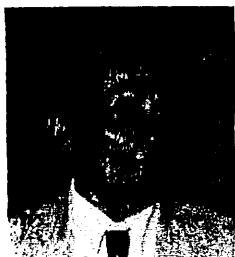




THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



DALE W. HOWIESON

The May issue of the newsletter was skimpy due to lack of input from the membership. Every member can contribute; it doesn't have to be about combat. I know everyone is just about out of material on that subject.

Several topics to write about: what you are doing in retirement, hobbies, travel and visiting with other members. What impressed you the most on your overseas tour, and anything else that you think your fellow members would enjoy reading. I hope this will generate more activity toward a better newsletter.

Since the '94 Reunion in Hampton, eleven of our members have died. This brings me to suggest several ideas for the Group to consider. We are not getting any younger so perhaps having a yearly reunion at the same central location is something to think about. No one would have to travel too far and planning the reunion would be easier.

I would appreciate your opinions on these ideas.

My warmest regards to all.

ATTENTION PLEASE!

Please send all dues and change of addresses to:

William J. McKinstry
473 Evergreen Dr.
Tonawanda, NY 14150

— Thanks!

COMBAT, CO-PILOTS & CONCLUSIONS, WWII

L.R. Kienle, Jr., 823 BGp.

PART 1 of 2:

When the typical pilot reached combat, he was "blessed" with 250 to 350 hours of "stick time." Thus, each sortie was a learning experience: going over as a co-pilot, one could say, barely trained. Ironically, our pilot became Operations Officer, then Squadron Commander. The aforementioned co-pilot moved to the left seat.

School time was terminated so a few situations are remembered as follows:

1. Sent to Capt Gloucester to pick up a B-25 left here with flat tire. No crew, just pilot and Sergeant mechanic. Changed tires and Aussie Aerodrome tanker gassed us up. Checked out plane, engines, pitch, flaps and taxied out to strip. Ran up engines ready to roll. Plane had sat on strip for 3 weeks and my suspicious nature prompted another run up. Both engines quit! Seems condensation had filled tanker with water and gas, plus what had condensed while the B-25 sat on the strip. Purged tanks (much water), ordered newly filled tanker. Ran both engines for 15 minutes, took off on routine flight back to 17 Mile.

Ho, Hum, thank You, Lord!

2. Took off on training mission from 17 Mile strip, banked left, fuel was siphoning out of left wing tank creating a cloud of 130 octane. Newly promoted ex-co-pilot neglected to inspect wing tank caps. Mission aborted. Five minutes flying time.

Once again, thanks Lord. I owe You!

Continued Page 2

5th AF SUN DIAL MEMORIAL

Mat Gac

Mat Gac, the official photographer for the 38th BGp, attended the dedication for the 5th AF Sun Dial Memorial at Hill AFB, Utah, May 13, 1994 as a member of the 5th AF Memorial Foundation. His abbreviated review of this dedication follows:

It was an inspiring ceremony, with Sammy Pierce, a foundation trustee, making introductory remarks as to what the memorial meant to all the 5th AF members.

Col. Maury Eppstein (ret), also a trustee, delivered the key note address, noting that 50 years has passed since we all, as young people, had participated in the greatest war of all wars, 1942-45, the most volatile and unusual years of our lives. It mattered not what each of our particular duties were, but that each of us contributed toward the ultimate victory. The operations in the South Pacific encountered not only the enemy but the uncommon obstacles that nature and environment presented to be overcome — tropical heat, drenching rains, dense jungles, insects, mud, swamps, typhoons and tropical diseases, to name a few. But we met the challenges — working together — and overcame the hardships on a day to day basis to help win the war.

5th AF personnel were also involved in the Korea and Vietnam conflicts; the experiences, memories and friendships remain to be cherished today. With our reunions and memorials we express our appreciation of our valued relationships and bonds to one another and those that have gone on before us.

Continued Page 2

**The 38th Bomb Group Association
(WWII)**

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Edited by Mary Jane Aurdal and printed with pride in the U.S.A. by Paco's Press, P.O. Box 431, Lynnwood, WA 98046-0431

ADDITIONAL LIFE MEMBERS

The Association has gained the following new Life Members since the listing in the January 1995 *The SunSetters* newsletter.

- Edward J. Hubbell, Sr. (HQtrs)
William Earl Skinner (71st)
Joseph E. Carter (405th)
Robert A. Emmons (405th)
James B. Hovis (405th)
James W. Small (405th)
Jesus A. Zaveleta (405th)
Edward N. Girouard (822nd)
Michael G. Gurdock, Jr. (822nd)
Raymond A. Phares (822nd)
Leo F. Herlacher (823rd)
Bruce K. McConnell (823rd)

Here is the breakdown, by squadron, of the total number of members who have contributed \$100 to the Life Membership Fund:

HQ	71st	405th	822nd	823rd	ASC
8	49	93	44	46	4
2	4	6	4	2	Dec'd
TOTAL: 244					

"The Elephant Boy"

by Garrett Middlebrook, 405th Sq.
author of "Combat At 50 Ft."

I was one of the pilots of the original 32 planes which crossed the Pacific in August 1942.

We occupied Durand Strip in the fall of '42. Although the Japs who made the overland attempt to conquer Port Moresby had been defeated and forced into retreat several weeks earlier, rumors still persisted of enemy sniper attacks at night. Consequently, some of us had the jitters.

Normally four of us slept to a tent. One of the junior officers had been nicknamed "Sabu." The name came about because we thought he resembled the lead character in "Sabu, The Elephant Boy," a serial movie popular with kids of that day and time.

Sabu's other three tentmates were ordered away on assignment for a day or so, leaving Sabu to occupy the tent alone.

We were all stripping down and getting under the protective mosquito netting one night when a blood-curdling scream emitted from Sabu's tent.

In my own mind, a sneaking Jap was attacking Sabu and I was anything but brave. I inserted a clip into my rifle and, in my dignified uniform consisting of boxer shorts, jumped into our private slit trench four feet from the tent.

The horrible screaming continued until some brave soul and eminent military leader assembled a task force to rescue Sabu.

The enemy was worse than a Jap sniper. A python snake, between eight and forty feet in length (depending upon who was telling the story) was wrapped around Sabu and tightening its deadly stranglehold, second by second.

Names now have vanished from my memory and I shall not attempt to identify the rescuers by assigning cowardice to those who were more worthy or to enoble others with valor who were undeserving. I just know a hell of an argument ensued.

One voice out of the darkness said, "You pull the damned snake's head away from Sabu and I'll blow its brains out with my revolver!"

But the other voice had a more authoratative ring "No, YOU pull the head away from Sabu and I'll shoot it!"

It took several minutes to determine which voice was more convincingly fearless but eventually a shot rang out and Sabu was saved.

Sabu sought refuge in tent after tent where he would have company but, with answers inspired by cruel humor, we replied, "There is no room at the Inn."

He slept on Pittman's dice table in the Officers' Club until his tentmates came back.

To this day, Sabu is just "Sabu." I do not believe he ever had another name, but at least he was not killed in action by a python. I personally wrote a recommendation to Bomber Command seeking the Purple Heart for Sabu, but the recommendation was returned with a denial saying Congress had not declared war on pythons. •

Sun Dial Memorial — Cont'd

James Chastain, CWO (ret) 36th Photo Recon Trustee, who designed the Sun Dial and spearheaded the project along with others, unveiled the memorial and Sammy Pierce presented it to the USAF.

Gen Rex Hadley (ret) of the Hill AFB Heritage Museum spoke, citing the honor of having this memorial, the first to be erected in the Memorial Park. He requested any memorabilia, photos, or any other material that they could copy, or be donated, to help preserve the AF heritage. Chaplain Aleson provided the benediction, followed by the retirement of the Colors to terminate the ceremonies. •

Combat, Co-Pilots — Cont'd

3. A mission in October '44, the twilight of my career, leading the 823rd, turned into strafing run on Jap airstrip, motioned co-pilot to open bomb bay doors, first mission co-pilot looking all over cockpit for lever. I reached down, opened doors, raised my head only to see a hole in the windshield where my head had been!

Thank You, God, for Your gift of "Green" Co-Pilots! •

"In Ever-Honored Memory"

Since the publication of the September 1994 newsletter, and as of July 13th 1995, we have been informed of these veterans of the 38th Bomb Group that have gone to their final resting place.

Charles Belvin, III (HQ)
 William H. McFarland (69th)
 Peter J. Buckowsky (71st)
 Robert N. Palmer (71st)
 Richard B. Pearson (71st)
 Leroy Russell (71st)
 Irving Nemerov (71st)
 Edward J. Tomalonis (71st)
 Jesse E. Cannon (405th)
 Charles S. Smith (405th)
 William O. Wilson (405th)
 Romonis I. "Mark" Markwart ... (822nd)
 A.I. "Bin" Marshall, Jr. (822nd)
 Edward R. McLean (822nd)
 Herman J. "Tex" Vaden (822nd)
 Delmar Land (822nd)
 Glen Grendahl (823rd)
 James M. Moss, Jr. (823rd)
 Fred L. Paveglio (823rd)
 Ed Preng (823rd)
 Len Romans (823rd)
 Sidney Sampson (823rd)

By squadron, here are the numbers of members and wartime friends of which we have been informed that have passed away:

HQ	13	71st	96	822nd	44
69th	1	89th	1	823rd	48
90th	7	405th	78	Unk	2
TOTAL - 290					

Philippine Liberation Ribbon

According to AF Reg 900-3, anyone who participated in flights over the Philippines and its waters, or who served in the ground echelon between 10/17/44 to 9/3/45 is authorized the Philippine Liberation Ribbon and Medal. The medal and citation may be obtained from the Philippine Embassy by sending a copy of your Discharge (both sides) along with a \$7.00 check payable to the Philippine Embassy, to:

Philippine Embassy
 1617 Massachusetts Ave. NW
 Washington, DC 20037
 Attn: Manny Ugay

(Note: Jim Thoren sent in a check for this purpose in late 1994. He had heard nothing back but the check was cashed.)

RISKY BUSINESS

Ted Broughton, 71st BGP

I recall a hunting trip out of 17 Mile strip in the fall of 1942 that caused a thrill and lots of risk.

A friend, Mel Glover of the 71st, and I decided to go crocodile hunting in the huge swamp adjacent to 17 Mile air strip out of Port Moresby, New Guinea. No boat was available so we managed with a 5-man life raft that was found on all B-25 bombers.

We had not gone too far up the swamp, when a small "croc" slid off the bank into the swamp. I thought it went under the raft (maybe not), but I do know that the aluminum paddle in Mel's hand was like a 50 hp motor! As we beached the raft, we heard shots a short distance away. We investigated and found an Australian skinning out a crocodile that was 12-14 feet long. I was glad he wasn't the one we disturbed, or maybe this article wouldn't have been written!

If memory serves me, this is the same swamp where Major Ezra Best lost his life. •

THE CO-PILOT'S CODE

I am the co-pilot, I sit on the right
 It's up to me to be quick and bright
 I never talk back though I have regrets
 But I have to remember what the Captain forgets
 I make out the flight plan and study the weather
 Pull up the wheels and stand by to feather,
 Make out the flight form and do the reporting
 And fly the crate while the Captain is courting
 I take the readings and adjust the power,
 Put on the heaters when we're in a shower.
 Tell him where we are in the darkest of night
 And do all of the bookwork without any light
 I call for my pilot and buy him Cokes,
 I always laugh at his corny jokes.
 And once in a while when his landings are rusty,
 I always come through with, "By gosh, it's gusty!"
 All in all, I'm a general stooge,
 As I sit on the right of the man I call, "Scrooge."
 You may think I'm past understanding
 But maybe someday, he will give me a landing!

Contributed by Wallace Byron

Ret. Maj. Gen. Frank T. McCoy Jr.



McCoy

Ret. Maj. Gen. Frank T. McCoy Jr., 82, of Nashville, TN, died April 3 after a fall one week earlier.

Born June 4, 1912 in Oklahoma City, OK he practiced law before moving to Nash-

ville in 1941 where he was called to active duty as a first lieutenant and assigned to the SW Pacific area with the 38th Bomb Group.

In 1942, he originated the Allied Code Name System for identification of Japanese aircraft used by the Allied Air Forces. This system was subsequently adopted by NATO for identification of Soviet military aircraft.

His assignments included Australia, New Guinea, the Philippines, Virginia and the Pentagon. He retired in 1968 with more than 5,000 hours as a pilot in command of 26 types of aircraft. He held a command pilot's rating in the Air Force.

His awards and commendations include Legion of Merit, Air Medal, Air Force Presidential Unit Citation, Air Force Commendation Medal, American Defense Service Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Philippine Liberation Ribbon, Army Commendation Medal and Navy Commendation Medal.

★ S/T CONCERNS! ★

So many members have not sent in their dues yet! My records show that, of the members that had paid dues sometime or another in the nineties, 221 are still delinquent.

In an organization with over 800 names, that doesn't sound bad until you realize that 236 are on the MIA list. Subtract another 224 life members and almost 50 widows, and we are lacking about \$4000 to keep the Association operating for 2 years.

We reduced the dues again by cutting out some of our expenses. We figured those members left on our active roster were the ones we could count on. If you aren't sure if you've paid your dues, look your address label above your name. It tells it like it is!

Wm. McKinstry, LM

Home, Sweet Home!

Charles (Chuck) Williams, 71st

"It was a dark and stormy night ..."

Actually, that's not the way this story starts. It begins in October/November 1944. The 38th was based on Morotai in the Halmahera Island group and the island was being subjected to nightly air raids by Japanese bombers. They were making their runs in Bettys, flying at about 20,000 feet. These raids were wreaking havoc with our Air Force planes on the ground, destroying as many as 30-40 planes a night.

Despite a tremendous number of 90mm anti-aircraft guns, they kept coming. But it certainly was a helluva show as the flak shells burst. It was as though there were a thousand fireflies twinkling. And, of course, the old saying applied, "What goes up, must come down." And down came the shrapnel like a summer rain. We all had deep air raid shelters covered with coconut logs and a foot of crushed coral on top of that, so only a direct hit on the shelter was a worry.

A squadron of Aussie Spitfire night fighters was brought in commanded by RAAF ace "Killer" Kane. The Aussies dove through our flak to get at the Japanese, but were not effective enough. So, a simple tactic was devised, to wit: Keep a U.S. bomber over Jap airfields in the area every night, all night.

These nightly intrusion missions involved sending one plane to the target area where it would orbit the Jap airfield at an altitude of roughly 10,000 feet for a couple of hours. At half-hour intervals, these planes would drop one 500 lb. bomb on the Japanese air strip. This kept them from turning on runway lights for night fighters to take off. After a couple of hours, each plane was relieved by another and headed for home.

This is where my story begins — headed for home from, if memory serves me correctly, Menado in the Celebes. It turned out to be a screwy mission with no enemy contact, but hairraising nonetheless.

Our call sign was "Badger Four." We got on course, and I settled back to have a smoke. Our co-pilot was flying the plane and there was a full moon which lit things up nicely. As I looked out the window, I suddenly became aware of a solid undercast that had built up beneath us.

My fatigue vanished as I realized the predicament we were in. We let down until we were right on top of the undercast and began calling Bloomer Tower to get a heading to the strip. There were volcanic mountains in the Halmaheras and we needed a bearing straight to the strip. The dialogue between Badger Four and Bloomer Tower went something like this:

"Bloomer Tower, Bloomer Tower, this is Badger Four, over."

"Roger, Badger Four. This is Bloomer Tower, over."

"Bloomer Tower, this is Badger Four. There is an undercast between us and the ground and it's going to be tricky getting down without slamming into the side of a mountain. I'll give you a long count; you give me a new heading."

This conversation kept repeating itself until our navigator told me we were about 10 minutes from our ETA. I began a slow circling let-down out over the ocean and pretty soon was in thick "soup." In response to our request, Bloomer Tower began flashing a green light, while we flashee our landing lights. Suddenly, there it was: the green light reflected in the clouds. Simultaneously, Bloomer Tower said it saw our lights flashing. I aimed at the green light and dove down through the remaining clouds. We broke out at about 1,000 feet, which was well below the surrounding mountains.

I called the tower, "Bloomer Tower, Bloomer Tower. This is Badger Four on the downwind leg, wheels down and locked. Thanks for the help."

Bloomer Tower's reply: "Welcome home, Badger Four." Those four words made my day! •

38th History

Larry Hickey, publisher working on the 38th History, advises that he has sold his jewelry business and by the first of September should no longer be involved in that activity. He has also consolidated other business interests which should enable him to concentrate on preparing data for the History.

Most items have been returned to the members, but he still has a few pictures and items that will be returned shortly. Larry says that he now has all the historical data, maps and pictures needed to complete the 38th History, and plans to spend at least 4 days a week to finish up the project.

Larry adds that many of you may feel like he has let you down, and admits that it was a bigger task than what he thought. While he is not in a position to provide a date that our history will be in print and available, he thanks all of you for your patience and promises that he will do his best to complete it as soon as possible.

Pacific Videos, Etc

Those interested in the B-25s and South Pacific operations may contact Boomerang Publishers, 6164 W. 83rd Way, Arvada, CO 80003, (1-800-316-5706) for their catalog on Pacific videos of B-25 Mitchells. Also available is "B-25 Mitchell, The Magnificent Medium" from Phalanx Publishing Co, 1051 Marie Ave., St. Paul, MN 55188 (1-800-316-1855).

A good book, "Black Sunday," is available from Aerosian Publications, 7 Rosedale Rd., Glen Iris 3146, Australia. Include personal check or money order for USA \$32 (includes postage) payable to Aerosian Publications.



"The Sun Setters"

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