

Ball of Fire QUARTERLY EXPRESS



NEWSLETTER OF THE 93rd BOMB GROUP

Vol. 14, No. 1

SPRING 2006

See you in Savannah!

Plans set for 2006 reunion
July 13 – 17th

SAN DIEGO 2005

President's Message

We are now less than 90 days from our 2006 reunion in Savannah. As you will see our reunion team has put together an enjoyable visit to this beautiful city and the Mighty 8th Air Force Museum and chapel. With this reunion scheduled in July it is our hope that you will be able to include some of the younger members of our extended family.

Have you visited our website lately? Charles Sill and those who have provided those great reunion photos have created a very impressive site befitting the famed 93rd. Congratulations to Charlie and all who are making this happen.

Your executive committee has been very busy getting involved on behalf of our members to determine how best to shape the future of the 2nd Air Division Assoc. You will be pleased to know that John Lee, our VP, has been selected to be the chairman of the nominating committee to elect the officers of the 2nd AD for 2007, by acting president Alan Senior.

The challenges facing 2nd AD are well defined in letters presented by two former presidents, Neal Soreson and Dick Kennedy and our interim report all appearing elsewhere in the Ball of Fire.

We would ask you to look these over for we will need your input when we meet in Savannah to discuss this further and agree how to vote your wishes in October.

What is taking place in our 93rd is a very successful role model. Under Paul Steichen's leadership, supported by John Marx, Don Morrison, Joe Duran, and Phyllis and Paul Levine, and many others. We should all be very proud of this transition to an effective leadership by the 2nd generation that will ensure the future of the 93rd.

See you all in Savannah.

FERNLEY SMITH



Ben Kuroki and Fernley Smith



Lew, Jr. and Lew Brown



Sarah and Lloyd Smith

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor,

Just a note to tell you about the death of Jim Marchione, asst. eng, on Mc Kamy's crew in 328th squadron, from Sept. '43 to April '44, tour of duty. That leaves me as the last survivor of that crew.

Carmen J. Fox

Dear Paul,

Sorry to have taken so long to write you... thank you for the "Ben Kuroki" books. One will become a part of our exhibit on Japanese American history, located in the museum aboard the USS Hornet (docked in Alameda, Ca).

Our organization, "Friends and Family of Nisei Veterans" (FFNV) will hold the first meeting of the 2006 in the Community Hall in Morgan Hill on Saturday. Our next event is the annual Nisei Veterans Memorial service in Roberts Park above Oakland. I hope you can attend so we can have a little more time to converse.

We will have the Peninsula Scout Band there to play military tunes prior to the service at noon. Please stay for the pot luck following the service.

Looking forward to talking with you about Ben Kuroki.

Sincerely,

Lawson I Sakai - E Company, 442nd, RCT

Dear Sir

My pilot, J.W. Reid, 330th squadron has been ill for some time. He may be reached through his son, Jim Reid III (5012 Tulip St., Amarillo, TX 79110 (806-353-1379).

You might be surprised to know I was the author of a long story in the first issue of the Ball of Fire. The editor (Paul Steichen Sr.) wrote to me and said my story of the 330th ordinance Christmas party in our barracks (we had it lined with the bomb loaders) was picked out of 250 submitted stories.

Bob B Tredway

438 W. 58th Terrace, Kansas City, MO 64113

Hi Paul,

Sorry I am late with my fee but I have had some problems.

Richard Trousdale

601 N Hayden RD Lot 93, Scottsdale, AZ 85257-4744

Dear Sir:

My Father, Harry H. Powers, a retired major in the USAF, passed away January 19th, 2006. He completed 35 high altitude missions over Germany as a B-24 Navigator 93rd Bomb Group, 330 bomb Squadron. He enlisted May of '43 in 52 integrated regular USAF Captain, was spot promoted to Major and Lt. Col B-47 select crew. He retired Oct 1970 as a Major.

We are interested in sending a picture of his B-24 Bomber Crew and submitting a small memorial article as Folded Wings or your suggestion. We got your name from his copy of The Journal and hope you can either help us or guide us in the right direction. We truly appreciate any help you can give.

With sincere thanks,

Helen Bradford (daughter)

Chris Bradford

Howdy Folks,

My dad (Oswald Sis) flew on Satan's Sister as the flight engineer. Which aircraft version of that name I'm not sure. The photo for the crew in your web site is beside a new aircraft fresh from the factory that this crew ferried across the Atlantic. He is pictured in the back row closest to the wing. He tells me that his helper had just dropped a screwdriver into one of the oil tanks while they were doing maintenance. Thus the "sour" look, as he calls it, is seen in the photo.

Seems as though this crew arrived after D- Day and was first used to ferry supplies to France before any missions that counted. From then on bits and pieces.

I'm sure dad would like your newsletter.

Thanks a million for your web site.

Dave Sis

Castle Rock, CO

Thank you, Paul, for the good hard work you put into this.

Joe Bisson (Barton's crew)

Enclosed are my dues for the year. I am in a rest home, and have been for 2 years. Tell Cal and the rest "Hello". I am the only one left from my crew. I went to the group in Dec '43. Captain Forth was my pilot after I lost my original crew at Gather early in '44. I flew 32 missions.

Take care, Ed

Ed Wagner

305 E Windsor Apt 202, Arkansas City, KS 67005-3845

Hello John,

We want to notify you of the death of Michael J. Debrino, Sr. of the 93rd on 3/16/06. Please let us know if you need additional information.

Jeanne Ciampino

Hi,

I received your email address and mailing address from Joe Avendano Duran. I would like to join your group. I understand the dues are \$20 per year. I assume I just send you \$20. Please confirm.

I live in Cedarburg, WI and grew up in nearby Grafton, WI. I am 54 years old. Our local Legion Post is named after Roy Harms, who was the pilot of Hells Angels in the 93rd and died along with most of his crew at Ploesti on Black Sunday. Roy was a friend of my aunt. I have been interested in his military career since I was a boy. I have studied the Ploesti raid and have made numerous presentations on the battle and how Harms died.

Looking forward to your correspondence,

Allen Bucholz - bucholz@wi.rr.com

I am trying to resource information on my Dad's unit. He was a top turret gunner on a B24 and flew over 30 missions and received Air medal with oak clusters, purple heart and distinguished flying cross. I have his service number 35058540. Please advise best options for info. Thanks.

Dick Baldwin

Draft Report for Business Meeting

At our San Diego meeting, the membership voted to have the Executive Committee develop a recommendation on this matter for a discussion and a vote in Savannah.

Separately in this issue of the BOF there are detailed articles on this matter by two former presidents of the 2nd AD. i.e.: Neil Sorenson and Dick Kennedy Both Neil and Dick and several other officers have formed the High Right Society, led by Dick Kennedy with founders Neil Sorenson, Walt Mundy and Hap Chandler. I have personally invited Hap Chandler, who lives in Atlanta, to attend our reunion in Savannah for our discussions with the membership on this matter.

The goals of the High Right Society have been stated as follows:

1. Remove the current president
2. Conduct a financial audit.
3. Remove the censorship by certain executives of the editor of the 2nd Air Division journal.
4. Review the Fulbright foundation oversight responsibilities to ensure USA control.
5. Empower the Heritage League appropriately to meet its defined goals.
6. Revise the by-laws, if necessary, to provide for more equally shared financial support between the Norwich Museum and the Mighty 8th Air Force Museum.
7. To elect a new executive management team to achieve these changes which are deemed necessary to keep the 2nd Air Division alive.

As of March the then president, DeCanti, has resigned and Alan Senior, the executive VP is now the acting president.

Very shortly, the High Right Society will formalize for Alan Senior the steps that must be taken to meet the goals of the High Right Society and Alan's election as the next president of the 2nd AD will likely hinge on his support for this program.

In addition, it is expected that the nominating committee, of which our own John Lee has been asked to serve, will very seriously consider the High Right Society's recommendations when selecting the new leadership.

We expect to have much more to share with all of you at our July meeting in Savannah and are attempting to provide our final draft for publication in the summer issue of the BOF.

Signed,

*John Lee, Vice-President and Fernley Smith, President
(for the executive committee)*

~~ Sorry, due to lack of space not all information submitted on this issue is included. Look for more info in your registration packet.

- Editor

Cal Davidson's Response to Baldwin Inquiry

Very little info available to me on your Dad. I did find his crew in several of my loading lists and have listed one below. I have no addresses on any of these men. My loading lists are from scattered dates and the dates I found your dad's crew on were 1/5/45, 1/28/45, 2/3/45, 2/6/45, 3/3/45, 3/10/45, 3/18/45 and on 12/24/44 I found the Neely crew flying with a different Engineer, Top Turret gunner. It is possible he may have been wounded before this date and the crew flew with a replacement. Nothing is reported in our history on fighter, flak or any damage to the Neely crew but our history does occasionally miss reporting some of these incidents.

Your Dad was in the 330th Squadron and was the Engineer on the crew. All Engineers and Radio-ops were normally promoted to T/Sgt.

Most all flying personnel received a list of their missions flown and was signed by their Commanding Officer. If you do not have a copy of his discharge papers check with the local county Recorder's Office, at his time of discharge, as all WWII vets were asked to have them recorded. If I can be of further help or you would like to have a query put in our newsletter to see if anyone remembers your Dad or the Neely crew email the query to me with your snail mail address?

Plane # 42-51569/I

P	Neely, Robert E.	1st Lt.
CP	Curtis, Winfield T	2nd Lt.
N	Puntney, William L.	2nd Lt.
B	Dixon, Robert F.	2nd Lt.
Top	Baldwin, Arthur R.	T/Sgt.
RW	Baker, Lloyd E.	S/Sgt.
LW	Vasquez, Arthuro	S/Sgt.
Tail	Caver, Lawrence H.	S/Sgt.
RO	Sineath, William P.	T/Sgt.



Crew of Leading Lady

According to our plane list the above plane was called Leading lady. The Neely crew flew at least three missions in this plane.

Cal Davidson

Cal,

Thank you so much for the reply and the info. My Dad passed in 83 and I remember him telling me about Arthuro and him being in the crew. You would be right about my Dad being out for awhile. He was wounded and also suffered battle fatigue from the early years of the war. His first mission had over 200 holes in the plane. Shortly thereafter the bombardier was blown in half by an 88 that hit him in the torso and the nose fuse partially exploded without detonating the round. My Dad was lucky that his turret armor was facing the right direction so he was not hit, The concussion of the round knocked out the CP and my Dad for awhile. My Dad never talked about the battle fatigue period much except to say that he was put up for awhile in a castle in England for R&R. It must have been very hard for him as his crew of the original squadron was the only surviving crew. My snail mail address is as follows:

Dick Baldwin, 14880 Millrich Cir. Hartville, OH 44632.

Dick Baldwin

As I Saw It

(The following excerpts are from "An Airman's Story" by
Doug Garner of the 93rd BG)

We are headed to Hamburg, Germany. As we approach the border of Germany, it is so beautiful up here at 20,000 feet, it is so clear you can see forever. My memory goes back to a time long ago, when I was raised on a dirt farm in central Alabama. Who could ever imagine that this country boy would be sitting in a tail turret of a B-24 five miles above the farmlands of Germany, gripping the controls of two 50 caliber machine guns, flying backwards and ready to fight for the freedom of this country? The view from this position is so spectacular. You are looking at all the aircraft that are flying formation behind you and we are all heading to Hamburg, Germany. Looking over the horizon you begin to see small dots appear. As the dots get closer and larger you identify them as your own fighters, P 51s and they have come to escort our bomb group to the target and back as their fuel consumption will allow.

◇◇◇◇◇

I would like to take this opportunity to tell a story about a mission that was never completed. On December 19, 1944, we were alerted to fly a mission. The 329th squadron of the 93rd was going to furnish the lead aircraft for several other bomb groups. Most of those bomb groups were already in the air, but we had a problem, the fog at Hardwick (our Base) was so thick you could cut it with a knife. The orders came down; the 329th would make an instrument take-off. We taxied out to the runway, my aircraft was number four in line. The fog was so heavy and it was hard to see the edge of the runway. Our bomb load was 12 RDX 500 pound bombs per each aircraft. With a roar of his engines, number one disappeared into the fog. Forty five seconds later, number two (Captain Marx's) aircraft disappeared into the fog and we all moved up in line. A few seconds later there was a thunderous explosion. Captain Marx had crashed at the end of the runway and eight of the bombs aboard had exploded. All eleven crew men were killed instantly. As our engine were roaring for take off, one word came down: "SCRUB, SCRUB". The mission was now scrubbed. The tragedy was not charged to enemy action, but the sorrow ran deeper than had the crew been lost in battle. The evidence of the crash stayed at the end of the runway for a long time. As we took off on other missions, it was a reminder of what happened that tragic morning.

Many years later, after I had been out of the service for a long time, I moved to Huntsville Alabama in 1966. And my memory went back to a long time ago, when Captain Marx's aircraft crashed and we were sitting on the runway awaiting our turn. There was an airman aboard his aircraft, Lt. R. K. Locker (the Copilot) and he was from Fayetteville, Tenn.. That is only 30 miles from Huntsville. For some reason, I decided to try to contact and go visit his relatives and tell them the story of that tragic morning. After several attempts, without any success, I was able to meet a family friend (the Vaughn Family) and conveyed my message. I still hope one day, I will be able to meet them in person before I too, will fade into the sunset and the story will be gone forever.

Doug Garner



John Cadle, Joe Schwarzgrubber, Vernon Swaim

Heritage League Addition a Big Plus For 93rd BG Savannah Reunion

John Marx, in his capacity as reunion chairman, has been working with his Heritage League counterparts to create some special events for our Savannah reunion. Our reunion and the Heritage League's convention occur at basically the same time in Savannah. The Heritage League is the legacy organization for the 2nd Air Division Assn. It is a worthy group doing many of the same things as the 93rd BG.

I would suggest to any of our 93rd BG "Heritage Members (Sons, Daughters, family and friends) Savannah will be a good time to join the Heritage League, if you are not already a member.

Editor

Urgent Fund Raising Campaign for The Mighty 8th Air Force Museum's Legendary B-24 Exhibit

As of 3/29/06, the fund drive for the Fighting Sam exhibit has received \$107,046. This leaves a balance due of \$17,954. Walter Mundy and his team are working hard with all Bomb Groups to meet this balance due ASAP. We of the 93rd have already give a significant amount by individual members and an additional \$2000 from our treasury. Your Executive Committee has pledged to Mundy an additional \$1500, of which \$500 was donated by members of your Executive Committee. We need your help to meet this goal. Please give this your immediate concern and hopefully support by sending a check to Treasurer, Cal Davidson before the end of June. We want to show all the other Bomb Groups how much the 93rd is behind the recognition of the B-24.

It would be my hope that we can exceed our pledge with at least \$2500 being raised. So in the spirit of the 93rd, give this your serious attention and if you can't get it before the reunion, bring your checkbook! Thanks again for your support. Checks made out to 93rd Bomb Group.

*See you in Savannah,
Fernley Smith, President*

FOLDED WINGS

Michael Debrino
Amos Dolliver
Lesley Scott
Harry Gloss

Jim Marchione
Bert Alexander
Wilford Duford
Harry Powers

George Karian

93rd Bomb Group Reunion 2006
July 13 -17th
Savannah, Georgia

- Complete Registration Form and submit not later than Jun 15th
- Make check payable to **93rd Bombardment Group**.
- Mail completed form to:

Joe and Phyllis Duran
 309 E. Santa Paula St
 Santa Paula, CA 93060
 Phone: (805) 525-4681
 Email: dogpatchraider@msn.com

- Make reservations not later than Jun 20th for the group rate.

Call **1-800-Holiday (465-4329)**
 Holiday Inn Savannah-Midtown
 7100 Abercorn Street
 Savannah, GA 31406
 (912) 352-7100
www.holiday-inn.com/sav-midtown

Please give the following group name/group code to reservation agent when making reservation:

"93rd BG Reunion" "NTB".

The group rate is **\$84.95** plus 12% tax per room.
 Approximately \$95.15 per night.

Make travel arrangements to arrive in time for dinner at 6:30 PM on Thursday, July 13th.

Prepare to have a great time with old and new friends!

REUNION FEE REFUND POLICY

Last minute cancellations at the San Diego reunion resulted in a loss of \$2,085 dollars. This loss results because we must guarantee your attendance to the hotel relative to all meals and other related costs. When you don't show, we still get charged for meals and other charges related to those meals.

We recognize that there will always be unforeseen events beyond your control, and we truly regret your personal inconvenience. However, your executive committee has decided that we must stay with our policy of "pay as you go" for reunion costs.

We have reviewed the choices: we can either add an extra amount to everyone's fees to cover last minute cancellations, or we can set a deadline date for cancellations after which the fees paid cannot be refunded.

In order to keep our reunion fees as low as possible, your executive committee has chosen the deadline date choice. Therefore, a deadline date, based on hotel contract requirements for each reunion will be provided to you at the time you make your reservations, and included in our reunion announcements in the Ball of Fire.

Registration Form

NAMES (Add more on reverse)

Sunday Banquet Choice

_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Chicken Kiev <input type="checkbox"/> Prime Rib
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Chicken Kiev <input type="checkbox"/> Prime Rib
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Chicken Kiev <input type="checkbox"/> Prime Rib
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Chicken Kiev <input type="checkbox"/> Prime Rib
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Chicken Kiev <input type="checkbox"/> Prime Rib

Address: _____
 (Street)

_____ (City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip)

Phone: _____ Email: _____

OPTIONAL EVENTS:

Friday, Jul 14th

City Tour and Lunch with the Heritage League - \$45.00

Saturday, Jul 15th

Golf Outing with the Heritage League

Contact Vicki Brooks Warning to arrange tee time
 vkwarning@comcast.net

CALCULATE YOUR REGISTRATION FEE:

The Registration Fee Includes:

Dinner for Four Evenings, Riverboat Sunday Brunch,
 Transportation, Museum Admission,
 Hospitality Room, Door Prizes

Number of adults in group: _____ X \$206 = _____

Number of children ages 11 & 12 _____ X \$192 = _____

Number of children 10 and under _____ X \$174 = _____

Optional City Tour & Lunch _____ X \$45 = _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Savannah Reunion Fee Refund Policy:

No refund will be made after July 1st

Please complete form and enclose check for the total amount.

See you in Savannah!

93rd Bomb Group Savannah Reunion
July 13th – 17th, 2006
Schedule of Events

Thursday, July 13

1:00 pm	Executive Lunch & Meeting
2:00 pm	Hospitality Room open
	Early bird arrivals can visit mighty. 8 th AAF Museum
6:00 pm	Southern Buffet at the Holiday Inn

Friday, July 14

9:30 – 11:30 am	Hospitality Room open
Optional - 12:00 am	Guided 90-minute tour of Old Savannah in 'trolley' followed by special lunch; round-trip from our hotel \$45 per person includes tips. We will join the Heritage League for this joint event.
2:00 pm	Heritage League will host a Historians' Roundtable. (Don Morrison will attend.)
4:30 - 5:30 pm	Hospitality Room open
6:00 pm	Buffet Dinner (Baked Ham & Sliced Turkey) at the Holiday Inn
8:30 pm	Hospitality Room Open

Saturday, July 15

Optional - Golf Outing with Heritage League. Please contact Vicki Brooks Warning at vkwarning@comcast.net to reserve your spot and be given information on course, fees, start times, pairings.

10:00 am	93 rd Business Meeting & Educational Program at Holiday Inn
Lunchtime	Lunch on your own
1:00 and 1:30 pm	Buses Depart for Mighty 8 th AAF Museum
3:00 and 3:30 pm	Buses return from museum to Hotel
4:30 pm	Buses Depart for Memorial Service at the Museum
5:00 pm	Memorial Service, Memorial Chapel at the Museum, Heritage League hosts 93 rd .
6:45 pm	Dinner buffet at Pirates House Restaurant serving food in Savannah since 1753. Discounts for children under age 10
8:30 pm	Buses return to Hotel
9:00 pm	Hospitality Room Open

Sunday, July 16

Morning worship on your own – Church list available from Hotel	
11:15 am	Buses depart
12:00 pm	River Street Riverboat Co. Sunday Brunch Cruise departs pier. Discounts for children under age 12
1:30 pm	Boat docks at pier. Return to the hotel or revisit the museum.
1:45 pm	Buses depart for Holiday Inn and Mighty 8 th AAF Museum
3:00 pm	Buses return to hotel from museum
6:00 pm	93 rd Farewell Banquet (Prime Rib or Chicken Kiev) – Holiday Inn
9:00 pm	Hospitality Room Open

Monday, July 17

Travel Day

Paul Bergman Recognized in “Heroes Among Us” by East County Gazette.

Injured as he struck the ground with a half opened parachute, Paul Bergman survived his time in Nazi Germany with a positive attitude and the necessary luck. He was recently honored by his local newspaper in the “Heroes Among Us” feature. Paul’s plane was shot down on Sept 9th 1944 as the 93rd Bomb Group attacked Koblenz, Germany. Five of the ten crew members survived this mission. A gunner and the bombardier were killed by German soldiers. The engineer and co-pilot were killed as their chutes failed to open. And the pilot went down with the plane. The five survivors became POW’s.

Housed mainly in hospitals, Paul believes he was kept alive by honest and compassionate care by some hospital nurses and surgeons and his commitment to stay positive. After the War, Paul renewed contact with some of the Germans who had helped him and due to the dire straits that they found themselves in, Paul was now able to help them by sending “Care” packages to them. He is still in contact with his German Friends and now lives in Eagle Creek, Oregon.

**The Ball of Fire Quarterly Express
93rd Bombardment Group**

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paulsteichen@comcast.net

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93rd Bomb Group

Send checks to Editor, address above