

# Ball of Fire QUARTERLY EXPRESS



## NEWSLETTER OF THE 93<sup>rd</sup> BOMB GROUP

Vol. 15, No. 3

FALL/WINTER 2007

### GIANT OF THE 93<sup>rd</sup> BOMB GROUP



Cal Stewart 1918 - 2007

At age 10, Cal was the printer's devil at the Belden, Nebraska Progress, a weekly newspaper produced with handset type. At age 14, Cal single-handedly produced two consecutive issues while owners vacationed. In conjunction with the newspaper, the owners bought and sold farm produce. For two weeks, the high-schooler tested butterfat, candled eggs, weighed heavy hens, and wrote checks.

Stewart became managing editor of Hartington's Cedar County News at age 19.

In 1942, as a private on the USAAF B-24 heavy bomber base at Hardwick, England, Cal founded "The Liberator," an unauthorized-but popular-tabloid newspaper. Outlay for the first issue came from his pocket.

As a corporal, Cal became the pioneer 93<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group's public relations "officer" and nicknamed the outfit: "Ted's Traveling Circus." He was appointed aide to Edward J. (Ted) Timberlake's staff, who, at 31, had become the youngest general since the Civil

War. For six months, Col. James Stewart (the actor) was Ted Timberlake's chief of staff and the General Timberlake, Col. James Stewart and Lt. Cal Stewart shared the same small bomb wing office.

Separated from the Air Corps as a captain, Cal married Margaret "Peggy" O' Mara of Millburn, NJ on January 5, 1946, in her hometown. Her first American Red Cross overseas assignment had been with the 93<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group. Cal and Peggy had three children - Suzanne, Sally Ann, and Scott.

After the war, Cal returned to the newspaper business and was Editor of many different newspapers in Nebraska during his lengthy career. With an advance from Random House, Cal collaborated with James Dugan to write the definitive book on the famous August 1 low level bombing of the Ploesti oil works in Nazi controlled Romania. The Dugan/Stewart book "Ploesti: The Great Ground Air Battle of 1 August 1943" has been reprinted 15 times in at least four different languages.

Cal's other book is "Ted's Traveling Circus" which was a nine year project. It is now the primary source for information on the 93<sup>rd</sup> BG.

One of Cal Stewart's last projects was to make America aware of the war time sacrifices and the story of fellow Nebraskan, Ben Kuroki. This project became almost overly successful as Ben Kuroki was honored by the Army with the Distinguished Service Medal, By the White House with a formal dinner with the visiting Japanese Prime Minister, and by a nation wide showing of "Most Honorable Son", a film by Bill Kubota, detailing Kuroki's story.

Cal Stewart was a giant of the 93<sup>rd</sup> BG and can't be replaced, just remembered. Thanks for all the great memories, Cal.

## PACKY ROCHE BURIED WITH FULL MILITARY HONORS IN ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

John (Packy) Roche, who survived being shot down twice and was one of the original 93<sup>rd</sup> BG pilots, passed away last November. After the war, Packy stayed with the Air Force and retired in 1970. His career paralleled that of the Air Force itself. He flew on the historic Ploesti raid of August 1 1943, was recruited to join the Manhattan Project and later participated in the nuclear tests at Bikini Atoll. He worked at the Pentagon and commanded many airbases during his distinguished career. Packy, along with his wife, Pat and family, was a regular at our 93<sup>rd</sup> BG reunions. He was a great guy with a beautiful family. Packy, we're going to miss you.

### FOLDED WINGS

Paul O. Bergman  
Bob Tredway  
Harry Gruener  
Cal Stewart  
Arthur J. Quinn

Thomas A. Sullivan  
Packy Roche  
Joseph Bisson  
Phil Golden  
Donald Lance

### 93<sup>rd</sup> BG OFFICERS

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### EDITOR'S NOTE

Due to some untimely health problems (are there timely health problems?) I fell behind in getting many of the Letters to the Editor published. So, this issue is devoted mainly to letters. Many great articles that I have will need to wait for the next issue. Should be out in March. ~ Paul

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Paul,

A month ago I had the pleasure of attending the world premiere of Ben Kuroki's film, *Most Honorable Son*. Exactly 65 years ago, Ben Kuroki joined Jake Epting's crew on the *Red Ass*, and I was navigator on that crew. Ben and I flew 18 missions together on the Red Ass and Tupelo Lass including the low level to Ploesti, which was my 25<sup>th</sup> and last mission. It was Ben's 24<sup>th</sup> mission.

At the World premiere, we were surprised and honored by an introduction to the film by Tom Brokaw.

I want to thank Bill Kubota for this great film. Bill started this documentary 9 years ago when he brought his camera and crew to El Paso, Texas to film an interview with me. Mr. Kubota worked

tirelessly and at great personal expense traveling from coast to coast to interview all living crew members and others, including our squadron CO, Col. K.O. Dessert.

Mr. Kubota, thanks for a job well done.

Edward E Weir  
Lt. Col. USAF Retired *colweir2@aol.com*

Paul,

Keep up the good work. Looking forward to next issue of "Ball of Fire" as stated in past issue, with story, " Lew Brown and his B-24". My uncle was on the plane with Lew and crew.

Thanks again,  
Lee Wildermuth  
581 W. Front St  
Logan, OH 43138

## **LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (Continued)**

Hello Paul,

Just a note. Sorry you had to leave early, no place like home if you are not feeling well.

Had a great time. Colin showed me the RAF plotting table and infrastructure at Duxford. What a blast!

Big screw up on the Amsterdam short cut home. Cancel my return flight, etc. etc. all kinds of excuses. Left Norwich at noon (7AM flight) and Houston at midnight the next day.

Take care and thanks a lot.

All the Best,

Art Magill  
26803 Hanna Rd.  
Conroe, TX 77385

Paul,

Flew the 35 missions with 409<sup>th</sup> squadron 93<sup>rd</sup> BG from Sept '44 till the end of war and flew a plane back to Ft Dix in June '45 with the crew. I was the co-pilot.

Many experiences but God was with us and we had no one injured.

Vern Harriman  
121 Balbach Dr.  
Buffalo, NY 14225

Hi Paul,

Hope this takes care of '06-'07. Due to family illness in the past year and the losing of my wife recently, I am behind in a lot of ways, but I'm catching up.

Your dad and I corresponded a few times, traded stories about a pilot I went over with and later your dad flew several missions with him. Good fun!

Paul Blateric  
1662 So. Utica St.  
Denver, CO 80219

Dear Paul,

This is to report to the members of the 93<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group Association and their families that I have established an archives repository with the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum for the 93<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group Association. At their request, I have sent three large boxes of material and a copy of our history book

authored by the late Cal Stewart. Following are examples of the material sent:

- (1) Ted's Traveling Circus, 93<sup>rd</sup> Bombardment Group(H) USAF 1942-1945
- (2) Article by Colonel Rolin Reineck about Major John L. Jerstad's crew having "Jerk's Natural" for their airplane
- (3) Paper written by Floyd Mabee about his crew which flew "Shoot Luke" and the pilot was John Murphy
- (4) Pamphlet published about Ben Kuroki, written and published by Cal Stewart.
- (5) Material about the 93<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group Association reunions held while Al Asch was President and correspondence generated and received while President.
- (6) Numerous photos

I still have a large folder of material about the 93<sup>rd</sup>. It is material Naomi and I generated for guidance to build our 93<sup>rd</sup> BG display.

I recommend this paper be read during the forthcoming reunion. Unfortunately, our health does not permit Naomi and me to attend this one. Also, it should be published in the Ball of Fire. Ms. Vivian Rogers Price of the Museum staff called and told us they were in receipt of the boxes and were very pleased to get the boxes. She implied that they would welcome like material from any member of the 93<sup>rd</sup>. Her telephone number is (912) 748-8888. The Museum address is:

Mighty 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Museum  
**Attn: Vivian Rogers Price**  
175 Bourne Avenue  
Pooler, GA 31322

Paul, please note my change of address. Naomi and I are now living in an assisted living setting near Nashville, Tennessee. Please express our best wishes to everyone.

Sincerely,  
Al Asch  
300 Wheatfield Circle #B207  
Brentwood, TN 37064

Dear Paul and Any of You Vets That are Left,

I received my draft notice on my eighteenth birthday. I was happily working at the Willow Run, Michigan bomber plant building B-24's. I ignored the draft notice for a short and then enlisted in the Army Air Corps after getting a release from my draft board. I reported to Detroit at 9a.m. with many other men (boys, mostly) for an all day physical inspection. Those of us who passed were sworn in about four in the afternoon. Ten hours later we had been taken by the Michigan Central Railroad to a receiving depot near Battle Creek where we were given bunks and left to sleep. About 5a.m. we were aroused and taken into a large depot to take general classification tests. I thought that was a waste of time as I wanted to be an airplane mechanic.

Skipping ahead, I went through basic training and Bombsite and Automatic Flight Control Maintenance School at Lower Field in Denver, Colorado. A one week assignment at a base in Boise, Idaho (where Jimmy Stewart was based as the Operations Officer). I was then shipped to Washington, DC with six other young men for special assignment to the UK to cross train with the Minneapolis Honeywell Automatic Flight Control personnel on the maintenance of the Sperry C5 Automatic Flight Control Equipment. The Sperry equipment was being installed on the B-24's built by the Ford Motor Company at Willow Run, Michigan. I was assigned to the 93<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group at Hardwick, eleven miles south of Norwich. That did not last long as the Sperry equipment was too fast acting and caused the formations to be scattered during bomb runs. So, I was sent to a large depot at Lythem St. Ann's to be crossed trained on the Sperry equipment. While there I met my wife, Margaret at a USO dance in Manchester and we hit it off immediately. I traveled the two hundred miles from Hardwick to her home in Rochdale, ten miles from Manchester, about every month until we were married on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1944.

(I can hear Margaret moving in the house as I write this.) On June 15<sup>th</sup>, we came back to Hardwick and took up abode at the Chipperfield Farm near the village of Harleston, five miles south of the base. I commuted by bicycle whenever I could get away from my duties. Margaret was eventually employed by the Army in our px and we traveled back and forth by bicycle.

There are more stories of various adventures. Like the day we accidentally dropped five one hundred pound practice bombs on five British gardens. I did much flying to test and check the autopilot equipment and was promoted to Staff SGT, as we could not receive flight pay being non crew members.

I am still in contact with Robert Veneck, 2620 Linda St, Bellevue, NE 68147. We have not seen each other since June 15, 1945 but were reunited by mail and e-mail through the Ball of Fire publication.

James Soper  
28829 Hatley Farm Rd  
Albemarle, NC 28001

Paul,

Thanks for getting the DVD to the Memorial Library in Norwich. The librarian sent me a nice thank you note. I hope your group had a good time in Norwich. Several people have contacted me since the mention in the last Ball of Fire. One was from Wilbur Cushing who was in my armament section in the 93<sup>rd</sup> and was transferred to the 491st at the same time I was.

Col. Rollin Reineck was the navigator on the original crew of Jerk's Natural. After completing 25 missions with the 93rd he went on to do another tour with 29's in the Pacific. Barbara Finitzer's husband, John, was in Group Headquarters, keeping records on the combat crews. I was interviewed for the Library of Congress oral history project and gave the interviewer a copy of the DVD. He said I was the first person in all of the interviews he had done to have a video record of their WW2 experience. It will go into the archives of the library. I'm also sending a copy to the Mighty 8th Museum. I hope we can make copies available at the reunion in September.

Best regards,  
Don Whited  
[dwhited@peoplepc.com](mailto:dwhited@peoplepc.com)

Hi Paul,

When we were at Duxford on 8 May, I encountered the "Explainer", Ivor Warne, in the American Air Museum who had given me a tour of the B-24 when it was still in the conservation hangar at Duxford. He told me that work is ongoing on the B-24 - a technician is reconditioning the instruments for the cockpit, navigator and bombardier stations. When

they are completed and installed, the Norden bombsight and the Plexiglas and glass in the lower nose will also be installed. The kind of conservation work they do at Duxford is of the highest quality. As an example, they overhauled and preserved the engines and propellers and all of the engine accessories such as starters, generators, oil coolers and the turbo superchargers even though they will never run. He was not sure if they plan to make the bomb bay doors operable to allow viewing of the interior as they haven't done that for any of the other aircraft in the AAM.

Charlie Sill  
[chrssl2@clearwire.net](mailto:chrssl2@clearwire.net)

Hello Paul,

Thought you might like this story about how dad became a flight instructor. ~ Becky Estes

### **The Consolidated B24-D (The aircraft I learned to love)**

By Lew Brown

I flew this aircraft for almost three years - 1942, 1943, and 1944.

It began in February of 1942 when I was checked out on the B-24 with, what you might say, was one solo landing with another student pilot. I had a total of 30 hours of observation, co-pilot and pilot training. Following this, I was assigned to the newly activated 93<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group, 409 Squadron along with a group right out of flight school, just like me.

In our first squadron meeting, Captain Sadalis (sp?) asked how many of us were checked out in the B-24. I was the only one who held up a hand and I might add ...rather meekly

With that he said: "OK, Brown, I'll ride with you tomorrow." The next day, after a two hour check ride, he advised me that I would be the squadron instructor. I almost fainted!

I started flying with two fellow pilots, one as a co-pilot and the other as an observer....changing them back and forth. After that, I put them in the pilot's seat and began checking them out as first pilots. All this provided me a chance to build up my flying time because I was flying four hours in the morning, four in the afternoon and four hours every other night. This went on for four or five weeks.

From there, I went to Ft. Myers for submarine patrol and more training. And then it was on to England in September of 1942.

Almost a year later, I completed my tour with my second trip to North Africa where I led the 409<sup>th</sup> SQ to: "you know where" on Sunday, August 1, 1943. Then it was back to The States, and, of course, instructing again at Wendover Field, Utah and Mt. Home, Utah. I was transferred to the ATC flying back and forth in the Pacific, and, you guessed it.....instructing once again.

Lew Brown  
220 Clardy St.  
Malvern, AR 72104

Hello,

I was contacted by the grandson of a former pilot (deceased) that was held at camps, including Wauwilermoos Prison in Switzerland during World War II. After being apprehended during his attempt to escape, the Swiss transferred the individual to the punishment camp for a substantial period of time.

Conditions were found to match circumstances which the Secretary concerned finds to have been comparable to those under which persons have generally been held captive by enemy armed forces during periods of armed conflict.

To be eligible for the POW medal, armed conflicts are defined as World War I, World War II, Korean Conflict, Vietnam Era, and Southwest Asia Conflict.

The Air Force has been denying his requests for 5 years, regardless the track record of the medal. I was fortunate to obtain copies of letters signed by the Secretary of the Air Force; Secretary of the Navy; and Acting Secretary of the Navy authorizing the POW medal to over 200 American airmen held in Russia during WWII, another foreign armed force not hostile to the United States.

According to documents, only 2 out of 200-300 airmen held at Wauwilermoos Prison have been awarded the POW medal.

1. The veteran contacted AF Chief of Staff General Fogelman. The general responded by instructing personnel at Randolph AFB to prepare the ceremony. In 1996, Lt. General Record presented the POW medal.

2. The daughter of a former pilot contacted their U.S. Congressman. For being held at Wauwilermoos Prison, he was awarded the medal, recently.

My research has identified at least 58 bombardment groups that were involved with aircraft that crashed/landed in Switzerland. Approximately 1500 airmen were held while over 200 were sent to the punishment camp.

Why does such a number of veterans accept such an unbalanced system of recognition? You may respond that many members are deceased or too old to be involved. President Reagan approved the POW medal in 1986. That would make all members younger than what I am today.

You may believe I am too harsh in my introduction of the subject. As a 22-year retiree of the military, I have discovered too many discrepancies in the system, including statements contained in letters from a Major General, and information shared by former POWs.

I would appreciate any action identified what members of the 93rd has attempted in order for those that endured such conditions be awarded the POW medal. Also, an opinion what should be done for those that were not recognized?

Finally, I do not claim to be a WWII veteran or a former POW.

Best Regards,  
Robert E. Johnson  
*Robersable@aol.com*

Good evening, my name is Stephane Fleury.

I'm living in Le Havre, France. I'm member of association "the Flowers of the Memory"(les Fleurs de la Mémoire) <http://fleursdelamemoire.free.fr/>. With this association we are (my friends and I) godfathers of some soldiers in Colleville Cemetery. We flower the graves of these soldiers and we make research to know which they was. I've a friend who has just been godfather of SSgt Eugene J. Mlot, of Wisconsin, 93rd Bomb Group/Heavy, 28th Bomber Squadron, Army Serial Number: 16060659, K.I.A: 06/24/1944. It is somebody can help me to obtain information of this soldier? It's important for us because we flower their graves but we don't know who was these soldiers come to fight for our freedom. We are so grateful towards them.

Please believe Madam, Sir, with my most sincere respects.

Fleury Stephane  
*kastell76@aol.com*

Hi,

Am seeking any available info on my father's service in the 93rd Bombardment Group (B)

James Harvey Yandle 34643827

Gunner on B-24 named Ready Teddy or Reddy Teddy  
He was from SC. Trained in Texas, Colorado, Idaho, ad Florida

Served 7 months active in Europe, 30 missions out of England. late '43 to mid-'44, including D-Day bombardment of Caen

Awarded DFC, Air Medal with 3 oak leaf clusters, presidential citation, and ribbons acknowledging service in 3 major campaigns... North Africa, Italy, and Europe, I believe.

I think he mustered out in late summer '45 as staff sergeant, serving at gunnery school at Tyndall Field, Panama City, Fl

Would very much appreciate ANY info anyone can share on my dad. I was named after his best friend in his crew. First name Paul, from Minnesota, I believe. My dad would also have been considered an old man at the time, as he was 33-34 years old.

Thanks in advance for any assistance or recollection,

Regards and Thanks,  
James Paul Yandle  
*paulyandle@bellsouth.net*

My father was 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. James F. Wright and was a member of the 93<sup>rd</sup> Bombardment Group in 44 and 45. I am in contact with the last remaining crew member, tail gunner, Cliff Collins. He has advised me that their crew was designated a lead crew and as such did not fly every mission during their tour. I would like to find out anything that is available.

He started with the 329<sup>th</sup> but was reassigned after about 6 missions to the lead crew program.

Thank you for any thing you might could add or a source to look for information.

John F. Wright  
*Wwright9@satx.rr.com*

We arrived home tonight. The reunion was fabulous. We had a woman who spoke that was in the WASP. That is the Women's Army (?) Pilots. They were the ones who flew the bombers over to Europe during WWII to deliver them to the Bomb Groups. She is 87 years old and has more energy than all of us put together. She gave me her card with her picture on it the way she looked back in 1942. The next time I see you I'll show it to you. She also taught at the gunnery school. She trained in Sweetwater, TX. The train ride was great even though it poured. All in all we had a great time but missed you both.

Alberta Delguidice  
*USER4723@aol.com*

Hi Paul and Marissa!

Hope all is well. When we took the Zephyr Dinner Train, I walked the aisles & polled the vets. How did you get home after discharge? The train was the most common. A few caught a car or a truck or a bus. Hearol Veteto said he caught a plane for the final leg home. But, Sam Harris of Chicago took the honors. He said that he and a buddy hitchhiked from Texas to Chicago.

I don't know if this is newsworthy, just thought I'd pass it on.

Jim Guddal  
*jguddal@yahoo.com*

Paul,

Just a short note to let you and others know that my Dad, Paul O. Bergman, died on December 22, 2007. He flew with your dad aboard the Alley Cat. They will be well remembered.

Brent Bergman  
*brentbergman@dsxextreme.com*

My Dad was Richard B. Ruff. He passed away in June of 2004. I know he served in bomb squadron 409-93 bomb group in the latter part of WW II. I know he flew out of Norwich, England. If you or anyone you know might have any information about his squadron I would appreciate if you would let me know.

Thank You,  
Walter Ruff  
*theruffs@scglobal.net*

Paul,

Looking in my check book it occurred to me that I do not remember paying my dues in June. Let me know if I owe and I will send you off a check. Sure sad to hear Packy passed away. He was a great guy and our Sq. CO with the Pathfinders.

Have a great day!

Bill Neumann  
*Mrnwx7@bellsouth.net*

Just came across your website and I know my Dad will be real interested in being part of your group. From what I know, my Dad, Joe Hernandez of San Antonio, Texas was part of the 93<sup>rd</sup> Bombardment Group and the 330<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron. Just this past Saturday we were visiting and he mentioned that he wished he had more information on his squadron and some info on the base in England where he was stationed, I believe it was Hardwick, England where the base was located. I am going to direct him to the various websites available and my wife and I will be getting him your quarterly newsletter. I am sure he will truly enjoy receiving them. You should be receiving our check for his subscription very soon.

Thank you,

George & Cynthia Hernandez  
*mrsghernandez@aol.com or mmbigdaddyg@aol.com*

Hi-

My uncle, Albert Cool, was a pilot of the 330th Bomb Squadron of the 93rd Bomb Group. His B-24 went down sometime around June 13, 1944. Do you have any info regarding him?

Thanks,  
Don Cool  
*drc1@netscape.com*

Sir:

I do not believe that I was ever a member of the 93rd BGA. Over the years I have received various magazines and newsletters, but I have not seen the Ball of Fire. I do remember the B-24 and have formed up on it. May I become a member and receive the newsletter by e-mail? I can be reached at *JimChitt@aol.com*. My name and address is as follows: James C. Chittenden, PO Box 1225, Ocean Shores WA. 98569.

I was in the 409th Bomb Sq. as engineer/gunner on Wm. Bryan's crew.

Cheers,  
Jim Chittenden  
*JimChitt@aol.com*

Sir/Ma'am,

My name is Chief Warrant Officer 2 Faine Doyal Jr. I am a US Army Aviator stationed at Fort Hood, TX. My great uncle was LT Faine M Doyal. I have been told that he was shotdown overseas during the WWII. I am searching for any information, pictures, people who knew him, etc. A picture of his crew would be like a piece of gold to me. I have heard only a few stories about him and his unit. I would love to know what some of the missions him and his crew went on etc. Any information or guidance you could provide would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time and effort.

CW2 Layron F Doyal Jr.  
Outlaw Troop, 4th Sqd, 3d Armored Cavalry  
Regiment  
Fort Hood, Texas 76544

Mr. Steichen,

I just received the latest edition of the *Ball of Fire* which I look forward to when it arrives. I wanted to let you know of my new address:

*Scott Ramsey  
128 Marin Dr.  
Panama City, FL 32405*

Also, I am making more copies of my video if anyone would like a copy. I brought it to the last reunion in Savannah, GA last July. It showcases different WWII museums and memorials set to some big band and WWII era songs. I do not accept money for the video only any written stories anyone would like to share with me. If you would like to add this to the next newsletter that would be great.

Have a good day,

*Scott Ramsey  
(850)276-7324  
WWII Interviews  
[scott@theramseys.org](mailto:scott@theramseys.org)*

Paul,

Thank you so much for the newsletter!!  
It is actually for my Father in-law, Fred Shubeck (1st Lieutenant), who as a pilot flew 33 missions with the 328th Squadron, 93rd Bombardment Group over Germany during WWII.

Sincerely,  
Carol Shubeck  
*carolshubeck@gmail.com*

I have been researching this bomb group on the internet. My grandfather served in the control tower at Hardwick. He is still living. His name is Montie (M.L.) Guthrie. I would like to try and help him find some old friends that he served with. How do you obtain the newsletter? Are there fees or dues? I have attached a link that has several photos from his photo album. He has a very good one. Thank you for your time.

[http://www.controltowers.co.uk/H-K/Hardwick\\_Monty.htm](http://www.controltowers.co.uk/H-K/Hardwick_Monty.htm)

Tom Guthrie  
*brianag@centex.net*

My father was with the 93<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group and flew the Ploesti mission. His name was Robert Moree. His pilot was Capt. Charles Merrill. Their Liberator was "Thar She Blows". Would like to hear from you and get more info on the outfit.

Sincerely yours,  
Desmond E. Moree  
*dmoree@pw.utc.com*

My name is Veronica Wilmot. I am from Denver, IA. My Dad and I have recently started searching for information about his brother who is MIA from WWII. His brother's name is James V Roberts. He was member of the 93 B.G., 409 B.S. He was a crew member on the A/C - Night Raider and also A/C 41-24122 Missouri Sue when it went down on April 16, 1943.

I was given your name by Michael Sellers. He told me to send you an e-mail to help get us started in our search. I had sent e-mails to the webmaster at the 93rd, but have not heard back as of yet.

I was talking to a historian who told me it was too bad

we didn't know about the 93rd's reunion, which was recently held in MN.

We have been reading past issues of the Ball of Fire Quarterly Express newsletters. Is there a way to subscribe to the newsletter? I would love to be able to give it as a gift to my Dad.

Thank you in advance for what help you can give us.

Sincerely,

Veronica Wilmot  
*cwwjr99@aol.com*

Dear Veronica,

Welcome to the 93<sup>rd</sup> family—we are always delighted to hear from others who are interested in the history and experience of the men who served in the 93<sup>rd</sup>. I've included Paul Steichen and Don Morrison on my reply because they can help you with part of your request. Paul is the President of the 93<sup>rd</sup> and the Editor of the Ball of Fire. He can add you to the email delivery of the BOFQE and tell you how to join the group. Don is our group historian and he will gladly tell you all he knows about your uncle and the planes he flew.

I'm so sorry we didn't discover you before the reunion—there were 29 vets present along with 50-60 family members and descendants. You are so close and could have easily joined us. The next BOFQE will cover some of the highlights I'm sure. The location and date for next year is undecided at this time, but hopefully you can join us. We are certainly eager to welcome new members. Our long range purpose is to keep the memory of the men and their bravery alive for future generations so that their sacrifices will be known and remembered.

My uncle, 1LT Robert L. Marx, was killed in a take off crash in England on Dec 19, 1944. He was a member of the 409<sup>th</sup> as well. He and five others of his crew are buried in the American Military Cemetery in Cambridge England. We have visited the cemetery three times in the last 10 years.

I'd be happy to talk with you if you'd like. Do you mind if I call?

Regards,  
John Marx  
*109clearview@verizon.net*

Dear Mr. Steichen,

I have been referred to you by Mr. Cal Davidson and also Mr. Scott Stewart. I am a Ph.D. candidate in American Studies at the University at Buffalo, State University of New York. I am attempting to learn more about Lt. William K. Little, a member of the U.S. Army Air Force. Last year I took a delegation of students to Sinaia, Romania to participate in the ITI/UNESCO Chair of Theatre Workshops of Drama Schools. While I was there I located the Hero's Cemetery in Sinaia. Recently I made inquiries in Romania about this cemetery and the American airman, William K. Little. I recently received an email from the Romanian Hero's Memorial Agency in Romania with a photograph showing the memorial to this airman. His information is as follows:

*William K. Little  
First Lieutenant, U.S. Army Air Forces  
Service # O-728290  
409th Bomber Squadron, 93th Bomber Group, Heavy  
Aircraft: Honky Tonk Gal, Crew Position: Bomber  
Entered the Service from: Tennessee  
Died: 8-Aug-43  
Buried at: Plot E Row 43 Grave 15  
Lorraine American Cemetery  
St. Avold, France  
Awards: Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, Purple Heart*

I am planning on preparing a scholarly account of Lt. Little and the mission. I was so shocked to find his former grave and memorial in Sinaia. I felt very sad to think that he was on the other side of the world and forgotten about. I would like others to know about his sacrifice.

Specifically, I am looking for:

- 1) The MACR form for the Honky Tonk Gal or the aircraft tail number/ serial number so that I can request the MACR.
- 2) The location of the Sinaia Military Hospital where he was held and where he died.
- 3) Were the officers separated from the enlisted men and placed in different camps. On the National Archive POW records the Enlisted so as being held at the Sub-Lagarule Timis, Timisul de Jos or Largarule Prizoinero #2, 13, 14, or 18, Timisul de jos, Romania.
- 4) Does anyone remember this airman? And could I speak with them? Any suggestions?
- 5) A crew listing for the Honky Tonk Gal. I have one I put together from the listings at Ploesti.org using the

aircraft commander as the search key. Amazingly enough these men are all linked to him as he was the AC of the Honky Tonk Gal. All but one, Sgt John L. English, appear in the POW records at NARA.

They are as follows:

Last	First	Middle	Rank	Born City	Born State	Crew Position	Unit	Post War	Occupation
Womble	Hubert	H	1/Lt	Caldwell	Texas	Pilot	93BG	Caldwell	Insurance
Lancashire	Lawrence	H	2/Lt	Shaker Heights	Ohio	CoP	93BG	Soldotna, Alaska	Farmer
Thompson	Arthur	W	2/Lt	Philadelphia	Pa	Nav	93BG	Bogota, Columbia	Pilot
Little	William	K	1/Lt	Memphis	Tenn	Bombardier	93BG	KIA Body in France	
Barker	James	J	Sgt	Lewistown	Pa	Gunner	93BG	Lewistown	
English	John	L	Sgt	Fairview Village	Ohio	Tail Gunner	93BG	Trappist Monastery	USA
Fitzgerald	Mack		T/Sgt		Ga	E-TT	93BG		
Ford	Howard	O	T/Sgt	Upper Marlboro	MD	Radio	93BG	Brandywine, MD	
Reed	Charles	A	S/Sgt	Ridgewood	NY	Gunner	93BG	Long Island, NY	
Sharp	Leo		S/Sgt	Prior & Duncan	Okla	Gunner	93BG	Frontenac, Wis	

I am in possession of a photo of his former grave/ memorial in the Sinaia Military cemetery. I am not sure if anyone is aware that this monument even exists. There is also a monument to all of you in Sinaia. I am returning to Sinaia again this summer and will photograph it.

Any information that you can provide or any suggestions will be appreciated.. I was a loadmaster on C-130's and was startled to find a brother airman so far from home that I was moved to investigate the circumstances surrounding his burial and his memorialization in Sinaia.

Thanks again, Mark F. Tattenbaum <http://myprofile.cos.com/tattenbaum>

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## The Ball of Fire Quarterly Express 93<sup>rd</sup> Bombardment Group

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➤ "Most Honorable Son" Premieres at Grand Event in Lincoln, Nebraska. Then, on to a National Showing on PBS.  
(Story in next issue)

➤ Minnesota Reunion Is a Great Success  
(Story and pictures in next issue)