



# 315th Newsletter

Published by  
WORLD WAR II 315th TROOP CARRIER GROUP ASS'N.

April 1997

## MILWAUKEE GATHERING

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### (Business Meeting)

Reading of the previous Business Meeting minutes was dispensed with. A report was given on the recently opened 8th AF Museum in Savannah, GA. Arrangements have been completed for an appropriate plaque to be displayed there in recognition of the 315th as a one time member of the 8th. Nominations to the 315th Board were William S. Perkins, Charles W. Lovett and Dr. Newman Riechman; J. H. "Bert" Petersen to be President, and Ray M. Schwartz Vice President. All were approved. Finances were reviewed, income and expense actions explained, and the \$20/year dues announced. Site of the 1998 Reunion was discussed including recommendations from the floor. Voting considered three locations: Tampa, Dayton and Colorado Springs. Colorado Springs was selected.

Numbers were down from past reunions but the comradie level remained as strong and sincere as ever when the 315th Association assembled last September at Milwaukee's downtown Hyatt Regency Hotel. The four day event was filled with tours, meetings, banquets, old friendships renewed and old stories embellished.

Thursday featured a full-day's trip to Oshkosh with two special stops. First at Basler Turbo Conversions where weary C-47s go through major modification including cabin extension, turbo power, modern electronics and much more to emerge ready for added decades in the air. Second was a visit to the Experimental Aircraft Association's headquarters and museum. A unique treat for all of us whose lives have mirrored the era of flight.

Friday morning the Board of Directors met and the afternoon featured a City tour. Saturday included the bi-annual business meeting, a special tour for the ladies, and the traditional evening banquet. Sunday many attendees climbed aboard an Edelweiss River boat to enjoy a cruise with sumptuous brunch.

[Complete reports of the Board and Business meetings can be obtained from Recording Secretary "Doc" Cloer.]

(For photos see pages 5 and 6)

### (Board Meeting)

Requests from different organizations for the Association's mailing list were denied. Requests to include solicitations in Newsletters were denied. A review of income and expenses was conducted. Agreed that dues be raised to \$20 per year and reductions be effected in the number and costs of publications. Discussed whether to explore combining reunions with other groups. Decided against. Potential sites of 1998 reunion reviewed. Dayton would be offered at the Business meeting as favored, with Colorado Springs next. Nominations for the Board and Officers to be presented at the Business meeting.

315th TROOP CARRIER GROUP ASSOCIATION  
Olmsted, Florence, Aldermaston, Blida, Spanhoe, Amiens

**OFFICIAL NOTICE BOARD**

**Message from the President:**

Our first professionally run reunion by the Armed Forces Reunion Corp (AFR), held last September in Milwaukee, was a resounding success. Much credit goes to Past President Stan Smith who acted as liaison between the Group and AFR. Hotel accommodations, tour selection, banquet all A-1. Even the weather cooperated.

Our next biennial is set for Colorado Springs in early September '98. AFR will handle the event and have appointed Sharon Armstrong in charge. If it goes as well as Milwaukee we should have another great one.

Colorado Springs is one of the best sites for Air Force reunions with multiple tour options including the Air Force Academy. More information on dates, hotels, tours, etc., will be in future newsletters. You won't want to miss this one.

Taps sounded for Past President John Andrews in November, when he joined his beloved wife, Ruby. A phrase frequently used by John describing persons he liked was "they are my kind of people." The 315th joins in saying, "John and Ruby, you were our kind of people."

For the first time in almost twenty years, Ed Papp is not listed as Newsletter Editor. Ed passed away shortly after John. If we didn't appreciate just how much he contributed to the Group, we should now. Ed did it all: taking reunion pictures, up-dating the roster, getting out the Newsletter, producing the pictorial. Volunteers have stepped forward to take over his work. Age and attrition will dictate future changes, but I predict a group of us will hang together as long as God lets us.

J. H. "Bert" Petersen

+++++

**STANDING ORDERS**

All Fit and Able 315th Troop Carrier Group Association members are ordered to stand by pending receipt of Official Notification of dates for the 1998 Reunion in Colorado Springs. Upon receipt of such, members will prepare to assemble at stated location. Full equipment will be carried, to include pictures, memories and memorabilia, prescriptions, reading glasses, and such other glasses as may be required.

Failure to appear will be so noted on the Group's Morning Report.

\*Naples-Foggia \*Sicily \*Rome-Arno \*Normandy \*Northern France \*Central Europe \*Rhineland

### "GREEN LIGHT....GO....GO....GO"

*(What happened to a stick of paratroopers when the Green Light flashed on over Normandy at 0230, 6 June 1944. Bill Brinson wrote to the man who headed the stick he dropped from C-47 #266. Here's his reply, edited slightly from the original.)*

5-21-96

Dear Mr. Brinson,

I was very pleasantly surprised, and pleased, to receive your letter as I have often wondered if your plane returned safely to England and which I now assume was the case. Perhaps you will recall that just before we took off you (or maybe your co-pilot) gave me your name and asked me to contact you after the operation in order to let you know how our "stick" fared. Well, unfortunately I was captured and the Germans relieved me of all written information that I was carrying so your name was lost and then, of course, I had no way of contacting you.

As records of the operation now indicate, we were badly disorganized and on landing never really functioned as a unit. For the most part there were many small groups consisting of 5 to 10 men that came together by accident all generally trying to get oriented and get on with the mission. Some were successful and others were completely lost and/or were ultimately pinned down (as we were) by troops of the German 91st Air Landing Div., before they could get established as platoon or company units.

(see "Green" page 4)

(clip and save)

#### WHERE TO SEND STUFF

<u>Address Information</u>	<u>Newsletter Articles</u>	<u>Dues and Donations</u>
(includes changes, deaths, new members, drop from mailings, etc.)	(true or false)	Sanford Friedman
Sanford Friedman	J.S. Smith	2425 Buckhurst Dr.
2425 Buckhurst Dr.	1967 Iowa Ave NE	Beachwood, OH 44122
Beachwood, OH 44122	St. Petersburg, FL 33703	216 464-1528
216 464-1528	813 527-0587	
or	E-mail: 105221.113@compuserve.com	
Robert L. Cloer		
1417 Valley View Dr.		
Yuba City, CA 95093		
916 674-3681		

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GREEN

I was never able to determine our location and as the day wore on we assembled perhaps 12 to 14 men and endeavored to advance north along a macadam highway. We encountered some pretty strong resistance and our group became further fragmented into groups of two or three. In my case my runner, a young boy of 18 whose last name was Henry, was killed and a companion 2nd Lt. was shot through the hips. I was not wounded but a bullet passed through my jump suit lapel at the neck and the shoulder fold of my uniform, without touching me. I'm not sure as to the damage we may have inflicted on the Germans as we were constantly moving and did not have the ability to make any assessment of our efforts. I am sorry that I can't accurately report on others that were in the plane--what with the passage of quite a few years, memory dims--I believe that several became prisoners and I am aware of hearing, when I rejoined my unit, that one or two who were wounded were held in German hospitals and later came back under US control as the front advanced.

Following capture we were marched to Cherbourg and then pointed in the direction of Rennes. During the march from Cherbourg to Rennes three of us (myself, H.J. Carroll and a shot down fighter pilot whose name eludes me) escaped and we were behind the lines for ten days before being recaptured and this time they got us to Rennes. From there we went by box car to Germany then to Poland. When the Russians came through in Jan., H.J. Carroll and I again managed to escape and we made our way to Odessa, then to Egypt, Italy and back to France where I rejoined my unit in Germany in time to cross the Elbe. I received a major wound from a sniper while clearing out a house, was air evacuated to a general hospital, then home and didn't pull any further active duty as the war wound down.

I returned to Normandy in 1961 with the idea in mind of trying to locate my landing site but after driving around for about a day, I gave up. Perhaps my memory was bad, the area had been changed or I was just unfortunate in my search. It's strange that we all have to go back and make a try at locating something or someone--maybe it's a need to put an end to the experience.

I am glad to hear that you still have contact with your crew--I think the Air Force crews had a little closer personal relationship than we did in the infantry just by reason of being fewer in number and working so closely with each other. I have only kept up with one Army contact--H.J. Carroll who now lives in Sedona, Ariz.--we talk on the phone frequently and try to get together as the opportunities present themselves. He is currently fighting the loss of his voice as a result of throat cancer and is learning to speak all over again with the help of an implant valve or alternate device. I assure him he is sufficiently stubborn that he won't have a problem with a small case of cancer--In fact however, I am happy to report that he is getting along very well which is a great relief.

Thank you for taking the trouble to contact me and I wish you all the best!

Very truly your,

s. Carl F. Clawson  
Carl F. Clawson

*(from the editor)*

**WE'RE LOOKING FOR:**

Stories: We have some great contributors; but, want to hear from more of you. Most articles are from the aircrew side. Ground personnel outnumbered air by five to one. Talk to us, story-wise: memorable experiences, foul ups that worked out, whatever.

## ZIGGY FINDS OAKEY.....and OAKEY REMEMBERS ARNHEM

For fifty-one years I tried unsuccessfully to locate Oakey H. McKim, the Radio Operator aboard old "622" on 18 September 1944...the second day of Operation Market Garden...heavy morning fog DELAYING our scheduled TAKEOFF for FOUR HOURS. We didn't know it then, but that nemesis of air-crews, FOG, probably saved the lives of many "Gooney-Bird" crew members and the battle-bound paratroopers eager and tensed to be "over" the drop-zone (DZ). The day before a persevering Kraut point-patrol had goose-stepped onto a bonanza...recovering a complete set of the TOP SECRET plans from a wrecked WACO CG4-A glider; maps showing our routes, ETAs and DZs. Fortunately for us waiting the fog to clear, an alerted, ALOFT, Luftwaffe ran low on fuel...returning to bases; and the confused Wehrmach...puzzled when the transport formations didn't show-up as scheduled, suspected a "Yankee ruse" (never checked the weather in the Isles) and retrenched their troops to nearby battles. When, late...the embattled British (dropped yesterday) barely hanging on to the Dutch end of the Arnhem bridge, expecting the critically need reinforcement hours earlier...we finally reach the DZ eight or ten kilometers West of the targeted river span, the "drop" was somewhat hectic, but by no means the DISASTER AVOIDED due to the fog! Vertically deployed (pretty much on target, I think) was David McPhee, a kilt wearing Scot veteran of the British First Airborne Division, 4th Parachute Brigade, HQ Defence Platoon and about nineteen of his "Red-Devil" combat buddies and a Jumpmaster.

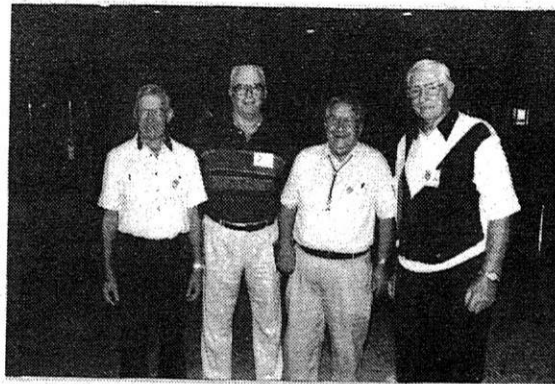
Quoting Oakey (letter to me concerning Arnhem): "as we dived away, there was a -47 upside down, its parapacks (racked underneath) still in place...along side two white (aircrew chutes) strung out, unopened, the bodies of the crew-men not moving.

On our right was a sandbagged German machine gun nest blazing away...not at us. Hyder (Don, co-pilot) had the Thompson submachine gun (from the Emergency Kit) and was blazing away at them through the right-side window/vent."

Locating Oakey was surprisingly easy. Gloria and I, visiting our eldest son James (and family) in Tucson, AZ were reading the daily newspaper when he yelled: "Dad, who would you like to locate?" He was experimenting with a new computer software...the total US white-pages telephone directory. He had already "located" the rest of the family, some with old addresses. "Oakey McKim," I quickly replied. Shortly, he said, "there is a 'O' McKim in Silver Springs, MD...I'll call the number." Seconds later he inquired of the voice on the other end..."were you ever a member of the 315th Troop Carrier Group?" The reply in the affirmative astounded us all! Moments later I was chatting with my old radio operator. About four weeks later when he visited relatives in Yuma, AZ, Gloria and I drove over to see the real "McKim"....a wonderful, exciting meeting.

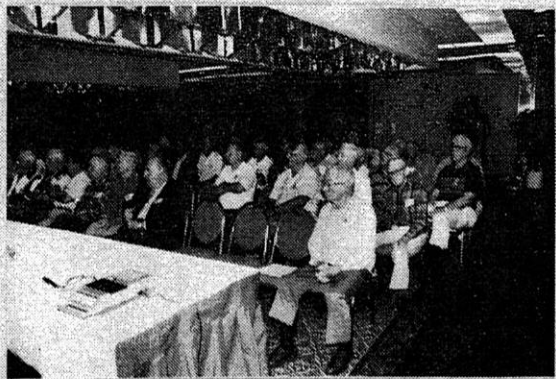
At this writing all four crew members of C-47 315622 are still telling war stories...me, Don Hyder (backup pilot), Fred Drysdale (crew chief) and Oakey. One of our "memory sessions" concerned the paratroop at Grave on 17 September '44....generally agreeing that this mission was a "piece of cake"...light FLAK and ground fire enroute and a fairly quiet DZ.

(see "Oakey" page 8)



upper left: Hdqs Sq.  
upper right: old friends  
middle right 34th Sq.  
lower left: 310th Sq.  
lower right: story time





upper left: Business meeting  
upper right: 43rd Sq.  
middle left: 309th Sq.  
lower left: more stories  
lower right: The Ladies

Photos by Ed Papp



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BUT, for Oakie it was a rather mirthful event. Briefed that the Jerries treated NCOs better than Privates, Oakey wore heavy ODs, his only clean uniform with Sergeants insignia on the sleeves....then a tightly strapped Mae West life preserver...slipped over his head...next a heavy and bulky FLAK vest tied at the sides...and finally, a parachute harness with a Quick-Release system (the Limey style snap-on chute which could be stowed nearby for quick access). Now, quoting Oakey, as we headed for Spanhoe..."crossing the Channel we were very low...I did not see the ripples on the water caused by our props, but I did see that of another C-47 flying on our right wing and slightly higher than us, so I knew we made one. Suddenly I was very warm and sweating and was having difficulty in breathing...having to force air into my lungs. Struggling and gasping for air, I removed the chute harness and slipped out of the Flak vest...surprised and embarrassed to realize that in the excitement of the moment, I had pulled the cords that released the CO2 containers, inflating the Mae West. Needless to say, I cooled off; and the next day (Arnhem) I wore only the chute harness."

Oakey's log also showed that seven days later, the Squadron was back over Grave, this time landing to deliver a complete, critically needed field hospital.

Unheeded Dutch resistance forces advisory messages (warnings), disregarded photo-recon prints disclosing concealed Panzer units, and lightly taken decoded Wehrmach messages caused the Allied "brass:" to badly underestimate Nazi resistance during the prolonged retreat to the Rhine River. As a result the fierce fighting during the liberation of Holland (Operation Market Garden during the Fall of '44) extended through the winter months.

Scorched-earth tactics of the desperate Krauts during the freezing weather left many of the Dutch families dying from exposure and starvation. I recall a sortie to Eindhoven...early in the campaign to provide the Dutch with foodstuff and fuel, when the entire load was 50lb lard cans. The Dutch unloaders devouring the pieces of hard bread pasted with globs of the fatty grease. Many of the Hollanders did not survive that terrible winter, and later, if I recall correctly, Allied bombers, B-17s, B-24s, Lancasters and Halifaxes, were used to drop food bundles and fuel...another facet of the terror and madness of WW II.

'Gotta go. C'est La Guerre!

Ziggy

*(from the editor)*

**BEEN THERE....DONE THAT**

We want to hear from you. Tell us in thirty words or less what you've been doing: read a great book we might enjoy, swam the English Channel, discovered a scenic spot everyone should see, bulldozed a steer, ran into a long lost 315th type, finally set the clock on your VCR (then the power went off), had a great dining experience, won a Triathlon, shot your age in golf (admit it, nine holes), hit the Lottery, published a novel, had your 50th-plus Anniversary. Let your friends know what's happening!



## "MISSING IN ACTION" while DEFENDING MY COUNTRY

*(Chuck Lovett tells us in this story how flying airplanes was not enough. Sometimes it got physical. We publish it in his memory. In February he joined those for whom we play "Taps.")*

I think it was in November 1944 that I flew a mission from Spanhoe to B-78 (Eindhoven) delivering a load of 10 in 1 rations. The return trip was to be via B-58 (Brussels), where we were to pick up a load of wounded for delivery back to England. Glenn Ulrich was my co-pilot on this mission. By the time we arrive at Brussels it was late in the day, and we were told it would be best to RON and evacuate the load of wounded the following morning. This suited us fine as it gave us a chance to go to town and see a little of Brussels. This we did. The crew members split up and each went his separate way. I eventually ended up in a bar, where I had a couple drinks too many. Here there were quite a few servicemen from various countries indulging in the same pastime. One, a representative of one of our allies (I won't say which one) began spouting off about the relative capabilities of U. S. GIs, airmen in particular. The implication was we were inferior to those of his country. I took exception to this and before long a rather heated argument ensued, eventually escalating to the point where we became involved in a bit of fisticuffs. The MPs were called in and we were each marched off to our respective brigs to spend the night.

The following morning I explained the need to get out to the field, but they wouldn't release me until a certain amount of paperwork was accomplished, and that couldn't be done until the officer in charge showed up.

In the meantime Glenn and the rest of the crew were at the field wondering where the heck I was. The wounded (litter cases) were loaded onto the plane and they were ready to go.

Only one thing was missing - me. Glenn waited and waited, expecting me to show up at any time. Finally, he did the only thing he could do. He took off without me, flying the ship back to England by himself.

The MPs finally released me and I rushed out to the field, arriving about 1 1/2 to 2 hours later than I was supposed to. I looked around but my plane wasn't there. I realized what had happened so began looking to see if any of the other C-47s there were headed for Spanhoe or any other place near Spanhoe. There weren't any other 315th ships there. We had been the only 315th ship on that particular mission. I located a C-47 that would be going to the vicinity of London, but they were a little reluctant to give me a ride. Maybe they thought I was a German spy in an American uniform or possibly AWOL or something. Anyway, one of the officers in charge of the field put through a call to Spanhoe to verify that I really was from the 315th and they gave me the go-ahead to dead-head on a plane bound for London. Once in London I caught a train to Kettering. I don't remember how I got from Kettering to Spanhoe - it was probably aboard a bus to within a couple miles of the base and then a walk the rest of the way. When I finally showed up at our Nissen hut, I was relieved to find out that they had not yet packed up my things as they usually do when someone is "Missing in Action."

Naturally, Major Hamby wanted to have a little chat about what had happened. I explained the whole thing in detail, and after I was done he asked me only ONE question: 'who won the fight?'. I told him I thought I had. It must have been the right answer, because there was no further discussion and no reprimand or chewing out whatsoever. I was dismissed and I never heard another word about it.

**TAPS**

**WITH DEEP REGRET WE RECORD  
THE DEATH OF THESE COMRADES  
AND 315TH LADIES**

*(If close friends are on this list a letter to their family would be a thoughtful remembrance.)*

John F. Andrews	Nov.	1996
Edward M. Papp	Dec.	1996
Gerald Lash	Feb.	1996
George Peavy	July	1996
Allen L. Barnes		1996
Russell Smith	Apr.	1996
William R. Dryden		1996
John Cassese	Jan	1997
Robert Crone	Feb	1997
Charles Lovett	Feb	1997
Mary E. (Mrs. Ted Stewart)	Sept	96
Evelyn (Mrs. Bernard) Coggins	Jan	97

**DONATIONS**

A number of Association members have expressed the desire to provide a donation in memory of former comrades or acquaintances. The Association has agreed to accept such through the organization's treasurer and, further, to inform the family a donation has been received.

We gratefully acknowledge donations received in memory of Ed Papp, Evelyn (Mrs. Bernard) Coggins, and J. Cassese from the following: I. Sternoff, B. Coggins, S. Friedman, Wm. Walsh, C. Fittkau, H. B. Lyon and R. Cook.

**A NOTE OF THANKS**

*TO: All of you in the 315th  
FROM: The sons and family of John S. Andrews*

*Said Mrs. Browning, the poet to Charles Kingsley, the novelist, "What is the secret of your life: Tell me, that I may make mine beautiful also." Thinking a moment, the beloved old author replied, "I had a friend."*

*I have had the pleasure of attending the last two reunions, and know firsthand of the bonds and friendships that all of you share. I was, however, completely overwhelmed by your outpouring of love and sympathy when you learned of my father's passing. Words cannot express my gratitude!*

*I want to thank all of you for your phone calls, letters, flowers, thoughts and prayers. I drew great comfort and strength from all of them.*

*Just to let you know, my wife and I will be attending the next reunion in Colorado Springs. Hope to see all of you there!*

*When my father ended his term as president of the 315th Troop Carrier Group Association in St. Louis, he finished his address to you with "An Old Irish Blessing." I am finishing this note the same way:*

*May the road rise to meet you.*

*May the wind be always at your back.*

*The sun shine warm upon your face.*

*The rain fall soft upon your fields.*

*And, until we meet again,*

*May God hold you in the hollow of his hand.*

*May God Bless You All*

*Respectfully yours,*

*s. Fritz Andrews*

*Fritz Andrews*

*(editor's note: Sandy Friedman and wife attended John Andrews funeral. At the luncheon following, attended by some 100 people, they were seated with the family. Sandy was asked to speak to those assembled about John. His response expressed the 315th's great admiration for our Past President.*

(1

**DOLLARS AND SENSE**

The Board of Directors  
at the Milwaukee gathering  
reviewed the Association's financial picture  
and decided a dues increase to \$20/year was  
needed to remain fiscally sound. Accompanying  
decisions made reductions on the expense side. Even with these  
actions greater participation than we have been experiencing is needed.  
A disturbingly low percentage of members pay dues regularly. Sharing of the  
load by those of you who can help would be sincerely appreciated. Join the team!

Send your dues (donations of any amount are also welcome) to:

Sanford Friedman, Treasurer  
WW II 315th Troop Carrier Group Association  
2425 Buckhurst Dr.  
Beachwood, OH 44122

*[Ziggy adds: "Guys!" Everyday each of us spends (or borrows) a "twenty"....just one every twelve months from the same each of us will keep our fifty-plus years of camaraderie filled with warm memories and happy times. Pay your annual Association dues so...God WILCOing, old "622" will keep on flying.]*

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**WANT TO STAY ON-LINE?**

A major Association expense item is publication of the *Newsletter*. The format has been changed in order to -among other reasons- save costs. We trust you will continue to find it interesting. However, should you no longer wish to receive the *Newsletter* please notify Treasurer Friedman, Bob Cloer or the Editor (see 'Where to Send Stuff' for addresses and phone numbers). Thanks.

in September  
COLORADO SPRINGS

THINK

REUNION 1998



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

J. S. Smith, editor  
WW II 315th Troop Carrier Group Assoc.  
1967 Iowa Ave NE  
St. Petersburg, FL 33703

Non profit organization  
Bulk Mail Permit  
St. Petersburg, FL  
Permit #1814

