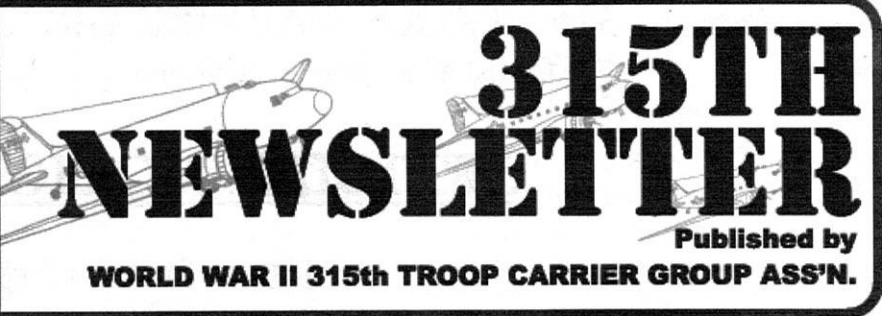


Rone



AUGUST, 2005 EDITION

## Operation Spanhoe 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration of VE-Day May 7-8, 2005

*"The aims of this event are to remember the ones who gave their lives over the war years never to return, to give the people who are still here today a chance to share with others their experiences, to help educate the younger generation by living history re-enactments and, to give them the opportunity to talk to people who have stories to share of those incredible moments at Spanhoe 60 years ago.*

*"It is with great honor we welcome four American pilots who flew Dakotas from Spanhoe in 1944 to Normandy, Market Garden and many others -- Len Thomas, Dick Ford, Ted Stewart and Bill Braun. We also wish to welcome the current CO of the 315<sup>th</sup> Air Lift Wing Colonel Gary Cook who has made the trip with them."*

*Stephen Barker, Chairman of Operation Spanhoe*

With these words the historic reunion at Spanhoe began. It was a monumental weekend with WWII period soldiers, tent camps, vehicles and planes, flyovers, special commemorative memorial service, a simulated war game and much more. Saturday night's program included an evening dance and social gathering. Several thousand visitors enjoyed the two-day event and honored the 315<sup>th</sup> despite cold, windy weather and scattered rain showers.

Perhaps one of the more touching moments of the weekend was when each member was personally handed the following note:

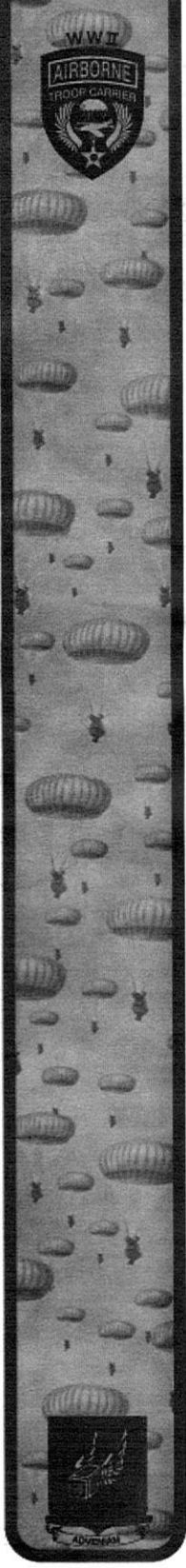
**My sincere thanks for your help in World War II.**

**For 50 years I have lived in peace and freedom, married and raised a family of two children, and now in my retirement pursue my greatest hobby, which is flying.**

**When I pass over the old disused Airfields occupied once by the United States Army Air Corps. I consider how fortunate I am to be able to do this.**

**I also think of all who helped to achieve the peace and especially those who made the supreme sacrifice.**

**Thank you once again, an ever-grateful Englishman. - Paul Knight**



# 315<sup>th</sup> TROOP CARRIER GROUP ASSOCIATION

Olmsted, Florence, Aldermaston, Blida, Spanhoe, Amiens

## OFFICIAL NOTICE BOARD

### Message from the President:

It has been almost 20 years since a bronze plaque with the names of 54 men from the 315th who were killed in action was affixed to the Spanhoe Memorial. In the mean time we have not ceased to age, but the memories of our accomplishments are still fresh in the minds of the local residents. Four of our 315th Group attended a Memorial at Spanhoe early in May and the results are best expressed by a second generation son of Calvin Harris.

"It was a great trip. I think we all came away with real, lasting, good memories. The English people were just great and it was so refreshing to talk to people who were truly grateful for the help of the U.S. in their time of need. It just wasn't the people who were alive to share those memories, but also the younger people who were too young to fight or the sons and daughters. I will treasure the stories of the aforementioned men and I think your contribution to the freedom of America was brought into a better perspective.

"Spanhoe, although not the same as when you were there, was nonetheless moving for me. I felt that I could understand your feelings about going up with your combat loads and with skill and luck coming back to Spanhoe.

"On Sunday we had a ceremony where the names of the 34 members of the 315th who lost their lives while at Spanhoe were read. It was raining and very windy but, when the names were finished being read, the wind and rain stopped and the SUN came out! I am glad the people who live in the area and own the grounds are going to keep what is left. I do wish however we had more time as I would liked to have gone to the Pub in the village where you guys went as I hear they still have mementos on the walls.

"Another moving experience was the American cemetery at Cambridge. It was just beautiful and well tended. It was also a very poignant feeling that the men and women who gave their lives were the cream of our youth and what lives they missed. The 315th Airlift Wing was just great and all hands were commended because the trip couldn't have been better."

A special thanks has to be given to the 315<sup>th</sup> TC Group and especially Col. Gary Cook of Charleston. They treated us like royalty. We were so grateful to be given the opportunity to fly with the Air Force again!

Now to the future! Current thought and plans are to have our 2006 meeting in Charleston, South Carolina as guests of the 315th Airlift Wing, which is the revival of the 315th TC Group. They have been a reserve unit for 38 years and currently fly the C-17A Globemaster worldwide. We represent a group that was from all over the USA and a variety of backgrounds in a unit that lasted approximately four years, whereas they represent a relatively local area and a membership of four generations. We both have stories to exchange.

Details will be completed by our next newsletter. Be assured that Charleston, SC is a very outstanding attraction and the trip will take full consideration of our age and possible infirmities. The timing will be early May with flowers and fauna in full bloom and summer travel will not have started. You will be greeted with grace, charm and southern hospitality.

STAY WELL!

Len

*The WW II 315th Troop Carrier Group Association publishes this newsletter irregularly  
1318 N. 126<sup>th</sup> St., Omaha, Nebraska 68154*

*Leonard Thomas  
President*

*Jamie Zartman  
Vice-President*

*Mary Lynn Schwietz  
Editor*

*Cathy Beck  
Assistant Editor*

## Taps

**With deep regret we record the loss of these comrades.**

*(If you were close friends a letter to their family would be truly welcome.)*

Jack "Jack" Wilson	309 <sup>th</sup>	Dec 2003
Dr. James C. Hulsey	34 <sup>th</sup>	Aug 1996
Jacob Boon, Jr.	310 <sup>th</sup>	Oct 2004
Veryl C. Hewitt	315 <sup>th</sup>	unknown
Thomas E Courtney	310 <sup>th</sup>	Nov 2004
Anthony F. Bianco	309 <sup>th</sup>	May 2004
William H. Katt	309 <sup>th</sup>	Feb 2004
Alphonse A. Dzielak	43 <sup>rd</sup>	Feb 2004
Lewis E. Johnston		Mar 2005
Honorary Member		

## Donations

Donations are gratefully accepted whether in memory of former comrades or in support of the Association. Families are notified when appropriate.

<b>From</b>	<b>In Memory Of</b>
Lib & Bill Walsh	Bernie Pleasant, 34 <sup>th</sup>
Bill Walsh	Bernie Pleasant, 34 <sup>th</sup>
Barry Bodell	James Bodell, 34 <sup>th</sup>

Bill Nagle, 310<sup>th</sup> TCS 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt.  
In support of the Association,  
and in remembrance of those  
for whom Taps were sounded.

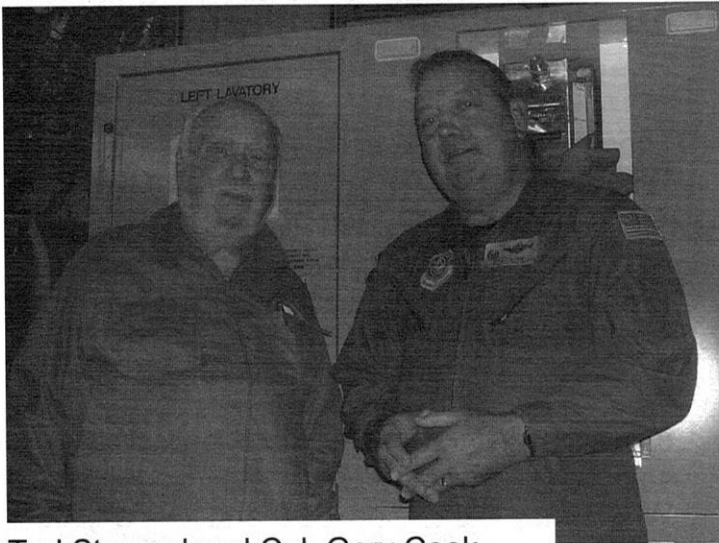
*Sharon Dzielak writes, "If there is anyone who knew by father (Alphonse Dzielak) I'd like to hear from them. I really don't know anything about his life in the service, he didn't talk to me about it. Thanks so much."*

*Sharon Ann Dzielak  
272 Babb's Road  
West Suffield, CT 06093*

## Flying West

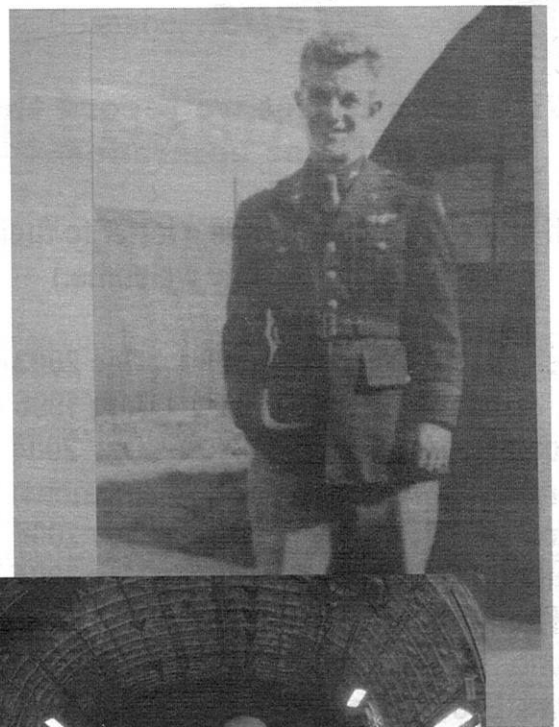
I hope there's a place, way up in the sky,  
Where pilots can go, when they have to die.  
A place where a guy can buy a cold beer  
For a friend and a comrade, whose memory is dear;  
A place where no doctor or lawyer can tread,  
Nor a management type would ere be caught dead;  
Just a quaint little place, kind of dark, full of smoke,  
Where they like to sing loud, and love a good joke;  
The kind of place where a lady could go  
And feel safe and protected, by the men she would know.  
There must be a place where old pilots go,  
When their paining is finished, and their airspeed gets low.  
Where the whiskey is old, and the women are young,  
And songs about flying and dying are sung.  
Where you'd see all the fellows who'd flown west before,  
And they'd call out your name as you came through the door.  
Who would buy you a drink, if your thirst should be bad,  
And relate to the others, "He was quite a good lad!"  
And then through the mist, you'd spot an old guy,  
You had not seen in years, though he taught you to fly.  
He'd nod his old head, and grin ear to ear;  
And say, "Welcome my son, I'm pleased that you're here."  
"For this is the place where true flyers come,  
When their journey is over, and the war has been won.  
They've come here at last to be safe and alone  
From the government clerk and the management drones,  
Politicians and lawyers, the Feds and the noise,  
Where all hours are happy, and these good ole boys  
Can relax with a cool one, and a well deserved rest;  
This is heaven, my son... You've passed your last test!"

u



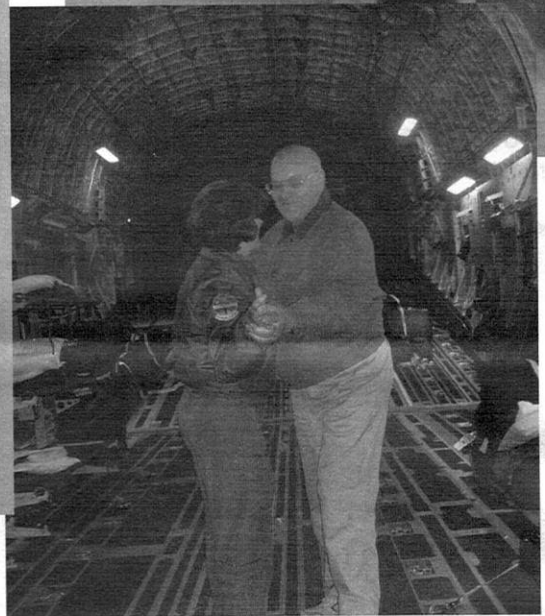
Ted Steward and Col. Gary Cook, Wing Co of 315<sup>th</sup> Air Lift Wing.

Dick Ford in front of Quonset hut barracks at Spanhoe in 1944.



Spanhoe Airfield 7th May 2005 60th Anniversary of V.E. Day

7<sup>th</sup> May, 2005 - 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE Day at Spanhoe Airfield. From L-R: 1Lt Charles Schmoezer (316<sup>th</sup> TCG), 1Lt Bill Braun (309<sup>th</sup> Sqn), Lt Cols Ted Stewart, Dick Ford, Len Thomas (all 310<sup>th</sup> Sqn)



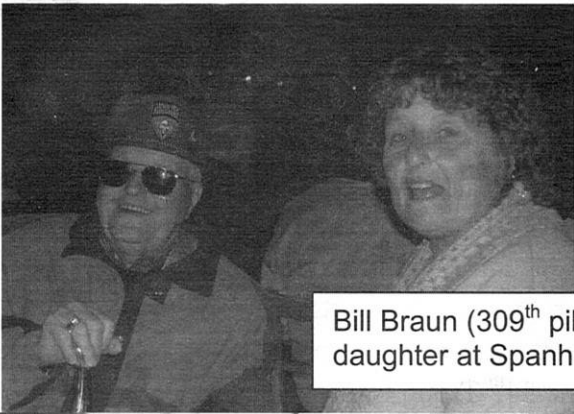
Col. Sharyn Roettger and Len Thomas dancing to 1940's music aboard the C17A on the flight to England.



Maintenance hangar buildings still standing from WWII air operations.



WWII Military equipment display.



Bill Braun (309<sup>th</sup> pilot) and daughter at Spanhoe.



Do you think they'll let us fly it?



We were treated like royalty!



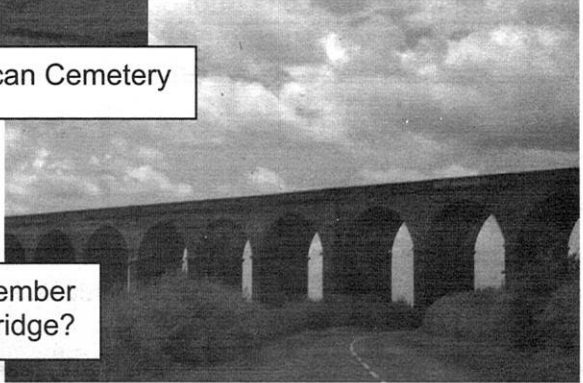
Local residents participating in reenactment.



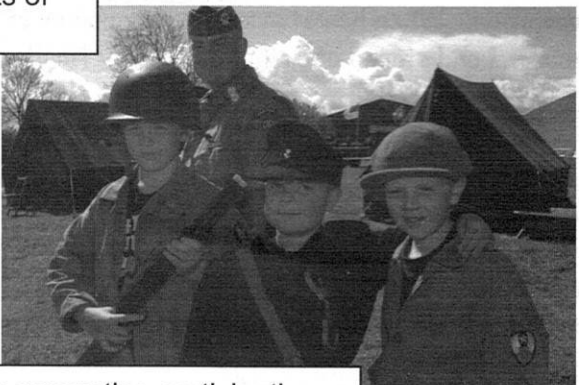
Cambridge American Cemetery



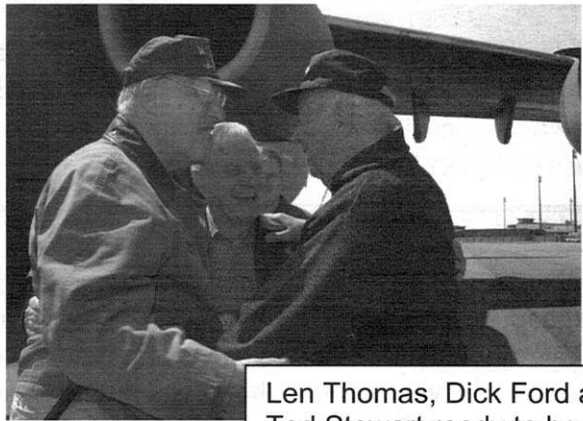
Mock battleground of reenactments of WWII trench



Does anyone remember the name of this bridge?



Another generation participating.



Len Thomas, Dick Ford and Ted Stewart ready to head home.

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In the December, 2004 edition of the 315<sup>th</sup> Newsletter Annette Dickinson asked for information about her father, Herman Sherrod. He had passed away and she knew little of his WWII years.

We were very happy to hear that Bill Nagle responded to Annette's inquiry. She was kind enough to thank the 315<sup>th</sup> and report on what transpired.

Bill Nagle, 310<sup>th</sup> First Sergeant, Responds to Inquiry  
by Annette Dickinson, daughter of Herman Sherrod

In 1944, Bill Nagle and Major Henry Hamby were both serving in the 34<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron at Spanhoe in England. Hamby approached Nagle and said, "I'm going to be getting one of these new squadrons – would you like to come with me as my First Sergeant?" Nagle said, "Lead me to it." And that's how they ended up as the chief officer and the chief enlisted man of the 310<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron. They have kept in touch from time to time over the years, and Bill has been to two Reunions of the 315<sup>th</sup>, one in Chicago and one in Colorado.

Bill Nagle lost his wife last year and is now living with his son and daughter-in-law in Glen Burnie, Maryland. He saw my inquiry in the last newsletter, asking for more information about my Dad's service in the 310<sup>th</sup>, and he gave me a call, saying he remembered my Dad, Herman Sherrod, very well. We arranged to meet for lunch and had a lovely long gabfest over some pictures of Spanhoe, including a snapshot of my Dad and a friend standing outside the 310<sup>th</sup> Headquarters building (a Nissan hut), right next to the sign marking Col. Hamby's parking spot. Dad had trained as a glider pilot, but also served as a copilot on the C-47s and was the squadron's mess officer for the second half of 1944.

Bill can be reached at 5 Harriet Drive, Glen Burnie, MD 21060, phone 410 760 3716. If other members of the 315<sup>th</sup> have memories of my Dad, Herman Sherrod, I would love to hear from you by e-mail at [annettedickinson@comcast.net](mailto:annettedickinson@comcast.net) or on my cell phone at 202 494 0575.

#### High Tech Competition

Three men (a German, a Japanese and a hillbilly) were sitting naked in a sauna. Suddenly there was a beeping sound. The German pressed his forearm and the beeping stopped. The others looked at him questioningly. "That was my pager," he said. "I have a microchip under the skin on my arm."

A few minutes later a phone rang and the Japanese fellow lifted his palm to his ear. When he finished talking he explained, "That was my mobile phone. I have a microchip in my hand."

The hillbilly felt decidedly low tech and did not want to be outdone. He decided he had to do something just as impressive. He stepped out of the sauna and went to the bathroom. When he returned he had a piece of toilet paper hanging from his behind. The others raised their eyebrows and stared at him. The hillbilly finally said, "Well, will you look at that! I'm getting a FAX!"

#### ***Caution, this new scam is being pulled mainly on older men.***

What happens is that when you stop for a red light, a young nude woman comes up and pretends to be washing your windshield. While she is doing this, another person opens your back door and steals anything in the car. They are very good at this. They got me 7 times Friday and 5 times Saturday.

I wasn't able to find them on Sunday.

## 315<sup>th</sup> TCG and 315<sup>th</sup> Air Lift Wing Past and Present

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The number designation "315<sup>th</sup>" was first assigned to a newly formed troop carrier group during World War II which flew C-47 airplanes, mostly C-47A's. Its initial mission was to deliver airborne troops during the D Day invasion and later in Holland and Germany, and also to airlift, on virtually a daily basis, critically needed supplies to front line areas, and to evacuate injured troops requiring special care. Its 2,000 members established an outstanding record of never failing to "deliver" anything at anytime to any place as ordered.

It is fitting that this number "315" remains a part of today's air force as the 315<sup>th</sup> Air Lift Wing, carrying out the same mission, now in C-17A's, with equal excellence in an expanded role, delivering personnel and supplies wherever and whenever needed throughout the world.

### Aircraft Comparison – Then and Now

	<u>C-47A</u>	<u>C-17A</u>
Length	64'	174'
Height	17'	55'
Wingspan	95'	170'
Empty Weight	16,970#	276,500#
Cargo Weight	10,000#	170,900#
Paratroopers	28	102
Vehicle capacity	Willys Jeep 2400#	M1A1 Abrams Tank 68 tons
Range	1500 miles	Unlimited
Ceiling	23,000'	45,000'
Cruise Speed	185 mph	500 mph
Engines	2 @ 1200 HP each	4 @ 40,000 lbs each
Crew	3	3
Cost	\$88,500	\$203,000,000
Adjusted for inflation	\$945,500 in 2005:	\$19,095,000 in 1944

### Small War Medals Free to Families

Family members (only next of kin or the veteran) are entitled to small replicas of all military medals awarded to a service member by a simple mail request. These ribboned replicas make an excellent framed display and keepsake item.

The form and mailing address can be obtained by contacting Dick Ford via letter or e-mail and they require about one month for delivery. These medals are available on a one-time, free request.

Also available from Dick Ford are request forms for Cold War Medals (active duty from 9 Sep 45 to 26 Dec 91) or Korean War Medals (Korea duty from 25 June 1950 to 27 July 1953).

I have had a few calls from people wanting to know how they could get a copy of the "Three-One-Five Group" book. George still has a few available. The price is \$20 plus \$2 postage.

I have just read another book that you might find of interest. "Sky Blazers" A WWII diary by George N. Doll. I never thought that I would be very interested in reading someone's diary – but it is a great story! George Doll was a dental technician with the 315<sup>th</sup> and also a member of the band. If you had a tooth pulled by Capt. Shulman, George was probably the guy that sat on your lap to hold you down. He was later transferred to an Air Force Band – The Sky Blazers – and sent over to France just a couple of weeks after D-Day. They followed the troops and entertained them in the field until the end of the war. Another untold story. The price of this book is \$16.95.

For either of these books send a check to: WALKA BOOKS, P.O. Box 56307, New Orleans, LA 70156-6307.

Doc Cloer

ML Schwietz  
WW II 315<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Group Assoc.  
1318 N. 126<sup>th</sup> St.  
Omaha, NE 68154

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### Where do you send information?

Everyone who received this newsletter is encouraged to **submit material**. Don't be afraid to jump in and contribute! Please share your memories with us. Suggestions are welcome! Please send all submissions to: Mary Lynn Schwietz, 1318 North 126<sup>th</sup> St., Omaha, NE 68154 or send via E Mail to [mlschwietz@aol.com](mailto:mlschwietz@aol.com).

**Change of address, deaths, new members, etc.** should be sent to Doc Cloer. His address is Robert Cloer, 1417 Valley View Drive, Yuba City, CA 95993. E-mail address is: [rlcloer@syix.com](mailto:rlcloer@syix.com)

**Annual dues of \$20, donations and requests for caps** should be sent to: Dick Ford, P.O. Box 4399, Sunriver, OR 97707-1399. E-mail address is: [Dickfordfire@aol.com](mailto:Dickfordfire@aol.com) (The famous 315<sup>th</sup> caps are \$15 each. Lapel pins of the C-47's are \$7.50)

Check out our own **315<sup>th</sup> Website** at [www.315group.org](http://www.315group.org) compliments of Miles Hanby!

### Treasurer's Report

January 1, 2005	Bank Balance	\$5865.23
Cash Received		
Dues	437.50	
Cap sales	30.00	
Lapel pin sales	22.50	
Insignia sales	9.00	
Donations	80.00	
Interest	4.11	
Total income		\$583.11
Expenses		
USPS Mailing fee	150.00	-\$150.00
April 30, 2005	Bank Balance	\$6298.34

Dick Ford, Treasurer

Father O'Malley answers the phone and a voice says, "Hello, is this Father O'Malley?"  
"It is", said Father O'Malley. The voice said, "This is the IRS. Can you help us?"  
"I'll try, what is it you want?"  
"Do you know a Ted Houlihan?" "I do."  
"Is he a member of your congregation?" "He is."  
"Did he donate \$10,000 to the church?" "He will."