

The WOLF HOWL-L-L

December, 2021

GREETINGS TO EVERYONE

Hello everyone, our 45th Annual Reunion in Pensacola, Florida, was again postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

This was the second consecutive postponement since the inception of our reunions (started in 1976).

We will once again plan to reschedule our upcoming reunion at Pensacola, Florida in September or October of 2022. No definite plans have been made at this time. We are tentatively looking at having our plans made and published in our May newsletter.

Providing things will be under control and we have confidence that our members will feel safe to attend the reunion.

As a reminder, all updates to our directory will reflect only the page locations in our new directory (Sep.2019). So, once again, please look at the Directory Updates Section here in our newsletter to receive the latest information on new addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, and new members who have recently contacted us. All new emails addresses that we receive will be shared with our Historian (Roy Bozych). This is very important because this will allow us to provide you with instant information.

Letters and Phone Calls

David Garvin – says hello to everyone
Tess Garvin – says hello to everyone
Frank Mancuso – says hello everyone
Debbie Polanko – says hello to everyone
Dan & Linda Richey – says hello to everyone

Directory Updates

We received the following changes since our May 2021 Newsletter. Please update your directory as follows:

Section 1 page 3 - Update new address and phone number

Old

Hayden, Laverne
11390 Coloma Road Apt. 206
Gold River, CA. 95670-6319
916-635-6155

New

Hayden, Laverne
5301 F Street Apt. 308
Sacramento, CA. 95819-3234
916-662-7697

Missing Members

Here is our latest list of newsletters mail out and returned. If you know someone on this list please contact me with an updated address or have them contact me direct if they wish. Their name will only appear in one newsletter after that if they have not been updated then they will be removed from our mailing list.

Mr. Forey Hutchinson
10200 E. Harvard Ave. Apt. # 224
Denver, CO, 80231-3947
6-14-21

Ms. Betty Linker
7755 Yardley Dr. Apt. 204
Ft. Lauderdale, FL. 3321-0880
6-24-21

Mr. John Morton
5990 NW 15th Street Apt # 2
Ft. Lauderdale, FL. 33313-4704
6-24-21

Mrs. Ellen Pratt
9426 Creek Summit Circle
Richmond, VA. 23235-4277
7-7-21

Final Flights”

It is always a sad time when we lose loved ones. These are some of our finest that we have the disappointing news to pass along to you. They will not be with us at our future reunions physically, but will be with us in spirit and will be discussed about their special stories they have shared with all of us. **GOD BLESS all of them.**



Rogers L. Dennis

Abilene - Rogers Lacewell Dennis, son of Seleta and James Dennis was born September 27, 1925 in Jacksboro, Texas and died September 22, 2020.

Always an entrepreneur, his early jobs included bicycle repair in his parent's back yard, and linotype operator for the Jacksboro Gazette. After graduating from Jacksboro High School, he attended Civil Service Radio School in San Antonio where he excelled and where his passion for radio was noticed. He then enlisted in the Army Air Corp assigned to the 323rd Bombardment Group 454th Bombardment Squadron where he served in the as a Radio Operator and Gunner on a B-26. His crew flew 28 missions over Germany, the 29th was recalled just an hour before dropping bombs because Patton had just taken the target. Dad enjoyed the six months of time spent in Europe waiting on a troop ship. Many times he recalled touring museums and monuments. One of his strong memories was watching liberation films that General Eisenhower authorized in order to always remind us what happened in the concentration camps, so that we would never forget. Dad then enrolled in Texas Technological College and began an Electrical Engineering degree. On July 9, 1949, he married the love of his life, Patsy Mae Lail. They lived in Lubbock until he was recalled into the Air Force during the Korean Conflict. Soon, son Roger and daughter Mary came along and the Dennis family moved to Abilene. In late October, 1957, Patsy and Rogers started Dennis Communications Center, where they worked together until October 1986. After selling this business, dad stayed busy with grandkids, bike riding, and amateur radio (W5MUH). Dad was honored to be named Small Business Man of the Year by the Abilene Chamber of Commerce.

Education was important to Rogers as he influenced his children and many others to seek high school diplomas and college degrees. Both his daughter, Mary and grandson, Dennis, graduated from Texas Tech. (Guns Up!)

Rogers was an active member of First Baptist Church, faithfully studying his bible and

lessons.

He was also involved in several community protests for fair banking, clean water, and decreasing the power of the Federal Communication Commission. Rogers believed in fair hiring for all.

He is predeceased by his wife Patsy of 64 years, daughter, Mary Cannon, and son-in-law, Rodney Weeks. He is survived by son, Roger Edward Dennis, daughter, Robin Marie Dennis, daughter, Sherry Dennis Weeks, daughter, Katherine Dennis Adams, and son-in-law, Lynn Richard Cannon. His grandchildren are Kim (Michael) Villegas, Katie (Logan) Wilson, Dennis Adams (fiancé Isabel Franco), and Clara Moore. Great grandchildren are Gabriella, Lyana, and Miriam Villegas, and Violet Wilson.

Rogers service was at Piersall Funeral Home, Friday, September 25. Burial at the Texas Veterans Cemetery.

Notified of Additional Members without obits:

<u>Name:</u>	<u>Date of Passing:</u>	<u>Date notified:</u>
Betty Robbins	7-3-19	6-18-21

Financial Report

Here is our financial report for 2021. We would like to thank everyone for their past contributions because that's what keeps our organization going strong.

Name	Amount
Trest, Dennis	\$150.00
Zeigler, Mitchell & Roberta and Harris, Karen in Memory if Cpt. Ransom, Robert P.	\$200.00
McLeod, R. Stan	\$100.00
McDonald, Merlin	\$200.00
Polanco-Baker, Debbie	\$100.00
Anderson, Lars	\$125.00
Bloomberg, Rebecca	\$40.00
Johnson, Bob	\$75.00
Total	\$990.00

Expenses

Debit	Amount	Date	Addl. Comments
Americopy Printers	\$66.01	1/4/21	Pring of 70 newsletters and 50 Envelopes for Thank you cards (CK # 558)
US Postal Service	\$44.00	1/4/21	Addtl postage to mail newsletters (CK # 559)
Roy Bozych - Historian	\$302.28	1/22/21	Annual Expense Report for 2021 (CK # 560)
US Postal Service	\$95.00	6/1/21	Postage for 60 newsletters and sheet of 1st class stamps
Americopy Printers	\$61.59	6/2/21	Printing of 65 newsletters
Total Expenses	\$568.88		

The above information does include the printing for December 2021 Newsletters and postage for mailings.

Balance as of Jan. 1, 2021	\$9,599.29
Contributions	\$990.00
Reunion Monies Rcvd.	\$10.00
Total Received	\$1,000.00
Expenses	\$568.88
Balance	\$10,030.41

If there were contributions for, 2021 that are not posted please contact me (George Cornett) at email georgecofaz@hotmail.com ,or call me at 480-577-6299 or write me at address below.

If you wish to make a contribution to the 454th Bomb Squadron Association please send to 454th BSA c/o George Cornett 8250 E. Obispo Ave. Mesa AZ 85212-1618.

Please make all checks out to 454th BSA.

Our Elected Board Members

Current Board Members:

President _____ Vacant
1st Vice-President ___ Howard Cross
2nd Vice-President ___ Frankie Mancuso
3rd Vice-President ___ Robert “Bob” Johnson
Secretary/Treasurer ___ George Cornett
Historian _____ Roy Bozych
Sergeant-at-Arms ___ Merlin McDonald

Previous Board Members:

President _____ Frank Johnson
1st Vice-President ___ Howard Cross
2nd Vice-President ___ Frankie Mancuso
3rd Vice-President ___ Bob Johnson
Secretary/Treasurer ___ George Cornett
Historian _____ Roy Bozych
Sergeant-at-Arms ___ David Garvin

Cheers until next time, stay tuned for our upcoming May Newsletter!!

George C.

454th Bombardment Squadron Association Reunion Dates and Locations

1 st - July, 1976	Myrtle Beach, SC
2 nd - July, 22 nd to 24 th 1977	Fairborn/Dayton, OH
3 rd - July 20 th to 22 nd 1978	Cocoa Beach, FL
4 th - July 19 th to 22 nd 1979	Tampa, FL
5 th - July 17 th to 20 th 1980	Hampton, VA
6 th - July 15 th to 18 th 1981	Colorado Springs, CO
7 th - July 8 th to 11 th 1982	Gettysburg, PA
8 th - July 13 th to 17 th 1983	San Francisco, CA
9 th - April, 10 th to 15 th 1984	Charleston, SC
10 th - May 15 th to 18 th 1985	San Antonio, TX
11 th - Aug 13 th to 17 th 1986	Oshkosh, WI
12 th - Sept 2 nd to 6 th 1987	Arlington, VA /Washington D.C.
13 th - Aug 31 st to Sept 4 th 1988	Dayton, OH
14 th - Sept 6 th to Sept 10 th 1989	Las Vegas, NV
15 th - Aug 29 th to Sept 2 nd 1990	Bellevue/Seattle, WA
16 th - Sept 18 th to Sept 22 nd 1991	New Orleans, LA
17 th - Sept 9 th to Sept 13 th 1992	Scottsdale, AZ
18 th - Sept 15 th to Sept 19 th 1993	Orlando, FL

19 th -Sept 7 th to Sept 11 th 1994	Natick /Boston, MA
20 th -Nov 1 st to Nov 5 th 1995	Nashville, TN
21 st -Sept 18 th to Sept 22 nd 1996	Omaha, NE
22 nd -Sept 24 th to Sept 28 th 1997	San Diego, CA
23 rd -Aug 26 th to Aug 30 th 1998	New Orleans, LA
24 th -Sept 22 nd to Sept 25 th 1999	Savannah, GA
25 th -Oct 4 th to Oct 7 th 2000	Tucson AZ
26 th -Oct 17 th to 21 st 2001	Houston, TX
27 th -Oct 2 nd to Oct 6 th 2002	Myrtle Beach, SC
28 th -Oct 8 th to Oct 12 th 2003	Tampa, FL
29 th -Sept 22 nd to Sept 26 th 2004	Branson, MO
30 th -Sept 1 st to Sept 5 th 2005	Baltimore/MD-Washington DC
31 st -Oct 2 nd to Oct 7 th 2006	Las Vegas, NV
32 nd -Oct 3 rd to Oct 6 th 2007	Dayton, OH
33 rd -Sept 10 th to Sept 13 th 2008	San Antonio, TX
34 th -Oct 7 th to Oct 12 th 2009	Colorado Springs, CO
35 th -Sept 22 nd to Sept 25 th 2010	Norfolk, VA
36 th -Sept 28 th to Oct 2 nd 2011	Minneapolis, MN
37 th -Oct 24 th to Oct 28 th 2012	Tucson, AZ
38 th -Sep 25 th to Sep 28 th 2013	Charleston, SC
39 th -Sep 17 th to Sep 20 th 2014	New Orleans, LA
40 th -Sep 9 th to Sep 12 th 2015	St. Louis, MO
41 st - Sep 22 nd to Sep 24 th 2016	Tulsa, OK
42 nd -Sep 14 th to Sep 17 th 2017	Kansas City, KS
43 rd -Sep 25 th to Sep 27 th 2018	Savannah, GA



HISTORIAN'S HANGER

Roy Bozych - Squadron Historian



Fall 2021

It's Finally Here!!!



For those of you who are on our email list, you already have this exciting news. But for the rest of you, it's finally here. Eleven years in the making, the 323rd BG video documentary is now available for purchase.

With historic film footage purchased from the U.S. National Archives, Victory Film Productions chronicles the contributions made by the veterans of 323rd Bomb Groups in winning WWII. This is a two disc set which totals three hours and thirty minutes in length. Our documentary starts in May of 1943 with the transfer of the 323rd BG to the ETO. It ends with the deactivation of the 323rd BG in the fall of 1945 and the end of WWII.

Much of the film is in color with up close and personal views of 323rd B-26 Martin Marauders shot by the 4th Army Air Force Combat Camera Unit that will put you inside the aircraft with your Veterans flying their missions!

The video is also interlaced with historical newsreel clips which enhance the accounts of our veteran's story. Additional newsreel clips detail the destruction wrought by the 323rd Bomb Group in its tactical support of the Allied troops as they advanced into Germany. One of these is even narrated by Tom Hanks! Included on the disc are:

Disc One:

USA to Station 358 Earls Colne England May 1943

Missions July 1943 – January 1944

Visitors Inspection of Earls Colne 13 April 1944

Pre-Invasion Activities: May – June 1944 plus D-Day

Post Invasion Activities: June December 1944

Disc Two:

Denain Prouvy France 9 February to 15 May 1945

4th Combat Camera Unit: March 1945 Kodachrome film of group missions to wars end.

Me-262 Jet Base: 15 May 1945 Erding, Germany.

Erding was the operational airfield of the German Me-262 jet fighters which savaged the B-26 Bomb Groups toward the end of the war. The 323rd BG bombed this base on 25 April 1945. This was their last operational combat mission flown in WWII. Also shown is the destruction to the Saalfeld Marshaling Yards which the 323rd BG bombed on 9 April 1945.

The cost of our video is \$35 and can be ordered through Victory Film Production's website listed below:

<https://victoryfilms.us/>

From the top of the website page select Page 1. Our video "The 323rd Bomb Group" is the eight item down from the top of the page. Click on the "Buy Now" button and fill out the details in the order form. Victory Film Production accepts most major credit cards and also PayPal.

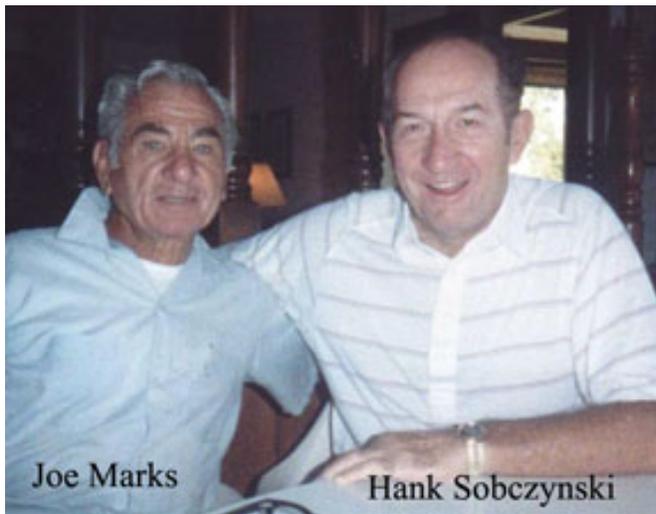
This is an outstanding video memorial that honors the sacrifice our Veterans made for our freedom. This is the story of the 323rd Bomb Group in WWII!

What Was It Like?

That was the question that was so often asked of our Veterans. What was it like to fly in combat? A question that was hard for our Veterans to answer. How do you describe the horror of war to an individual who has never experienced it? Someone who has no frame of reference to understand the experiences that you are trying to explain.

For the last eighteen years I have had the honor and privilege of collecting and archiving the historic memories of our veterans. I am now in the process of digitizing many of those records and memories for future researchers and our own archives. As I itemize and digitize these items I am finding some exceptional pieces that I will share with you from time to time in our newsletters and emails. Pieces that I hope will enlighten and answer some of the questions of what the war was like for our Veterans.

One of those pieces is a newspaper article that I came across from 1985. At the time we were holding our annual reunion in San Antonio, Texas. A reporter from Herald News took that occasion to interview one of our veterans Joe Marks. Joe was a Flight Engineer and Gunner who flew 60 plus missions with Hank Sobczynski. The article was titled "Marks Recalls WWII Bombadier Missions". It was written by Howard Groesbeck. Some of the information used in this article was based on a story that first appeared in Stars and Stripes on January 13, 1944. Unfortunately the Stars and Stripes reporter Bud Hutton got a few of the details of that mission wrong. To keep the historic record spot-on here are the correct facts. Normally Hank Sobczynski did fly a B-26 named "Flounder Gus" serial number 41-34913 coded RJ-R. However on this day they were flying "Honest Injun" serial number 41-34695 coded RJ- B. Also the Amsterdam Schiphol mission took place on December 13, 1943. Here is the article.



"Flounder Gus and a flock of B-26s approached the Holland coast in January 1944. Lt. Z. H. Sobczynski from Chicago aimed our bomber toward the target: Amsterdam Schiphol Airdrome.

Looking at the map I could see nothing but flak batteries all along our bombing course. As we hit the coast I was waiting for an explosive reception. To my surprise our bombers flew over Holland as peacefully as geese before hunting season.

We arrived at the start of our bombing run, and the bomb bay doors opened up on Holland below. Lt. Andreas Stolen, our bombardier and navigator, prepared to drop our visiting cards on the enemy. Stolen was concentrating on the mission. He didn't have any room in his mind for memories of his Cottage Grove, Wisconsin home.

Suddenly like the fourth of July back in my Pittsburg neighborhood, the whole sky around Flounder Gus filled with bursts of flak. Everywhere I looked large fragments were flying through the air. Off to the right another B-26 continued unsteadily with one engine toward the target. I knew our buddies flying next to us were hit. I hoped they were still okay.

Stolen released our bombs. I felt better knowing our load was falling, but I was certain some of the welcoming flak was meant for us.

The bursting flak surrounded us. We were caught in a large, airborne drum, and the enemy was beating on us for all they were worth. Though all the racket I heard a voice on the interphone, but I couldn't make out a word.

I looked back into the tail and Staff Sgt. George Bauer signaled me. Bauer knew all about signals. He was our radioman and gunner. He hailed from South Milwaukee. Bauer wanted me to head to the cockpit. That's when I knew some of that flak found us.

"Sob" would never call me from my guns unless we had been hit and hit bad. I threw off my helmet and flak suit. I headed for the cockpit, but when I stepped near the bomb bay a shower of gasoline and hydraulic fluid soaked me. The cat walk was slippery as hell. Down I went. I tore my coveralls and skinned my shin.

Back in Pittsburgh we learned a little something about ice-skating so I got up and headed for the cockpit.

I stuck my head in the cockpit and Sob pointed at the hydraulic pressure gauge. It read zero. Sob push the control column back and forth. Flounder Gus didn't respond. The bomber continued flying level. I knew for sure trouble was filling our lives as fast as the flak kept bursting outside our B-26.

Our bombardier was no dummy. Stolen wanted to see Cottage Grove again before he found eternal rest in his home town cemetery. Stolen escaped the nose of Flounder Gus and strapped on his parachute. The bombardier open the escape hatch. He paused before making a decision to jump. "How does it look?" Stolen asked me.

"Everything's okay" I said. He didn't see my fingers crossed. Stolen was relaxed and sat down like he was waiting for the next Greyhound bus. "Call the rest of the crew and tell them to get ready to bail out."

I left the cockpit and headed back toward the bomber. While I was checking out the hydraulic system, I looked back into the tail. Bauer, the radio man didn't want to be buried in Holland. Sgt. Charles E Archer, a gunner from Ennis, Texas, agreed that Flounder Gus was turning into a coffin. Bauer and Archer were opening the camera hatch and reaching for their chutes. They were preparing to jump.

I scrambled back to the camera hatch and grabbed their chutes. "Come on up front," I yelled. I turned back toward the cockpit, stopped and looked at the anxious pair. They were fighting over the spare chute I had packed for the mission.

Bauer and Archer decided teamwork might save Flounder Gus and the five-man crew. They dropped the spare chute and followed me up front. I opened the hydraulic tank. Empty.

"Hey Archer, get the spare can of hydraulic fluid from the tail." I yelled. We always carried a couple extra cans for emergencies.

I was working on the hydraulic lines when a rush of air blew through the ship. I turned around and saw the left bomb bay door yawning. Archer was gone. We were over open water. I imagined Archer falling, falling to an ocean grave.

"Bauer, Bauer where is Archer?" I shouted. Bauer pointed to the tail. Archer was reaching for the spare can of fluid.

Ice-skating inside the belly of Flounder Gus was getting more dangerous. The hydraulic fluid had turned the ship into a slippery winter pond. I couldn't grab anything for support because the fluid slicked the metallic body. I eyed the open bomb bay door and knew another slip would land me in the English Channel.

I couldn't reach Archer and the spare can of life-saving fluid. I needed that fluid so I could fill the tank and pump the landing gear down. Without wheels we all knew a crash landing will send us back home in flag draped coffins.

I inched my way along the bomb bay rack. I was getting closer to Archer, and he was stretching toward me. We were still too far apart. I motioned to him. Like a shuffleboard player he slid the can across the other bomb bay door. I hoped the weight of the fluid filled can wouldn't drop the door.

The can slid to a halt. I stuck my leg out. With my foot I worked the can toward me. I reached for the can, grabbed the handle and pulled the precious fluid toward me.

I hurried to the nose and filled the tank. I grabbed the landing gear lever and pushed it into the down position. I grip the hand pump and worked it until the nose wheel slowly dropped. After the nose wheel locked in place, I set the lever for the main wheels and started pumping again. The pump went dead. The fluid tank was empty.

I knew the can upfront still held some fluid. I made my way back to the nose and filled the tank. Bauer stood at the pump. When I finished filling the tank again, Bauer pump the main wheels down. We all sighed with relief when we knew the wheels were locked and in landing position.

Like boxers at the end of a 15-round match, we wiped the sweat which was pouring off us and dripping onto the oil slick belly of Flounder Gus. During the emergency I had stripped off nearly all my clothes. If we crashed into the English Channel, I was dressed for swimming.

Within a few moments we reached the English Channel. Sob was searching for a landing site. I was damn glad I wasn't the pilot because I couldn't figure out how Sob could bring us down without crashing flounder Gus and killing the whole crew.

Sob didn't have much to work with. No controls, no hydraulic pressure, no breaks. The elevator controls were shot away. The hydraulic system was knocked out. The jammed bomb bay door it was creating a speed killing drag. Sob relied entirely on the trim tabs for ascent and descent. Flounder Gus was running out of gasoline fast.

We stayed a field but the runway looked too short. We didn't have time or gas to search the English coast for a safer field. We radio the ground crew, and Sob began as approach.

I started pumping again. I hoped I could get enough pressure for it for the brakes. I yelled "Hey Sob as soon as we hit the runway, try the brakes." I kept pumping with one hand. With my other hand I grab the bottle handle for the emergency air brakes.

Flounder Gus hit the runway hard and short. The shock threw me over the instrument panel. I push myself up, and we bounce into the air. Flounder Gus and our hearts remain suspended for long seconds. At 160 miles-per-hour the B 26 again flopped onto the concrete ribbon. I was pumping like crazy.

“Hit the brakes. Hit the brakes”, I yelled. Sob tried them twice. He might as well have been jamming his feet against marshmallows. Flounder Gus raced unimpeded toward the end of the runway.

I pulled the handle for the air bottle. The brakes grabbed and the wheels streaked rubber along the runway. Flounder Gus rolled for half-a-mile before coming to a stop. Like a lunatic chopping sugar cane, I cut all the switches.

“Let’s get out of here before we all blow up”, I yelled. Gasoline and oil was creating a potential lake of fire. The silent lake awaited an explosive spark.

Bauer, Archer, Stolen and I jumped out of the bomber. We turned around and looked for a Sob. The second lieutenant was still in the cockpit. He was wearing his parachute. The safety belt was fastened.

I ran back to the B 26, climbed up into the cockpit and helped Sob get out. We scramble to safety as the emergency field crew arrive to wash down the deck and save Flounder Gus from the frying pan.

An ambulance scream toward us. The vehicle screeched to a stop and a doctor jumped out. He ran for Archer. The doctor grabbed our gunner who started yelling, “I am okay. I am okay.” Archers head was bleeding hydraulic fluid. After we wiped the red fluid from Archer’s head, the doctor relaxed. We all had a hearty laugh.

Lt. Andreas Stolen, Staff Sgt. George Bauer, Sgt. Charles E. Archer, Lt. Z. H. Sobczynski and I circled Flounder Gus and inspected the damage. The field crew shook their heads. They couldn’t see how we made it back and survived the landing. The field was designed for P 47s.

We headed for the barracks to get cleaned up and ready for another mission. At the mess hall P 47 fighter pilots said Flounder Gus made the fastest landing they’d ever seen.

Although the B 26 was badly shut up and the hard landing added to the damage, ground crews repaired the bomber. Flounder Gus eventually return to action over Hitler's Europe."

Want to learn more about this historic mission? Read John Moench's account of it in "Marauder Men" starting on page 120. One hundred and forty seven B-26s returned with battle damage. Three were so bad they were considered total losses.

80 years Ago This Month December 7th 1941-2021



This month marked the 80th anniversary of the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the start of WWII. A handful of the original Pearl Harbor veterans were on hand to be honored at the 80th Anniversary ceremonies. If not the last, this will probably be one of the last anniversary's in which original Pearl Harbor survivors will be present. Time has taken its toll. Now, less than two percent of all WWII Veterans are still with us.

As the Japanese aircraft returned to their carriers on December 7th they left 2,403 dead including 50 civilians. With most of those deaths occurring on the USS Arizona.

429 of those deaths however occurred on the USS Oklahoma when it capsized after being hit by nine torpedoes. Unlike the USS Arizona, all the bodies on the USS Oklahoma were eventually recovered. However during the time it took to recover those bodies many became unrecognizable. So they were interred in unmarked common graves in Halawa and Nu'uauu Cemeteries in Hawaii.

Now 80 years later new advances in DNA technology have made it possible to identify those fallen on December 7, 1941. This has come as welcome news for many of the families of the fallen. Time has not diminished the grief or loss felt by these families.

To date the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, DPAA, has identified 391 of the 429 sailors and marines killed aboard the USS Oklahoma. DPAA hopes to identify all 429 by the end of this year.



Two of the sailors killed that morning on the USS Oklahoma were the Trapp brothers, Harold and William. Growing up in La Porte, Indiana the two brothers were inseparable. Often taking the same jobs so that they could be together. Consequently when William enlisted in the Navy in 1939 so did Harold. Both were assigned to the USS Oklahoma. Who could ask for a more perfect assignment?

Together sharing all the delights of Hawaii. Sending home pictures of the wonderful time they were having.

The morning of December 7th that all changed. When the attack came Harold was up on deck and William was working below decks. Both gave their lives for our country that infamous morning. They became two of the unknown individuals buried in those common graves.

Now thanks to the advances in DNA technology and the hard work of the folks at DPAA, Harold and William's remains have been identified. On June 15th with their families present, they were buried with full military honors in separate graves in Honolulu. A family member commented, "Unless you go through it personally, you just have no idea what it means to have this closure."

For more on this story and a short video go to: time.com/pearl-harbor

Most of our WWII Veterans are gone now. All we have left are their memories. The poem on the next page pays homage to them. It was written by Roger Freeman a British WWII Historian. I found it in the Victor Lewis Collection. Victor also is a British WWII Historian.

Until next Time...

Keep 'em Flying



Roy R. Bozych
49 E Lucas Dr.
Palos Hills. IL 60465-3100
708-870-6605
Historian@323bg.org
<http://www.323bg.org>

THE SKY WAS NEVER STILL

The old man sat in the English pub
As he had for many a year
And listened to the stranger's talk
As he sipped a temperate beer.

A stranger asked how long he'd lived
In the village here about.
"Why all my days," the old man said
An age, without a doubt."

"I envy you" the stranger sighed
Your tranquil village life,
The gentle fields, the muted sky,
Devoid of urban strife."

The old man smiled a wistful smile,
"That's just a townie's dream.
For I have seen the sky aflame
And heard the meadows scream."

"I've known a thunder at each dawn
That shook the very ground
As warplanes sought to gain the clouds
From airfields all around."

"They called some Forts and others Libs
And there were fighters too
I've counted hundreds at a time
Yes, what I tell is true."

"They'd climb and soar like flocks of rooks
And round and round they'd mill
From north and south, from east and west
The sky was never still."

"Sometimes there'd be a wondrous sight
A sight beyond compare
The bombers going out to war
Forging the frigid air."

Four miles above, just silver specks
Like sunshine on the dew
And trailing lines of cloud-like white
Across the cosmic blue."

"They set the heavens all a-throb
That did not fade away
For others rose to meet the night
Invisible to stay."

"And when was this?" the stranger asked
"And who were those you saw?"
The old man drank and then replied
"It happened in the war."

"They were but boys
and many died
Some lost without a
trace
For then the sky in
foreign parts
Could be a violent
place."



Roger Freeman

"Yes, they were boys
and me a child
But I remember well
And if you have the time to spare
There's more that I can tell."

The stranger said that he must go
"Perhaps another day"
Indifferent to the old man's tale
He quickly slipped away.

The old man turned to inward thought
His memories to tend
He knew that those who were not there
Could never comprehend.

Those who'd not known the crowded sky
The sounds that drenched the land
Or stood in awe and wonderment
Would never understand.

The old man left the English pub
And stood awhile outside
The evening vault was milky blue
Cloud-free and stretching wide.

He raised his head and scanned the sky
That held so still and clear
And in his mind a memory
And in his eye a tear.

Roger A. Freeman
Historian



Pin



Patch

454th Squadron Order Form

- Pins are 1 inch in diameter
- Patches are 4 ½ inches in diameter and have an iron on backing

323rd BG Commemorative/Challenge Coin



Front



Back

- Coins are 1 ¾ inches in diameter, weigh .8 ounces and are made of brass with raised lettering. The front of the coin is highlighted with red, white and blue enamel.

Prices Include Shipping

**Make Checks Payable
To
454th BSA**

Number of Pins ___ x \$5 = \$ _____

Patches ___ x \$15 = \$ _____

Coins ___ x \$20 = \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Name _____

Street Address _____ **apt #** _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip Code** _____

Phone _____ **email** _____

mail to: Roy Bozych
323rd BG Historian
49 E. Lucas Dr.
Palos Hills, IL 60465-3100

Phone 708-870-6605

email address historian@323bg.org