . . . and walk slowly!" Everyone siestas from 12:30 to 3 p.m. I'm in a tent which holds the heat with a fervent grasp. And I work in a tent. Today I wore my uniform, but after this it's shorts and short-sleeved blouse in the daytime and G.I. fatigues at night, with long sleeves because of mosquitoes.

Until we arrived, there were no women at this camp and certain refinements had to be made. Men now wear towels about their midribs as they hurry to the showers, which we're permitted to use for one hour in the afternoon. For hot water, we rely on the sun heating the tanks.

Went in a command car yesterday to one of our outlying camps about forty miles away. The Red Cross work there comes under my jurisdiction. Never in all my life have I experienced such a drive. Everything in the world was red . . . grass, trees, ground and me. From the topmost hair on my head to the lowest toe, every exposed portion of my body was brick red . . . and as I stood under the shower it seemed that diluted blood poured from me.

The ants here are amazing. The ground moves and breathes with them. At night, if you listen quietly, you can hear a constant crackle that sounds like wrinkling Cellophane. It's the termites. Poles have fallen and tents collapsed because they've gone through wood and ropes. Then we have a delightful species of cricket that chews voraciously on my khaki shorts and slacks. Also snakes and scorpions that crawl lovingly into bed with you. These may seem like little things, but how they play havoc with your life!

Nobody drinks plain water here, because it's completely unpalatable. It's tea or lolly water (a mixture of sweet extract and water) or beer . . . lots and lots of beer. Generally, we get no fresh fruit except bananas, fresh meat now and then, and powdered eggs once in a great while.

Some of the men wanted to go swimming the other day, so another Red Crosser and six of our super G.I.'s started out in a jeep. We went to a glorious jungle pool. We swam, we ducked each other, we loved it. Then, on the way home, it started to pour. No top for the jeep. We plowed through muddy red water four feet deep, rounded rutted curves that sent the back of the jeep sailing out fanwise to sideswipe trees. The jeep stalled, coughed, choked, limped forward again. We hovered on one wheel, skidding, slipping, then straightened out again. We were very wet and cold (for a great change), our lips blue. But we all laughed until our ribs and stomachs ached. When we finally got back to camp we found it hadn't even rained there.

Now comes a plane buzzing the field. These wonderful kid pilots who talk of their missions as though they were going out for a quiet Sunday picnic! Buzzing a field, if you don't know, is coming in low and fast over the buildings so that the roar sets your ears atrembling. It's only a way of saying, "Hello, folks, I'm home again!"

Am now happily settled in my little nest. The men have set up a pyramidal tent for two other girls and myself. The area has been set off by a tarpaulin to keep us safe from prying eyes. When I retire at night to the little stockade I feel like a grub returning to her cocoon.

Later. I've been busier and worked harder and been hotter in these past two days than in any days in my entire life. Worked over tin tables and, I swear it, I set a piece of bread on the table and when next we looked around it was toasted! Stayed in the immediate vicinity of our quarters from Tuesday night until 5:30 tonight (Thursday) without coming out for food. Have had a phone installed and contracted all business that way. Didn't eat except canned pears and asparagus tips in that time and sent two girls to bed (temporarily) with heat prostration.

But the men are so wonderful and appreciative you can't ever do too much -- it's hard to feel you're doing enough, in fact.

MURIEL PATCHEN.



Muriel Patchen—shorts and blouse replace her Red Cross uniform.

Contributed by Mary Ellen Yates Olson from an article her grandmother had saved from the Ladies' Home Journal, date unknown.

TAPS

LEST WE FORGET



528th

Alberth T. (Tommy) Goga, Photographer, Various Crews, DOD January 14, 2015, Harrison City, Pennsylvania, reported by his daughter, Cheryl Sturm

Emanuel R. Kokes, Ground Crew, Medical Staff, DOD April 15, 2008, Saline County, Nebraska, reported by Hugh Bekkers

Robert L. Muchow, Pilot, Dyson Crew/McGuire Crew (23), DOD October 23, 2015, Leawood, Kansas, reported by his son, Daniel Muchow

Daniel G. Sullivan, Navigator, Wise's Crew (19), DOD January 25, 2015, Amityville, New York, reported by his son, Michael Sullivan

530th

John L. LaShier, Gunner, Kiel's Crew (68), DOD August 13, 2015, Johnson City, New York, reported by his widow, Mary Emma

531st

Harry J. Blum, Aircraft Commander, Blum's Crew (91), DOD October 8, 2014, Lincoln, Nebraska, reported by his bombardier, Tony DiNardo

Daniel T. Bruen, Bombardier, Low's Crew (109), DOD June 18, 2015, San Antonio, Texas, reported by his widow, Kay and his son, Daniel J. Bruen

Stanley E. Rychlicki, Ground Crew, Mess Hall Cook/Supply, DOD November 24, 2014, Caledonia, New York, reported by his son, Arnie Rychlicki

Harold Robert (Bob) Winters, Gunner, Blum's Crew (91), DOD July 29, 2015, Zanesville, Ohio, reported by his daughter, Shelley Winters Fuller



HOW TO REPORT TAPS

Please write to:

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

Or send email to: 380th.ww2@gmail.com

Or go to this web link and submit the form: <http://380th.org/form.html>