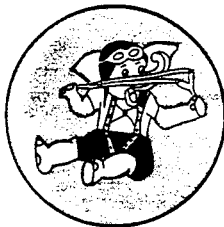
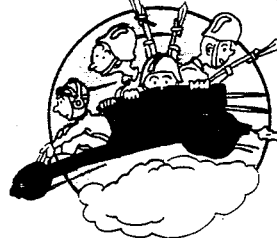




**World War II
315th Troop Carrier Group
Association - U.S.A.A.C.**

**NM****34th Sqdn.****UA****43rd Sqdn.****M6****309th Sqdn.****4A****310th Sqdn.****MARCH 1994****GENTLEMEN:**

Another year has passed and I see that I have not slowed down too much - just missed getting this out over the Holidays by three months. Looked up last years letter and see that I was three months late then - so am holding my own - which at our age is great.

First, I want to thank my good buddy Jew Johnston, of the 61st Sqdn. of the 314th T.C.Grp. for all of the work he does to print up the roster and the address labels. Next, want to thank all of you who have put us on your mailing list, find your newsletters very interesting. As there are some new contacts on the list, I will be covering some things that may be old info to you.

Would you please go over the roster and make sure that your address and phone number are correct. If we do not have a phone number listed for you, would you please send one. This roster was put together years ago just to help find our old Troop Carrier troops. At this late date, there are still many that we have not located. If we hear of anyone who was in a WW II T.C. outfit that does not know about his reunion organization - any of these contacts can help him find his old Buddies. The contacts listed do not need to be officers who change each year, but someone who is active in your organization and will help pass on information. I send these out once a year and in the meantime we loose some of our contacts that we never get the word on.

As I read your newsletters I see that we are having many of the same problems. Newsletter from the 62nd T.C.Grp. just the other day, they have lost 24 active members who made their last flight this past year. Health problem of one of the spouses is keeping some from the reunions - where to hold the reunions to keep the cost down - who will be the reunion chairman, and his back-up - how do you get these members who are so selfish that they will not come to a reunion and let their buddies enjoy their company.

2

Ever once in a while I will get a letter from a wife whose husband has just passed away - "John has been saying for years that he was going to make one of your reunions. He had his reservations in this year - - he just waited too long"!

I know that all of you are probably on everybodys mailing list - but just in case - I will pass on a few items that might be of interest to some. THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF NORMANDY - I am sure you all know that there is going to be a hell of a crowd. The French Government is not going to allow any vehicle on the roads in the Normandy area on the 5th & 6th of June without a permit. If you plan to be in the area on these dates, you need an I D badge and you need to get it before the last of April. To get the I D you need to write to: Veterans Identification Program, WW II Commemoration Committee, 5001 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria, VA 22333. You need to send some proof of service in the ETO. For more info call 703/692-2143 or 703/692-2120. Letter from the State Department reminds all that Medicare does not provide for hospital or medical service outside of the U.S. While in this area, if you have any real serious problems, the nearest U.S. Consulate or Embassy is the Embassy in Paris. Phone number (33) (1) 42-96-12-02.

The 9th Air Force Assn. will have the 1994 Convention at the Hyatt Regency New Orleans Hotel May 12-15. That will be followed by the "D-Day Remembered" Eisenhower Center Seminar at the University of New Orleans, May 16 - 17 1994. For those interested in this big event, contact: Marvin J. Rosvold, 600 S. 13th Street, Norfolk, NE 68701 or Call 402/371-6633 work or 402/379-2825 home. The big 9th A.F. Reunion will be the 5 days crossing on the QE2 to England with all outfits having their reunions on the way over. It will depart N.Y. on May 29th for England and then will later be off the Normandy coast for D-Day. For those wanting to join the 9th Air Force Assn., send a check for \$15.00 to, Larry Gaughran, Treasurer - 2428 No. 145th Street - Omaha, NE 68116. If all of the 9th Troop Carrier Command joined, we would probably be the largest unit.

I am sure that many of you contribute to many Museum projects and I don't want to do anything that will stop that - - but I will pass along some information that worries me. I have been a charter member for The Battle of Normandy Museum since the late 1980's and then it changed in about 1991 to The Battle of Normandy Foundation. I visited the Museum at Caen France in 1989 and was very impressed. This last December the 9th A.F.A. sent all of its members copies of articles out of the Washington Times and the L.A. Times. Headlines - "Less than 10% of donations used to commemorate WW II". Of the \$8.2 million collected from 1987 thru 1992, over \$7.6 went for salaries, travel, fund raising, entertainment and etc. No money went to the museum before 1990. Thru 1992 contributions were \$206,968. Last month I received a letter from the Law Firm of McKenzie & Baer out of Dallas, Texas. They had just completed an investigation of The Battle of Normandy Foundation with some

very important people on the investigative committee, one of them being Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John W. Vessey. Their Report: "The investigation found the charges to be false, and demonstrated that the Foundation has exhibited an admirable record of service to veterans. Please know the Foundation continues its unswerving commitment to serve those whose bravery and sacrifice forged peace and freedom for our great nation." You will have to make up your own mind !! In the mean time, Sens. Robert Dole and Strom Thurmond resigned as Board members. Knowing politicians - - that doesn't mean much ! I am going to ask for a financial report before I send any more.

The Silent Wings Museum at Terrell Texas is well worth your stop to visit. I have supported their effort for years but they have not been asking for money lately. They can't seem to get together on what they want to do with the Museum. It take all of the fun out of their reunions anymore. Another worthwhile project is the American Air Museum at Duxford England. Jimmy Doolittle was the spokesman and now Jimmy Stewart is doing work for it. If you would like to help - American Air Museum, P.O.Box 64409, Baltimore, MD 21264-4409.

The Grandfather of them all, is the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson AFB, just out of Dayton, Ohio. Many are holding reunions in this area and many of our Troop Carrier outfits have their plaques and trees in their Memorial Garden. Some years back I visited the Museum and spent a half day there. There was no way I could see everything in that time and they have doubled it in size since. All should join "Friends of the Museum". They publish a very good Journal for all of the members four times a year and help with reunions held in the area.

As many old AF Vets visit the Museum they have asked if there was any log they could look at to see if they could locate any of their long lost Buddies. The Museum has now started a Veteran's Registry that will be available at the Information Desk in the Lobby. It will list name, rank, organizations served in, and occupational specialty. If you would like to take part in this program - I will try and save room on the last page of this letter for the form.

Some of you have asked me where you could get good VCR tapes of Troop Carrier War film to show in your hospitality rooms at your reunions. I have bought a few from: Boomerang Publishers, 6164 West 83rd Way, Arvada, CO 80003. Drop them a note and ask for a copy of their flier. (PLEASE NOTE: I am not advertising for anyone in these newsletters, just passing on info.)

Have just finished reading the book "POLES APART" by our good friend, George Cholewczynski. George is an honorary member of the Polish Airborne and the 315th Troop Carrier Group. While this book covers the Polish Airborne at the Battle of Arnhem

4

(who the 315th dropped at Driel) I found most interesting, the Polish involvement in WW II long before the U.S. ever got involved. This is an interesting and easy to read book that took years of research. A version of it was published in 1990 in the Netherlands and it has now been published in both the U.S. and England. It is now required reading at the Army Staff and Command School at Ft Leavenworth. See if your library has a copy, if not, see if they will get one for you. The publisher is, Sarpedon Publishers, Inc., 166 Fifth Ave., NY 10010. Hardcover of 318 pages, \$21.95.

George is now working on the WW II role that Troop Carrier played in the ETO, MTO, CBI and the Pacific. He started research on this book in 1990 and has about another years work before it is completed. He has been in contact with many of you and made some of your reunions. If it turns out half as good as POLES APART, it ought to be a best seller!

NOW - SOME - ASK - For - Help!! Letter from, George E. Koskimaki, 101st Airborne Division Assn., 1222 Charleston Court, Northville, MI 48167. He is trying to locate the Group and Sqdn. that dropped them on the early D-Day morning. The tail number is 41-18542. Check your records and see if your outfit had that plane. If so, give him a call - 313/348-1037.

The next letter: Classic Air AG, CH-8058 Zurich-Flughafen, Switzerland. Classic Air is in possession of two DC-3 (C-47s) that they are trying to trace the history on. They would like to know right away with the 50th anniversary coming up, if one of these planes could of been in D-Day.

HB-ISB	C-47D	serial number	4666	tail number	41-18541
HB-ISC	C-47A	"	"	9995	" " 42-24133

If any of you can help - drop them a note .

I guess that most of you know that the Confederate Air Force has moved to the Midland Texas International Airport. The American Airpower Heritage Museum is now located on the 85acre Confederate Air Force Headquarters complex. They have a full calendar of events for the coming year. I will name a couple - June 6, 1994 - - Midland, Texas. Dedication of the Confederate Air Force Memorial Garden. Fly-over to commemorate the Normandy Invasion. D-Day veterans invited to attend. For information call CAF 915/563-1000

October 8-9, 1994 The Confederate Air Force will host AIRSHO 94 at the Midland International Airport. The show will feature the CAF WW II Airpower Demonstration. The explosive sights and sounds of battle are brought to life with an exciting array of pyrotechnics and approximately 100 vintage aircraft take to the sky. The American Airpower Heritage Museum will unveil Phase IV "Verticle Employment: Silent Wings and Airborne" which will focus on the unpowered troops during WWII, such as gliders and parachutists. For ticket information call 1-800 CAF-SHOW or 915/563-1000.



Where Was the Enemy?

I participated in two missions to Holland. The operation was Market Garden. The missions occurred 17-19 September 1944. I did not see any enemy aircraft on either mission; however, I have always wondered where the Bf109's and the FW190's were. The book JG 26 Geschwader by Donald L. Caldwell provided some information. Quoting from pages 292-293 of the book:

On 18 September, the weather, that enemy of Allies and Axis alike, took a turn for the worse. This hindered both the Allied efforts to re-supply and reinforce the landing zones, and the Germans attempting to block them. The weather improved slightly on the 19th. Jagdkorps II reported that forty-eight fighter-bomber sorties were flown to the Nijmegen area in the morning. During the afternoon, according to the Luftflotte 3 war diary, 148 German fighters "engaged in dogfights with enemy fighter formations over the target area. By concentrated effort, air superiority was gained over the landing area between 1715 and 1800 hours." This hard-won so-called victory availed nothing to the Germans, as they did not reach their targets, the transport formations themselves. The Allied escort consisted of 127 Spitfires from Fighter Command and 182 P-51's of the Eighth Air Force. Fifty-four of the Mustangs belonged to the 357th Fighter Group, which reached Arnhem in late afternoon to find an eerily lit purplish-blue sky full of milling British, American, and German warplanes; machine gun-strikes on the aircraft flickered like distant fireworks. There was a solid cloud deck at 20,000 feet; another cloud formation walled off the eastern edge of the drop zone, sharply restricting the combat area. The Mustang pilots waded into the cauldron and returned to England claiming 20-1-1 Bf109's and the 5-0-0 FW 190s. The Group lost five pilots, however, including one squadron commander. JG 26 was active over the combat zone all day, and it was probably responsible for all of the 357th Group's losses. One flight of three P-51's, separated from its squadron, was shot down at the same time and location as Lt Gerhard Vogt's 5th Staffel claimed four Mustangs. The missing American squadron commander was last seen by his wingman after a combat with Bf109s. The fifth P-51 lost as bounced by Bf109s that dropped out of the clouds. Either or both of these last two P51s could have been downed by III/JG 26; one suitable claim is known. JG 26 lost only one aircraft during the day, a 6th Staffel FW 190 that failed to return from a strafing attack on the ground troops. Both sides were grounded by the weather on the 20th. By the next day, the situation of the British 1st Airborne Division in Arnhem was desperate, and the long-delayed drop of the Polish 1st Parachute Brigade was ordered, despite the poor weather. Only ninety American fighters, the Thunderbolts of the 56th and the 353rd Fighter Groups, could get off their bases for escort and patrol. The 56th Group engaged a large formation of FW 190s which fought back aggressively, drawing the combat eastwards toward Osnabrueck. The Wolfpack claimed 15-0-1 German fighters for the loss of one P-47, but in their absence the twenty-five FW 190s of I/JG 26 burst from the clouds over s'Hertogenbosch and raked the defenseless transports of the RAF's 38 and 46th Groups. Seventeen "Douglas transports" were claimed shot down by Borris's men, who then escaped unscathed. The most successful pilot was the 3rd Staffel's Oblt. Fred Heckmann, who downed four planes, for his 66th to 69th victories.

The 353rd Group Thunderbolts reached the Nijmegen area in time to break up the attacks by the Second and Third Gruppen on the transports, but not until the Focke-Wulf pilots had downed three. The American pilots claimed 3-1-1 FW 190s and one Bf109 but lost one P-47 to Lt. Hofmann, JG 26's losses were to FW 190s and one Bf 109, one of the pilots survived.

The British lost thirteen Stirlings and ten Dakotas on this mission, out of 114 transports dispatched. Some were undoubtedly shot down by anti-aircraft fire, but the actual losses to JG 26 were very close to the twenty claims submitted. This proved to be the only successful attack by the Luftaffe, on what turned out to be the largest aerial assault and re-supply operation of the war.

The above is only an extract of the cited book. William E. Bruce submits the story. At the time, I was a first pilot in Capt Sitarz flight of the 34th Squadron, 315th Group. I recall many impressions of the two missions. One memory I have is on the first mission Capt Bohannon and crew with paratroops was shot down shortly after crossing into Holland. Another is the flack from a 37mm gun tracking my aircraft with the big black bursts right in front of the nose of the aircraft.

The JG 26 Geschwader was based in the Nordhorn area of Germany. Nordhorn is only 245 km from Arnhem so was very close to the action. However, the British and American Groups had to travel 800 km and more to their bases. See pages 60-63 of the book "Three-One-Five Group" by W.L. Brinson for further details on Operation Market.

---- William E. Bruce

TOUR DESCRIPTIONS

AIR NATIONAL GUARD/BOWMAN'S FIELD/LUNCH CRUISE

Thursday, September 23 1993

Start the day at Kentucky's Air National Guard's 123rd Airlift Wing. They have a proud history and an unmatched record of sustained outstanding performance. Their mission is to provide worldwide theater airlift for U.S. military and humanitarian operations. The wing is equipped with twelve C-130H model aircraft. Eight squadrons and seven flights carry out the unit's mission by providing administrative and logistical support. Continue your tour towards the other end of the airport, Bowman Field. Bowman Field has played a vital role in the growth and evolution of our country's aviation industry. It was founded by Abram H. Bowman, who had a vision about the importance of aviation at a time when many people were unconvinced that air travel had a future. Twenty years later during WWII, Bowman Field was the busiest airport in the country. At that time thousands of members of the military called Bowman Field home while undergoing combat readiness training. The facility became known as "Air Base City" when a bomber squadron moved in, and more than 1600 recruits underwent basic training in a three-month period. Bowman Field was also home to the Army Air Force School of flight surgeons, medical technicians and flight nurses. Graduates of the school were responsible for evacuating and treating a half-million sick and wounded from war zones around the world by the end of 1944. Bowman Field today has replaced its sod strips with concrete aprons and runways. It is home to hundreds of privately owned aircraft as well Central American Airways, Falcon Aviation, and Kentucky Flying Service. Afterwards, board the Star of Louisville, a modern riverboat with three decks. Enjoy a scenic cruise up the Ohio River with a lavish luncheon buffet and live music.

9:00am board bus, 2:30pm back at hotel

\$48/person includes bus, guide, and lunch cruise.

FORT KNOX

Friday, September 24

Enjoy an all-you-can-eat lunch buffet at Doe Run Inn, which includes fried chicken, baked ham, roast beef, and all the trimmings. After lunch, continue on to Fort Knox and begin your self-guided tour of the Patton Museum of Cavalry and Armor, dedicated to General George S. Patton, one of the most colorful of all twentieth century military leaders. The exhibits depict the history of Fort Knox, where the Armored Force was formed in 1940, and the development of cavalry and armored weapons, equipment, and uniforms from the Revolutionary War to the present. The Patton Gallery contains many of the General's personal items, including his famous ivory-handled pistols. Outside, you will see many historically significant vehicles and equipment. Finally, take a drive through Fort Knox and drive by the famous Fort Knox Gold Depository.

11:00am board bus, 4:00pm back at hotel

\$42/Person includes bus, guide, and lunch.

FARMINGTON

Saturday, September 25

Farmington was built by John and Lucy Fry Speed in 1810 according to a plan by Thomas Jefferson. A masterpiece of Federal architecture, it features two central octagonal rooms, pre-1830 furnishings, an adventurous stairway, and a nineteenth century garden. Stop at the Captain's Quarters, a restaurant located on the banks of the Ohio River, for lunch featuring grilled chicken salad. Originally built as a carriage stop, the Captain's Quarters was intended to become the center of Louisville.

9:45am board bus, 2:00pm back at hotel

\$45/Person includes bus, guide, admission, and lunch.

(All tours require a minimum of 30 people)

Driver and guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices.

Please plan to be at the bus boarding area at least five minutes prior to the scheduled time.

CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY FOR ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC.

For attendees canceling reunion activities prior to the cut-off date, Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. (AFR) shall process a full refund less the non-refundable AFR registration fee (\$5 per person). Attendees canceling reunion activities after the cut-off date will be refunded to the fullest extent that AFR's vendor commitments and guarantees will allow, less the non-refundable AFR registration fee. **Cancellations will only be taken Monday through Friday from 9:00am until 5:00pm Eastern Standard Time, excluding holidays.** Please call (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Canceling your hotel reservation does not cancel your reunion activities.