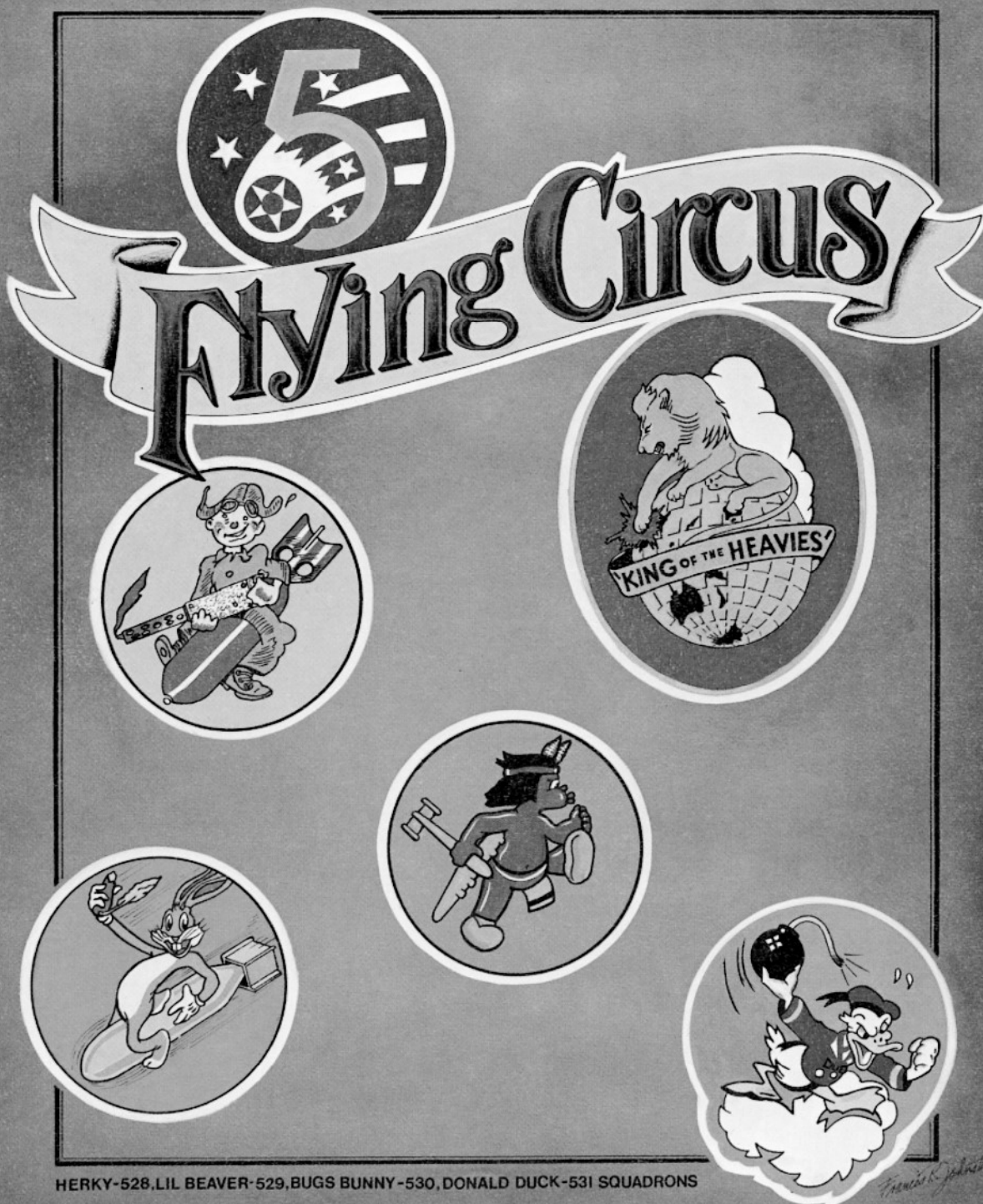


380TH BOMB GROUP



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



The 380th Bomb Group Association

5th AF -- RAAF

Affectionately Known As

The Flying Circus

NEWSLETTER #76

NOVEMBER 2022

New Facebook Discussion Group Pages
How to Report TAPS

Update to Previous Story - Colin McCallum (528th)
The Rest of the Story by William Brew (528th)
Going Home
US Air Force Celebrates 75 Years!
The Territory Remembers - 75 Years
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Liberty Belle
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B-24J-135-CO, 42-110115, "Drunkard's Dream"

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HISTORIANS

Bob Alford
Glenn R. Horton Jr.
Bob Livingstone
William Shek Jr.
Robert Withorn

HISTORY PROJECT
NEWSLETTERS
REUNION COORDINATOR
WEBPAGES – FINANCIAL
Barbara J. Gotham

LINKS

Membership form:

[http://380th.org/
2022member-form.pdf](http://380th.org/2022member-form.pdf)

Gear order form:

[http://380th.org/Gear2022-
January.pdf](http://380th.org/Gear2022-January.pdf)

Comments/TAPS notification:

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

FACEBOOK

Search for the group *380th Bombardment Group (WWII Veterans Group)* or go to [https://www.facebook.com/
groups/2302731583244398](https://www.facebook.com/groups/2302731583244398)

TAPS/Memorial page:

[https://www.facebook.com/
groups/421843586784696](https://www.facebook.com/groups/421843586784696)

Introduction to this Issue

The main "theme" of this issue is the B-24 Liberator, with a detailed story on the Ford Willow Run manufacturing plant. Issue #62, December 2016 (<http://380th.org/NEWS/News62-web.pdf>), covered the production of the B-24. A member suggested a follow-up story on Willow Run, and that's the impetus for this issue!

Regarding Future Print Copies of THE FLYING CIRCUS Newsletter

This may be your last print issue of this newsletter. The price of printing and postage continues to rise, making it hard to sustain print copies of THE FLYING CIRCUS newsletter. Print copies will continue to be sent to those who request them. The membership donation form is included in this issue; please consider making a small contribution to help support future issues.

380th Bomb Group Association

130 Colony Road
West Lafayette, IN 47906-1209 USA
<http://380th.org/> Email: 380th.ww2@gmail.com
Phone: 765-463-5390; Cell (texting preferred): 765-412-5370 (Eastern time zone). Please leave voicemail if no answer on cell or home phone.

NEW FACEBOOK DISCUSSION GROUP PAGES

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2302731583244398> - NEW 380TH DISCUSSION GROUP FACEBOOK PAGE

This is the link to the new group page for the 380th Bomb Group Association on Facebook (FB).

The reason for the new group page is that the personal FB account of the only Administrator for the previous page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/380th>), Barbara Yeoman Gotham (previous FB username; new FB username is Barbara Gotham) was hacked in August 2022, and she has been unable to get FB to allow her access to her old account so the solution was to create a new group page.

Members of the previous group page should submit a member request to join. Content from the previous group cannot be reproduced on the new group page, so if you were a member of the old group, you can continue to post there if you'd like, but since there's no active Admin for the old page, Barbara Gotham cannot get access to the old pages and therefore cannot answer any questions anyone might have. Please use email for personal messages: 380th.ww2@gmail.com or find her new Messenger account on Facebook (username: Barbara Gotham).

If you had a listing on the old page that you'd like to copy to the new page, that is acceptable.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/421843586784696> - NEW TAPS FACEBOOK PAGE

This is the link to the new group page to post obituaries and memorials for 380th veterans and their families. (The old link was <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1686408651610839/>). Same as for the FB group page, content from this old page cannot be reproduced on the new page. If you had a listing on the old page that you'd like to copy to this new page, that is acceptable.

Apologies to everyone - it is so unfortunate that everyone has to endure the same pain Barbara has encountered with this hacker on FB.

HOW TO REPORT TAPS

To report the death of one of the 380th WWII veterans or their spouse, 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>

Be sure to include your relationship to the deceased and include a way to contact you if further information is required.

The online TAPS listing can be found at: <http://380th.org/NEWS/TAPS/taps.cgi>

UPDATE TO PREVIOUS STORY - COLIN MCCALLUM (528TH SQUADRON/RAAF)

August 28, 2022

You were kind enough to publish an article on my father, Colin McCallum (RAAF) in Newsletter 71.

I have finalised a written piece on my father's World War 2 service. 380th has been a valuable source, including your last newsletter.

The link to his story can be found at:

https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Space:Colin_McCallum_World_War_II_Service

Thank you so much for your help.

Bruce McCallum



Intro to and excerpt from the wikitree.com article

The story behind the World War II Royal Australian Air Force service of Colin McCallum, Service No. 0118019/425956

Ft.Lt. McCallum served in the Royal Australian Air Force in World War II

Service started: 21 May 1942

Unit(s): 71 Sqn; 23 Sqn

Service ended: 23 Oct 1945

This profile comprises my research into the Royal Australian Air Force World War II service of my father, Colin McCallum. This service received only cursory references in family conversation. However on the passing of my parents and sister I received family artifacts including his RAAF Log Book, certificates and photographs. These, along with National Archives of Australia records, websites such as Peter Dunn's ozatwar.com, 380th.org, family recollections, family history research by Patrick McCallum and further personal research have helped me better understand both Colin, his service and the State of Queensland during this period. This is my first foray into military history and I am happy to acknowledge errors and omissions in the presentation.

528th SQUADRON, 380TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)

Colin trained and flew missions with the American 528th Squadron from 27 September to 19 November 1944. Colin's 380th missions in training, not counted with those from 23 Squadron totalled 10 Operational Sorties, 10 Strikes and Attacks. The mission on 12 October 1944 was to strike Ambesia Airdrome (Sulawesi/Celebes, one of the four Greater Sunda Islands, Indonesia). The mission instructions

outline the level of detail involved. Colin reports in his logbook a ten hour flight under Squadron Leader Miller, STRIKE, 25 100 lb bombs.

CONTENTS

- 1 DECORATIONS, MEDALS & BADGES
- 2 ENLISTMENT
- 3 TRAINING
- 4 No 71 SQUADRON
- 5 No 23 SQUADRON
- 6 528th SQUADRON, 380TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
- 7 CRASHES/ACCIDENTS
- 8 BASES/AIRFIELDS
- 9 MEDICAL
- 10 RAAF RESERVE
- 11 CONFIDENTIAL REPORT - prior to Liberator Conversion Course
- 12 AIRCRAFT NOSE ART
- 13 BEER BOTTLE BOMBS
- 14 AIR TRAINING CORPS
- 15 LASTING MEMORIES
- 16 TIMELINE
- 17 ARTIFACTS
- 18 Sources

To read more, go to:

https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Space:Colin_McCallum_World_War_II_Service

THE REST OF THE STORY

After World War II ended I had an interesting assignment. When the war ended I was made Adjutant of 528th Bomb Squadron. As Adjutant my duty was to send all members of the Squadron back to the United States. After I sent the Squadron Commander home, I was made Squadron Commander. I continue to send all of the Squadron members home, except for me and Staff Sergeant Robert I. Valentine.

After all personnel were sent home, or were otherwise assigned to other duties, I, with Staff Sergeant Robert I. Valentine were ordered to travel to Fort William McKinley, near Manila to assemble all of the Squadron records and assets and send them to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, where they were filed for history.

The 529th, 530th and 531st Squadrons also received the same orders with one Officer and one Enlisted Man. We were called "One and One Squadrons."

We worked hard, but had time to relax and enjoy ourselves. Each of the four Squadrons were assigned a Jeep. The eight of us were able to tour Southern Luzon Island in our spare time.

I think I sent you a copy of our final Morning Report, signed as Squadron Commander of the 528th Bomb Squadron. You can add Squadron Commander to my duties for the 528th Squadron.

When we finished our assignment we were ordered Stateside. We sailed for 31 days from Manila to San Francisco in an old World War I German Hospital ship. Very slow. What a beautiful sight the Golden Gate Bridge was. Good to be back to good old USA, the best country in the world.

Respectfully submitted

William (Bill) Brew
July 15, 2022

. . . GOING HOME

From page 178, "The Blue Book" (1946, by the Intelligence Section, edited by Jim Fain et al.)

Orders to return to the states came with disconcerting abruptness to the organization. One day there was a rumor that all men with over eighty-five points were to be sent home soon; then one evening the orderly room received an order that all men with over ninety points would be off the island before midnight. There was a mad rush to check men out. to some it was difficult to adjust to the new situation. One man, for instance, protested, "But I'm going home next week on rotation!" A cook ran from the kitchen directly to the truck with his sleeves rolled up and pie dough clinging to his fingers. He left behind him a whole batch of pies in the oven with a combat man in charge. Allison spent his last few minutes after packing trying to find the guys who owed him \$250 in gambling debts but found that they were all busy elsewhere at the moment. Twice such hurry-up moves were made and then a sweeping order came down which cleaned out all of the old men in the squadron. All Officers with eighty-

five points or better and all EM with eighty points were put on the list and shipped home. The old combat crews were waiting for their orders to fly the Group's planes home and the new crews were facing the bleak future as occupation forces.



Of course, it rained the last day.

US AIR FORCE CELEBRATES 75 YEARS!

Fold3.com Blog Post: September 15, 2022
by Jenny Ashcraft

September 18, 2022, marked the 75th birthday of the United States Air Force. This branch of the United States military was established through the National Security Act, though officials realized the strategic value of air power long before.

Early Wright Flyer

During the Civil War, military balloons provided an eagle-eye view of the battlefield and helped military leaders conduct reconnaissance missions and direct fire over enemy territory. In 1907, the US Army Signal Corps created the Aeronautical Division and contracted with the Wright Brothers to deliver Aeroplane No. 1. Still in its infancy when WWI began, military aviation quickly expanded. In 1918, the government removed aviation from the Signal Corps and established the US Army Air Service. By the time WWI ended, the Air Service had nearly 200,000 officers and men, 45 squadrons, and 740 planes. Following WWI, the Army Reorganization Act in 1920 created the Air Service, and the Air Corps Act of 1926 established the Army Air Corps.

As the United States entered WWII, the Army Air Forces supplanted the Army Air Corps in 1941. By 1942, the Army Air Forces fell under a single command that rapidly expanded to include 16 air forces, 2.4 million officers and men, and some 80,000 aircraft. Nearly 30,000 women served in the Women's Army Corps during WWII. The Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron was created in September 1942 to allow female pilots who worked as civilians attached to the Army Air Forces to ferry planes, fighters, bombers, and transports within the United States. They also trained male airmen. In 1943, they became the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs), an organization that broke ground for later USAF female pilots.

Tuskegee Airmen of the 332d Fighter Group

Two years after WWII ended, the National Security Act of 1947 created the Department of the Air Force, and on September 18, 1947, the United States Air Force was born. As an official branch of the military, the USAF began to diversify. During WWII, most personnel in the Army Air Force were white males. Still, the success of the Black WWII fighter pilots from the 332d Fighter Group (Tuskegee Airmen) in Italy helped pave the way for racial integration in the USAF. In 1948, President Harry S. Truman issued Executive Order 9981 abolishing segregation in the armed forces.

President Truman also signed the Women's Armed Services Integration Act in 1948. It allowed women to serve in limited roles in the USAF. In 1976, women were accepted into the USAF on an equal basis with men. Jeannie Marie Leavitt became the first female fighter pilot in the USAF in 1993. She later commanded a combat fighter wing.

F-35A Lightning II

Today, as the USAF celebrates 75 years, they continue to adapt to rapid technological changes to make America the leader in airpower. The Air Force's five core missions include air 1- superiority, 2- global strike, 3- rapid global mobility, 4- intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, and 5- command and control.

If you would like to learn more about the critical role played by the USAF and its predecessor organizations in defense of the nation, explore these and other related collections on Fold3®:

Gorrell's History – AEF Air Service
<https://www.fold3.com/publication/80/gorrells-history-aef-air-service>

Hill Air Force Base
<https://www.fold3.com/publication/1020/hill-air-force-base>

Combat Squadrons of the Air Force WWII
<https://www.fold3.com/publication/1070/combat-squadrons-of-the-air-force-wwii>

WWII US Air Force Photos
<https://www.fold3.com/publication/495/wwii-us-air-force-photos>

WWII Army and Army Air Force Casualty List
<https://www.fold3.com/publication/893/wwii-army-and-army-air-force-casualty-list>

Missing Air Crew Reports, WWII
<https://www.fold3.com/publication/95/missing-air-crew-reports-wwii>

Source:
<https://blog.fold3.com/us-air-force-celebrates-75-years/>



THE TERRITORY REMEMBERS - 75 YEARS

William Shek shared a link (Facebook post, July 26, 2022)

A few years back (around 2017), I was fortunate enough to be invited to submit photos from my Dad's collection for inclusion in an Australian book being published titled, "The Territory Remembers-75 Years," commemorating the 1942 Japanese bombing of the city of Darwin. It contains donated photographs and remembrances of that event. The bombing brought Australia into the war with Japan and, shortly afterward, the U.S. joined Australia, sending forces (including the 380th Bomb Group) to Australia to support and fight with them against the Japanese advance in the southwest Pacific.

The book is large format, was published in very limited numbers, and was distributed only to schools and libraries in the Northern Territory of Australia. As well, they sent a copy to each of those who had donated material for the book. I was honored to receive a copy. It was never released for public distribution or sale, and is now long out of print.

In the last couple of years I have tried numerous times to contact someone in Australia associated with the publication to request permission to share the book with the 380th BG Association members, but have not been able to contact anyone. Every email I sent (to various sources) was bounced back to me as "undeliverable-email address unknown." So, I have given up the efforts. The book is long out of print and it seems that no one who was associated with its publication can be contacted. I guess that when the project ended they closed shop and all moved on to other things.

Anyway, I decided to go ahead and share the book with the 380th BG. It contains several 380th photos that I contributed. I have uploaded a PDF copy of it on DropBox. Here is the link (you don't have to be a member of DropBox to view it):

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/z0awia21isgzbeP/TheTerritoryRemembers-75Years.pdf?dl=0>

Each photo in the book has a code number (3 letters with 3 numbers). The last page of the book has a list of the code numbers with info about each photo. Here are the page and code numbers for the 380th photos--the ones beginning with "BOS" are my photos. The ones beginning with "BOC" are from Clinton Bock (an Aussie member of the 380th BG Association).

Page 24_ROW 001 (Not my photo)
Page 24_ROW 002 (Not my photo)
Page 44_BOB 020 (Not my photo)
Page 83_BOB 016 (Not my photo)



32 THE TERRITORY REMEMBERS 75 YEARS
COMMEMORATING THE BOMBING OF DARWIN
AND DEFENCE OF NORTHERN AUSTRALIA



My photos:

Page 32_BOS 010
Page 45_BOS 007
Page 54_BOS 012
Page 70_BOS 003
Page 71_BOS 006
Page 84_BOS 011
Page 102_BOS 005

"BEST IN THE SOUTHWEST" BOOK FOR SALE

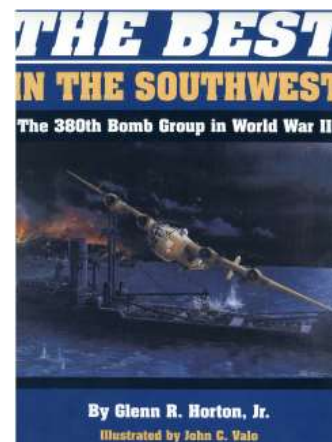
Martin Berkels sent email on October 4, 2022, saying:

I want to sell the book "The Best In The Southwest." I'm from Germany and tried to use Ebay, but it seems that it doesn't get listed on the international website, but only on the German one. I'm searching for a possibility to sell it to the US, as there's not really a demand for these kind of books in Germany. Maybe one of your members would be interested?

I have no connection to the 380th. I just got interested in the RAAF's actions in the PTO during a stay in Australia. Before moving back to Germany, I managed to get my hands on a few books that aren't really available in Europe, including "The Best In The Southwest," even if it's not covering the RAAF. In the meanwhile, I got more books related to the 5th AF.

I'm asking for \$260 including postage; payment could be done with Paypal goods and services and their protection policy for the buyer.

Best regards,
Martin Berkels
sv77@mailbox.org



If anyone is interested in purchasing this book from Martin, please contact him directly at the email shown above.

MAIL CALL

Jul 2, 2022 --

I had been writing a book about my Dad and Mom based on my father's WWII mission log that we found quite by accident, almost threw it out when cleaning out the family home a few years ago.

What I need now is some advice. I had downloaded the forms to request information from the National Archives. I filled them out as there are some big holes in my father's story and I was hoping the Nat'l Archives could give me the missing info...but they were closed down for Covid and would only reply to emergencies. I think I should resend the forms requesting some specific info asap. Do you by any chance know if they are accepting non-emergency requests now??? Should I send off my forms again to the National Archives ??

--Monica Conover-Tehomilic

Jul 6, 2022 --

I asked one of our members about this issue, since he's had to request records himself. Here's the answer:

The National Archives Veterans' Records site (<https://www.archives.gov/veterans>) says that they are back open for normal business. You should check the site and re-submit your records request. If they answer back with "records destroyed in fire" (the big fire there in 1973, which burned many records), you should submit again, and again, and again, if necessary. The Archives have had a successful project going on for a few years to recover/restore many records thought burned up or damaged. Many times they "find" those restored records for the requester. Request they also check the "Burn Files". I know of a few folks who did that and got at least some of the records. Don't give up. Of course, if you submit a bunch of repeat requests and get the same answer every time, the records you want may have been unrecoverable. There is a chance that some may be damaged, but still legible.

--Barbara Gotham

LIBERTY BELLE

Liberty Belle was a popular name for United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) aircraft during World War II; over two dozen known individual Boeing B-17 Flying Fortresses and Consolidated B-24 Liberators used the name. (Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberty_Belle_\(aircraft\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberty_Belle_(aircraft)).)

The website b24bestweb.com shows photos and contains info about 11 versions of B-24s named LIBERTY BELLE, as well as one named LIBERTY BELLE II (she was in the 5th Air Force, 22nd Bomb Group).

Four of them were in the 5th AF, in the 90th, 22nd, 380th, and 43rd Bomb Groups. The 8th AF had four LIBERTY BELLES; two others were in the 15th AF, and the 7th AF had one LIBERTY BELLE. To see the pictures of all these B-24s, go to: http://www.b24bestweb.com/Pics-L-LIBERTY_BELLE.htm

The 380th's LIBERTY BELLE, serial 44-50894, was a model B-24M-15-FO (manufactured at Ford-Willow Run in Michigan). In April 1945 she was flown overseas from San Francisco (where modifications had taken place); she was assigned to the 529th Squadron, and stationed at Murtha Strip, on Mindoro, The Philippines. LIBERTY BELLE flew 10 missions, and was terminated on December 31, 1945, and then salvaged. To learn more, go to: <http://380th.org/HISTORY/PARTVI/LibertyBelle.htm>



Another 529th masterpiece done by Ray Hafner.
James Acord Collection

The mission record for 44-50894 is shown below.

DATE (M/D/Y)	MISSION #	MISSION TYPE	TARGET	CREW #	ACFT CMDR	SQDN
06/21/1945	172-E2	Strike	Balikpapan Fortifications, Borneo	NL	Steil	529
06/22/1945	173-E2	Strike	Balikpapan Fortifications, Borneo	NL	Janssen	529
06/24/1945	175-E2	Strike	Balikpapan Fortifications, Borneo	NL	Fjare	529
06/26/1945	177-E2	Strike	Balikpapan Fortifications, Borneo	NL	Kuehn	529
07/05/1945	186-E1	Strike	Toyohara A/D, Formosa	NL	Fjare	529
07/08/1945	189-E2	Strike	Shinchiku A/D, Formosa	NL	Fjare	529
07/22/1945			Transit to Okinawa	Mix	Woodward	529
07/24/1945	205-C-1E	Strike	Kiang-wan A/D, Shanghai	Mix	Woodward	529
07/25/1945			Transit to Mindoro	Mix	Woodward	529
08/14- 15/1945			Transit to Okinawa, Change of Station			529
12/31/1945	Salvaged					

SURVIVING B-24s

The Consolidated B-24 Liberator was an American four-engine heavy bomber used by the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) and other allied air forces during World War II. Of the 19,256 B-24, PB4Y-1, LB-30 and other model variants in the Liberator family produced, thirteen complete examples survive today, two of which are airworthy. Eight of the thirteen aircraft reside in the United States (one is in Canada, one is in India, and two are in the United Kingdom, and one is being restored in Australia).

Post World War II

The B-24 was quickly declared obsolete by the USAAF and the remaining stateside aircraft were flown to desert storage in the US Southwest. In the Pacific theatre, many were simply parked, the oil drained from their engines and the aircraft left for reclamation by scrappers. The last flight of a B-24 in US military service was on 12 May 1959 when Strawberry Bitch left Bunker Hill Air Force Base (now Grissom Air Reserve Base), in Peru, Indiana, following an Armed Forces Open House. It was bound for the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, where it is now displayed.

Surviving Airworthy Aircraft

40-2366/AM927 - Commemorative Air Force, Dallas, Texas (since 2012 wears livery of "Diamond Lil")

44-44052 (original serial #) - Collings Foundation, Stow, Massachusetts (first painted with livery of 42-78444 "All American" and first flown 8 August 1989; repainted as 44-40973 "The Dragon and His Tail" in 1998; in 2005 repainted as 42-52534 "Witchcraft")



"Witchcraft," Purdue University Airport, 2016, Newsletter #62



"Strawberry Bitch," Dayton Reunion, 2017, Newsletter #64

"Bungay Buckaroo," Tucson Reunion, 2018, Newsletter #66



"Diamond Lil," Dallas Reunion, 2015, Newsletter #59



Newsletter #76 - November 2022

Surviving Aircraft by Manufacturer

Plant	Number Produced	Number Surviving
Consolidated San Diego (CO)	6,506	5
Consolidated Fort Worth (CF)	2,745	4
Ford Willow Run (FO)	8,685	4
North American Dallas (NT)	966	0
Douglas Tulsa (DT)	964	0
	19,256	13

Display Aircraft in the U.S.

41-23908 - Hill Aerospace Museum, Roy, Utah

42-72843 - "Strawberry Bitch," National Museum of the U.S. Air Force, Dayton, Ohio

44-41956 - Castle Air Museum, Atwater, California (wearing livery of 42-40369, "Shady Lady" (380th BG), and wearing serial 44-41916 on tail)

44-44175 - Pima Air and Space Museum, Tucson, Arizona (first painted as "Paisano/Shoot You're Covered" and later painted as "Bungay Buckaroo")

44-44272 - Fantasy of Flight, Polk City, Florida (wears livery of 42-50551 "Joe")

44-48781 - Barksdale Global Power Museum, Bossier City, Louisiana (restored in 1982 with livery of "Laiden Maiden"; later painted as "Louisiana Belle II"; now wears livery of "Rupert The Roo II", 42-73076)

Under Restoration

44-41956 - Werribee, Victoria, Australia -B-24 Liberator Memorial Restoration Fund -- Under restoration for display: Built at Consolidated San Diego as B-24M-10-CO. Assigned to RAAF No. 7 OTU as A72-176 at East Sale Airfield. Struck off 23 March 1948. Wings and tail scrapped. Purchased in 1948 by George Toye, and moved to his property in 1952. Tail and wings taken from 42-41091 "Bunny Hop/Flying Wolf." See past newsletters for stories on the restoration project: <http://380th.org/NEWS/NewsStories-Links.html#AU>.

To find out about all of these Liberators, go to: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_surviving_Consolidated_B-24_Liberators

WILLOW RUN

Willow Run, also known as Air Force Plant 31, was a manufacturing complex in Michigan, United States, located between Ypsilanti Township and Belleville, constructed by the Ford Motor Company for the mass production of aircraft, especially the B-24 Liberator heavy bomber. Construction of the Willow Run Bomber Plant began in 1940 and was completed in 1942.

As a defense plant that began production in 1941, Willow Run initially built components. The aircraft manufacturer, Douglas Aircraft, and the B-24's designer, Consolidated Aircraft, assembled the finished airplane. Remote assembly proved problematic, however, and by October 1941 Ford received permission to produce complete Liberators. Willow Run's Liberator assembly line ran through May 1945, building almost half of all the Liberators produced.

Willow Run Airport was built as part of the bomber plant. The airfield passed into civilian hands after the war and is now controlled by Wayne County Airport Authority. Part of the airport complex operated at various times as a research facility affiliated with the University of Michigan, and as a secondary United States Air Force Installation. Willow Run Airport has remained active as a cargo and general aviation airfield. Since 1992, it has been home to the Yankee Air Museum. See article in Newsletter #63 (June 2017) about the Yankee Air Museum: <http://380th.org/NEWS/NEWS63-web.pdf>

Ford built the factory and sold it to the government, then leased it back for the duration of the war. When Ford declined to purchase the facility after the war, Kaiser-Frazer Corporation gained ownership, and in 1953 General Motors took ownership and operated the factory as Willow Run Transmission until 2010. Following the 2010 closure of Willow Run Transmission, the factory complex was managed by the RACER trust until it was sold in 2016 to an entity created by the State of Michigan, which leases the property to the American Center for Mobility.

History

Willow Run takes its name from a small tributary of the Huron River that meandered through pastureland fields and woodland along the Wayne–Washtenaw county line until the late 1930s. By the mid-1920s, a local family operating as Quirk Farms had bought the land in Van Buren Township that became the airport. Quirk Farms was purchased by automobile pioneer Henry Ford in 1931. Ford, a keen exponent of the virtues of country living, used it as farmland for a “social engineering” experiment that brought inner-city boys aged 17-19, mostly sons of dead or disabled WWI vets, to the Willow Run Camp to learn about farming, nature, and the rural way of life. Camp Willow Run shut down after the 1941 season with the coming of the bomber plant; many

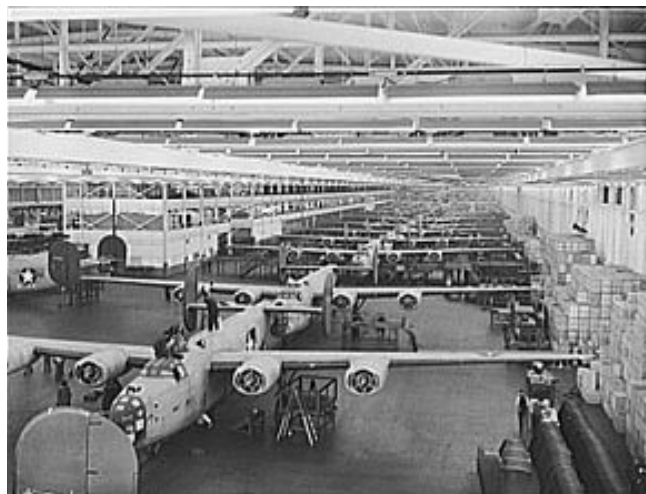
of the young men went to work at the Willow Run village industry plant, and others moved on to the apprentice and trade school.

From farm to flight line

In early 1941 the Federal government established the Liberator Production Pool Program to meet the projected demand for the B-24, and the Ford company joined the program shortly thereafter. Ford Motor would not only build the bombers, it would supply the airfield as well; the farm at Willow Run was an ideal location for the airfield's runways, being under the personal ownership of Henry Ford and sited between the main roads and rail lines connecting Detroit with Ann Arbor and points to the west. Easements were acquired from landowners across the county line in Ypsilanti Township where the Liberator plant (and eventually the airport terminal) would be built.

Although officially retired (his son, Edsel, was directing manufacturing output), Henry Ford still had a say in the company's affairs and refused government financing for Willow Run, preferring to have his company build the factory and sell it to the government, which would lease it back to the company for the duration of the war. Ford Motor was to have first option on the plant after war production ended, an option it ultimately chose not to exercise. Ford would eventually sell its land to the Reconstruction Finance Corporation's Defense Plant Corporation in July 1944, shortly after the Ford farms were transferred to the company's ownership.

The main structure of the Willow Run bomber plant had 3,500,000 square feet (330,000 m²) of factory space and an aircraft assembly line over a mile (1600 m) long. It was thought to be the largest factory under one roof anywhere in the world. The



WILLOW RUN (continued)

Willow Run plant featured a large turntable two-thirds of the way along the assembly line, allowing the B-24 production line to make a 90° turn before continuing to final assembly.

Liberator production

Despite intensive design efforts, the opening of the plant still saw some mismanagement and bungling, and quality was uneven for some time. Although the Ford Trimotor had been a success in the 1920s, the company had since shied away from aviation, and initially, Ford was assigned to provide B-24 components with final assembly performed by Consolidated at its Fort Worth plant, or by fellow licensee Douglas Aircraft at its Tulsa, Oklahoma, plant. However, in October 1941, Ford received permission from Consolidated and the Army to assemble complete Liberators on its own at its new Willow Run facility. Even then it would take nearly a year before finished Liberators left the factory.

A 1943 committee authorized by Congress to examine problems at the plant issued a highly critical report; the Ford Motor Company had created a production line that too closely resembled an automobile assembly line “despite the warning of many experienced aircraftmen.”

Although the jumping of an automotive company into aircraft production posed these quality problems, it also brought remarkable production rates. The plant held the distinction of being the world’s largest enclosed “room.” The first Ford-built Liberator rolled off the Willow Run line in September 1942; the first series of Willow Run Liberators was the B-24E.

The Willow Run Plant had many initial startup problems, due primarily to the fact that Ford employees were used to automobile mass production and found it difficult to adapt these techniques to aircraft production. The plant at Willow Run was also beset with labor difficulties, high absentee rates, and rapid employee turnover. The factory was nearly an hour’s drive from Detroit, and the imposition of wartime gasoline and tire rationing had made the daily commute difficult. In only one month, Ford had hired 2,900 workers but had lost 3,100.

Henry Ford was violently anti-union and there were serious labor difficulties, including a massive strike. In addition, Henry Ford refused on principle to hire women. However, he finally relented and did employ “Rosie the Riveters” on his assembly lines, probably more because so many of his potential male workers had been drafted into the military than due to any sudden change of principle on his part.

At the request of the government, Ford began to decentralize operations and many parts were assembled at



other Ford plants as well as by the company’s sub-contractors, with the Willow Run plant concentrating on final aircraft assembly. The bugs were eventually worked out of the manufacturing processes, and by 1944, Ford was rolling a Liberator off the Willow Run production line every 63 minutes, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

At its peak monthly production (August 1944), Willow Run produced 428 B-24s with highest production listed as 100 completed Bombers flying away from Willow Run between April 24 and April 26, 1944. By 1945, Ford produced 70% of the B-24s in two 9-hour shifts. Ford built 6,972 of the 18,482 total B-24s and produced kits for 1,893 more to be assembled by the other manufacturers. The B-24 holds the distinction of being the most produced heavy bomber in history.

Army Air Forces support and post-production activities

After their manufacture, the next step in the process was the delivery of the aircraft to the operational squadrons. This was done at Willow Run by 1st Concentration Command (1st CC). The 1st CC was responsible for completing the organization and equipment of tactical and combat bombardment squadrons prior to their deployment to the overseas combat theaters. It also provided a final inspection of the aircraft and made any appropriate final changes; i.e., install long-range fuel tanks, remove unnecessary equipment, and give it a final flight safety test.

Once production began, it became difficult to introduce changes dictated by field experience in the various overseas theaters onto the production line in a timely fashion. Consequently, newly constructed Liberators needed modifications for the specific geographic areas they were to be flown in combat. For this reason, a series of Air Technical Service Command modification centers were established for the incorporation of these required theater changes into new Liberators following their manufacture and assignments. There were seven known modification centers: the Birmingham Air Depot in Alabama; Consolidated’s Fort Worth plant, the Oklahoma City Air Materiel Center at Tinker Field, the Tucson Modification Center at Tucson International Airport; the Northwest Airlines Depot

WILLOW RUN (continued)

in Minneapolis; the, Martin-Omaha manufacturing plant, and the Hawaiian Air Depot at Hickam Field. The Birmingham Air Depot's primary mission was modifying Liberators from Willow Run.

Liberator variants produced at Willow Run

The **B-24E** was the first variant of the B-24 that underwent primary manufacture by Ford at Willow Run. Not only did Ford build 490 complete planes, but it also supplied components of B-24Es as kits that could be trucked for final assembly at the factories of Consolidated in Fort Worth and Douglas in Tulsa, 144 and 167 kits.

[Note: The 380th had many **B-24Ds** (manufactured by Consolidated). Ford did not build any aircraft designated as the B-24D; Ford's Ds were designated as the B-24E.]

B-24Es built and fully assembled at Ford were designated B-24E-FO; those assembled at Tulsa and Fort Worth out of parts supplied by Ford were designated B-24E-DT and B-24E-CF, respectively. Because of production delays encountered at Willow Run as a result of the inevitable difficulties and snags involved in the adaptation of automobile manufacturing techniques to aircraft, the B-24Es produced at Willow Run were, generally, obsolete by the time that they began to roll off the production lines, and most were relegated to training roles in the United States and hence few ever saw combat.



TEMPERAMENTAL DUCHESS (42-6982): Example of a Ford B-24E; this one was used as a trainer. The three last digits of the serial number on the nose invariably identify a plane as a training aircraft in the U.S.

The **B-24H** was the first variant produced by Ford at Willow Run in large numbers that went into combat. The B-24H differed from earlier B-24s by having a second turret placed in the nose of the aircraft to increase defensive firepower. Because of the many structural changes required to accommodate the nose turret, the first B-24Hs were delivered slightly behind schedule, with the first machines rolling off the production lines at Ford in late June 1943. Production for the B-24H at Willow Run was 1,780.



BIG MOGUL (42-52078): Example of a Ford B-24H; she was in the 15th AF, 451st BG, 726th BS

Upon the introduction of the **B-24J**, all three of the Liberator manufacturing plants converted to the production of this version. The B-24J incorporated a hydraulically driven tail turret and other defensive armament modifications in the nose of the aircraft. The bomber plant produced its first B-24J in April 1944; 1587 were built at Willow Run.

LIBERTY BELLE (42-50647): Example of a Ford B-24J; from the 8th AF, 392nd BG, 577th BS



During June 1944, the Army determined that the San Diego (Consolidated) and Willow Run plants would be capable of meeting all future requirements for Liberator production. The Boeing B-29 Superfortress was taking over the long-range bombing role in the Pacific Theater and no new B-24 units were programmed for deployment in the other combat theaters of Europe, the Mediterranean or in the CBI.

The **B-24L** was the first product of the new, downsized Liberator production pool. It was an attempt to reverse the trend toward ever-increasing weight of the Liberator as more and more armament, equipment, and armor had been added, with no corresponding increase in engine power. With the weight reduction and more powerful engines, it also had a much longer range than earlier models. 1250 B-24L aircraft were built at Willow Run.

The **B-24M** was the last large-scale production variant of the Liberator. Apart from a new tail turret, the B-24M differed little from the B-24L. The first B-24Ms were delivered in October 1944, and by the end of its production in 1945, Willow Run had built 1677; 124 Ford-built B-24Ms were cancelled before delivery.

Ford had switched over to the single-tailed **B-24N** in May 1945, but the end of the war in Europe in the same month brought a rapid end to Liberator production; the contract with Ford was officially terminated on 31 May 1945 and orders for 5168 unbuilt B-24N-FO bombers were cancelled as well. The delivery of seven YB-24Ns by Ford in June 1945 marked the end of Liberator production at Willow Run.

WILLOW RUN (continued)



44-52054:
Example
of a Ford
B-24N

Although Willow Run is synonymous with the Liberator bomber, B-24s were not the only planes manufactured at Willow Run. As the US Air Force struggled to expand its airlift capacity during the Korean War, Kaiser-Frazer built C-119 Flying Boxcar cargo planes at Willow Run under license from Fairchild Aircraft, producing an estimated 88 C-119s between 1951 and 1953. Kaiser also built two C-123 Provider airframes at Willow Run, which were scrapped before delivery, as a procurement scandal involving the company put an end to any chance for future Air Force contracts.

Redevelopment efforts and the Yankee Air Museum

The airfield, owned by the Wayne County Airport Authority since 2004, continues to operate as the Willow Run Airport and is primarily used for cargo and general aviation flights. The Yankee Air Museum resides on the airport grounds, occupying as of April 2013 a 47,000-square-foot (4,400 m²) hangar and other properties.

The museum would consolidate operations scattered on various parcels at Willow Run, and the Trust expects to clear the remainder of the plant for redevelopment. The 175,000-square-foot (16,300 m²) portion of the original bomber plant that Yankee seeks to preserve is less than 5% of the massive facility, comprises the end of the former B-24 assembly line at the far eastern edge of the property, and contains the two iconic bay doors from which the finished Consolidated B-24 Liberator bombers exited the plant during World War II.

Demolition of the majority of the Willow Run facility began in December 2013. The Yankee Air Museum was able to gain control of approximately 144,900 square feet of the plant, and plans to develop a permanent home for the museum. By mid-2014, the majority of the facility had been demolished and cleared.

To learn more or visit the Yankee Air Museum, go to:

<https://yankeearmuseum.org/>

Sources:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Willow_Run

<http://www.b24bestweb.com/reluctantdragon-v1-1.htm>

<http://www.b24bestweb.com/054-v2.htm>

<http://www.b24bestweb.com/temperamentalduchess2.htm>

<http://www.b24bestweb.com/bigmogul1.htm>

<http://www.b24bestweb.com/libertybelle-v8-1.htm>

During the Spring of 1945, the 380th started to receive "L" and "M" models of the B-24. Ones that came from the Ford Motor Company's Willow Run plant were very easy to identify by their elongated navigator side windows in the nose, triangular side windows in the bombardier's compartment and enclosed waist windows. These two Ford production models were externally very similar and difficult to distinguish from each other.

This difficulty would not be a problem with San Diego produced "M" models for they looked much different than the Ford products. They retained the smaller, bulged, navigator side windows introduced on the B-24J-185-CO, but had a squared bombardier's side window, like the late Js. They also had enclosed waist windows. Both the -FO and -CO produced "L" and "M" models occasionally used a new, lighter, hand-operated tail turret. (Source: Horton, Best in the Southwest, p. 468.)

Willow Run made one last change to their B-24s with the introduction of the M-25-FO model; they made the front part of the canopy "V" shaped by taking out the flat center panel and the two triangular air vent windows. Aircraft with this modification had serials that began with 44-51252. Very few of these planes found their way into the 380th's inventory.

Sources:

<http://380th.org/HISTORY/aircraft-types.html>

<http://380th.org/HISTORY/All-Aircraft-byModel.htm>



DADDY OF 'EM ALL (44-49860): B-24L Model; 5th AF, 380th BG, 528th BS, Mindoro



POM POM EXPRESS (44-50396): B-24M Model; 5th AF, 380th BG, 531st BS, Mindoro

TYPES OF B-24 MODELS USED IN THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC

On first appearance the most distinctive feature between any two B-24s is the type of armament protection of the nose of the aircraft. This is reflected in the appearance of the successive models of the B-24 and their variants as WWII progressed.

The several separate groupings (Types) are as follows:

1. The so-called "Greenhouse" nosed B-24D with only manually-operated machine guns as nose protection. All of the Initial Deployment aircraft of the 380th Bomb Group were of this type.
2. Modification of an original "Greenhouse" nosed B-24D to carry a Consolidated A6A tail turret in the nose. In the case of the 380th, these were all theatre modifications carried out at the Townsville, Australia, Depot. Some of our original planes were so modified, but all replacement aircraft received after August 1943 carried such armament. These were called Hawaii noses to distinguish them from Type 3, which were called Oklahoma noses.
3. In addition to theatre modifications, i.e., Townsville, there was a stateside effort to supply a few such modifications before going overseas. These were carried out at the Oklahoma City Depot and were distinctively different from Type 2.
4. The initial B-24J models, which had the A6A nose turret installed at the factory.
5. B-24Js with the A6A turret replaced by the A6B, which was lighter and could be more easily streamlined into the fuselage.
6. B-24Js with the horn type pitot tubes of the earlier models replaced by a pitot tube placed low on the left side of the nose.
7. Type 6 B-24Js with a small window installed behind the bombardier's window on each side to increase visibility for the bombardier.
8. Replacement of the A6B Consolidated turret with the Emerson A-15 electric turret. The Consolidated turrets were all hydraulically operated. All subsequent models used the Emerson turret for the nose protection.
9. B-24M aircraft by Consolidated. Very similar in appearance to Type 8. However, these aircraft carried newer radar and other equipment. (There was also a Consolidated B-24L but the 380th did not receive any; one was borrowed for a short period from the 90th Bomb Group.)

10.-12. B-24s manufactured by the Ford Motor Company at Willow Run, Michigan. These differed from the aircraft of Consolidated by having a large "balcony" window in each side of the nose to increase visibility.

10. B-24L-FO. In addition to the above, this design featured a lightweight tail station with gun movement hydraulic boost but no full turret.

11. B-24M-FO. Returned to the tail turret but had increased electronic features of B-24M-CO.

12. B-24M-FO with a V-shaped (2-piece) pilots windshield to increase pilot visibility.

SOME FURTHER GENERAL NOTES REGARDING 380TH AIRCRAFT

Until the arrival of FORD-Willow Run built Ls and Ms in Summer 1945 at Mindoro in The Philippines, all 380th assigned aircraft were of Consolidated (later Consolidated-Vultee) Aircraft manufacture. Of these, all but three were built at the San Diego, California, plant.

There were no very early B-24 models (B, C) assigned to the 380th.

There were no E, F, G, H, K, or N models of the B-24 assigned to the Pacific Theatres of War. Es and early Gs were used for crew training in the United States. All H models were sent to Europe. All late G models were used in the Mediterranean Theatre of Operation. F and K models were experimental only. The N model was the production K but cancelled at war's end.

There were 39 identified sub-types or sub-models of the B-24. Of these, 13 served with the 380th.

To save weight, all 5th Air Force B-24s had their ball turrets removed and replaced by a Scarff-ring mounted set of twin-50 caliber machine guns. All other Air Forces and the RAAF kept the ball turrets.

Sources: <http://380th.org/HISTORY/partV-models.html> (written by Theodore J. Williams)

To learn more: <http://380th.org/HISTORY/aircraft-types.html> (written by Theodore J. Williams)

For information on additional models and types:
<http://www.aviation-history.com/consolidated/b24.html>
<http://www.b24bestweb.com/>
http://www.usaaf-in-cbi.com/Liberator_ID/Liberator_ID.htm

B-24 DESIGNATION EXPLANATION

A note here about the B-24 designations: each aircraft was designated as B-24 followed by the model series, block number, and manufacturer: e.g., B-24J-135-CO (this is a type J, block 135, manufactured by Consolidated San Diego).

The block designation was introduced because the production line was moving fast and so too was technology and new equipment. A certain number of changes were “saved up” and added to the production line together. The block system allowed the B-24D to be modernized progressively to the B-24M without disrupting the production line and also allowed the changes to be documented (e.g., for servicing and repair manuals) and accounted for so that the aircrew and mechanics could keep track of what specifically was in each individual aircraft.

Designed by Consolidated, a small pool of manufacturers produced the B-24s: Consolidated San Diego (CO), Consolidated Fort Worth (CF), Ford Willow Run (FO), Douglas (DT), and North American (NT).

THINKING OF PUBLISHING MEMOIRS?

Thinking of writing a book on your veteran’s WWII experiences? Things you should consider first:

1. Research similar books and find a particular reason why THIS biography would be of interest to others, and how his WWII life is different from all the others already published; what’s “special” about him or his service that will stand out.
2. Research not only what and where the market is, but what is similar already on the market or recently published and what would make your book stand out from the others.

These issues are probably more important to the budding author than the process of getting published and finding a publisher (or self-publishing). Finding the answers to these questions should let you know if you should publish for others or just print memoirs for yourself and your family/descendents.

Note that the person paying for the book is the “publisher,” and the “printer” is the one doing the printing; many people confuse these two.

Once you determine that you want to publish for others (sell books), you will need to decide if you want to self-publish or use a publishing company.

Some authors self-publish because it is easier and quicker than trying to submit to different publishers. Self-publishing isn’t necessarily cheaper, but you do have control over your book and who sees it. Find a book printer by doing research online; for small numbers, use digital printing and for over 1000 copies, use offset printing. There are services now that print per book ordered, so you don’t have inventory.

As for publishing, research the sorts of books publishers produce. This sort of book needs to be targeted to publishers of similar genres.

To find a literary agent, this link was suggested by one author: How to Find a Literary Agent: Get Signed as an Author: <https://blog.reedsy.com/how-to-find-a-literary-agent/>

You may want to do research to find those publishers that accept proposals without a literary agent. Two resources suggested are:

- 15 Book Publishers That Don’t Require a Literary Agent: <https://writingtipsoasis.com/book-publishers-that-dont-require-a-literary-agent/>
- Barnes and Nobles’ publishing program: <https://press.barnesandnoble.com/>

There are many books and online blogs and articles out there about publishing. Educate yourself on the process and see if it is worth your time and effort to use a publishing company or self-publish, or if you should just print copies for your family and friends.

A quick online search came up with the following resources:

- How to Publish a Book in 2022: 10 Steps to Success: <https://blog.reedsy.com/how-to-publish-a-book/>
- Writer’s Clique: <https://writersclique.com/book-publishing/>
- Should You Self-Publish Your Book? 5 Essential Questions to Help You Decide: <https://thewritelife.com/should-you-self-publish/>

Thanks to these authors for contributing ideas and suggestions to this article: Valarie Anderson (with the assist to Martha Collins), Steve Dixon, Robert Livingstone, David Welch (assist to Craig Bellamy), Kara Martinelli White

Resources suggested here are only offered as suggestions or starting points, not endorsements.

380th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

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B-24J-135-CO, 42-110115 - DRUNKARD'S DREAM



DRUNKARD'S DREAM, manufactured by Consolidated San Diego in January 1944, arrived overseas (Townsville) in April 1944. She was assigned to the 380th's 531st Squadron and flew 74 missions, terminating with a take-off crash on Jun 18, 1945.

This photo was sent to Barbara Gotham, June 14, 2015 (though it was not identified as "Drunkard's Dream" until September 2022), from Paul H. Tedesco, Ph.D.;

Professor Tedesco received the photo from the late Sgt William Lee, Group Headquarters, Ground Staff, Intelligence, Topographer. 380th website updated with this photo in September 2022: <http://380th.org/HISTORY/PARTV/DrunkardsDream.htm>

See also: <http://http://www.b24bestweb.com/drunkardsdream1.htm>

TAPS

LEST WE FORGET



528th - Hagen, Harry P., Navigator, Ortman's Crew (24), DOD May 15, 2010, St. Petersburg, Florida, reported by his daughter, Nancy Nick

528th - Hagen, Gertrude V. ("Trudy"), Widow of Harry P. Hagen, DOD March 31, 2022, Seminole, Florida, reported by her daughter, Nancy Nick

529th - Clark, J(ohn) Maben, Jr., Gunner, Nakardo's Crew (47), DOD May 1, 2013, Richmond, Virginia, reported by his neighbor, Samantha Renneker. From his obituary: *Unbeknownst to most, he was a spiritual man who prayed for strangers, tenants, neighbors, relatives, friends, caregivers and the mailman. Honor Maben with kindness to others.*

529th - Fjare, Orvin B., Aircraft Commander/Pilot, Fjare's Crew, DOD June 27, 2011, Helena, Montana, reported by his nephew, Monte Fjare

529th - Fjare, Sigrid Solberg (wife of Orvin B. Fjare), DOD March 28, 2009, reported by her nephew, Monte Fjare

529th - McMullen, Francis Raymond ("Mac"), Tailgunner, Barton's Crew, DOD May 19, 2021, Burney, California, reported by his son, Craig McMullen

530th - Muccia, Joseph A., Sr., Ground Staff, Aircraft Armorer, DOD May 10, 1976, Rockville Centre, New York, reported by his grandson, Joseph A. Muccia III

530th - Muccia, Mary N., Widow of Joseph A. Muccia, Sr., DOD March 7, 2002, Rockville Centre, New York, reported by her grandson, Joseph A. Muccia III

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

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531st - Leiner, Miriam, widow of Samuel Leiner (his TAPS January 19, 2015, Flight Engineer, Koller's Crew), DOD March 14, 2022, Tom's River, New Jersey, returned newsletter

531st - Spearin, Frank A., Jr., Ground Staff, Communications, Radio Operator, DOD August 12, 2011, Randolph, Massachusetts, returned newsletter

NOTICES

If you have any inquiries, requests, or other information you would like to relay to other 380th Bomb Group Association members, please write to: Barbara Gotham (see contact info below in "How to Report TAPS").

Also, if you have any information pertaining to any of the mail calls in any issue of THE FLYING CIRCUS, you can respond directly to the person inquiring (if contact info is provided) or to Barb Gotham to pass along to that person.

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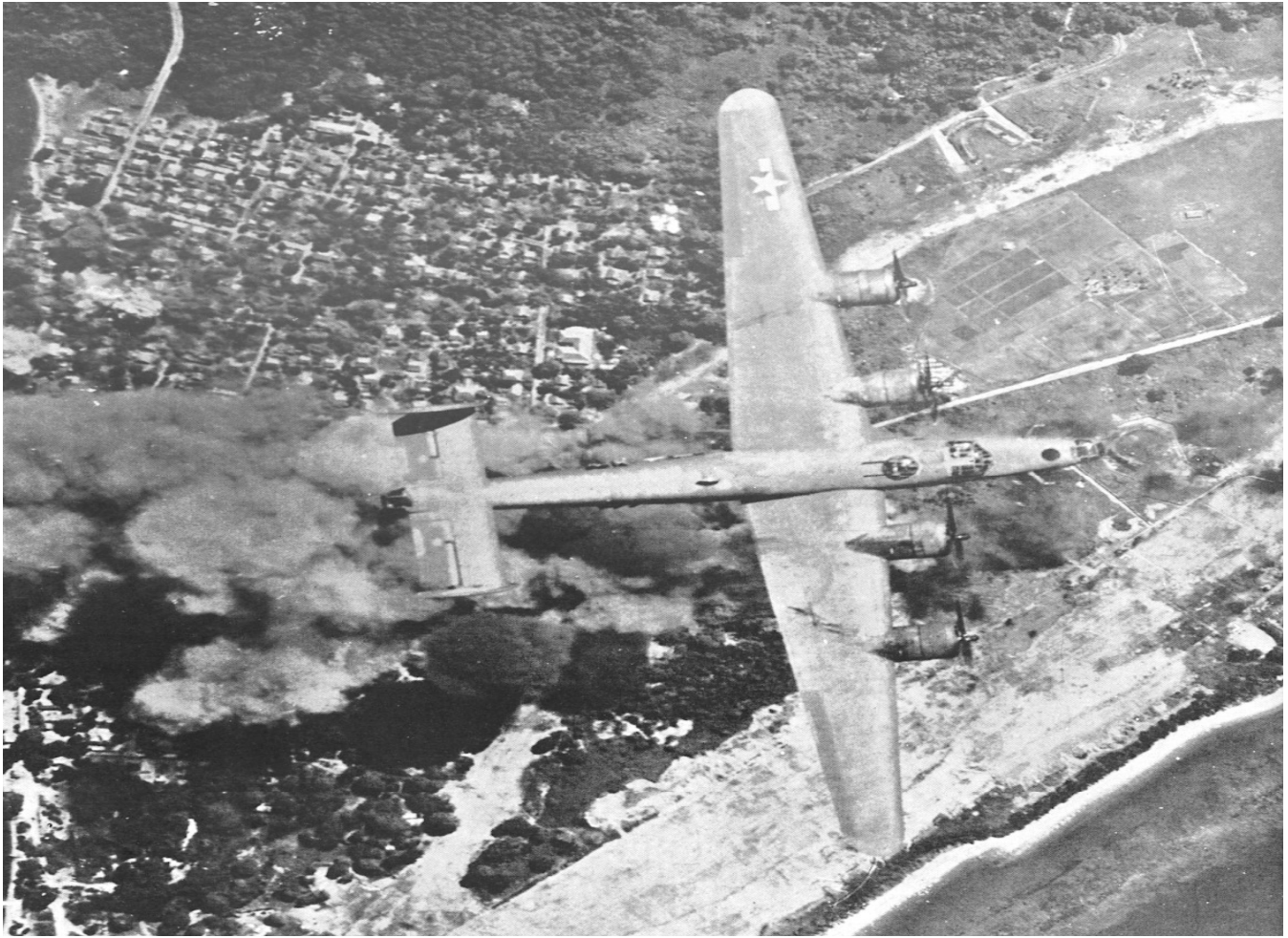
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*This Newsletter is Dedicated to All the Men of the
380th Bombardment Group (H) in World War II*

with special thanks to

*Forrest E. (Tommy) Thompson, Lt. Col. USAF (Ret.) and Helen H. Thompson
who had the foresight, perseverance, and love of the 380th Bombardment Group (H) and its history,
traditions, and personnel to organize, succor, and guide the
380th Bombardment Group Association, Inc. (our predecessor organization, from 1982-1999)*

*and to Theodore (Ted) J. Williams
for his dedication to preserving the 380th's history and for continuing the work of the
Thompsons in guiding our current organization from 1999-2006*

*and to Thomas (Tom) M. Hunt
for his support, guidance and commitment to the 380th Bomb Group Association during his lifetime.*

Our everlasting thanks and love go out to them all.