



# The Crow Flight



Twenty-fourth Newsletter of the 47<sup>th</sup> & 48<sup>th</sup> & 396<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadrons, 41<sup>st</sup> Bomb. Group (M), 7<sup>th</sup> AF, WWII, Issued May 2003

## THE SKINNY ON OUR BRANSON, MO. REUNION

**WHERE:** Welk Resort, 1984 Hwy. 165, Branson, MO.

**WHEN:** 15 - 17 Sept., 2003 (Mon. - Tues. - Wed.)



Welk Main Bldg.

**WHO:** 47<sup>th</sup>, 48<sup>th</sup>, 396<sup>th</sup> (Host Sq.) Bomb. Sqds. With 820<sup>th</sup> Most Welcome

**WHY:** Because we like to get together once a year with old comrades, family and friends to share memories tell stories and lies and have a good time being entertained and eating good food.

**HOW:** Register directly with the Welk Resort by calling 1-800-505-WELK (9355). Identify yourself as 41<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group and secure the first night lodging with a major credit card. Additional nights, 2 days prior & 2 days after may be booked at the rate of \$83.41 (Including tax) per night single or double. **REGISTRATION CUT-OFF DATE IS 29 JULY 2003.**

**THE HOTEL PACKAGE:** \$273.11 PER PERSON DOUBLE OCCUPANCY; SINGLE \$396.34; both Include Tax. This pays for: 1) Three Nights Lodging 2) Three Hot Breakfasts 3) Two Evening Meals 4) Four Shows: Show Boat Branson Belles and Dinner; Lowe's Family of Utah; Lawrence Welk Show and Dinner; and Shoji Tabuchi. (See also P 9.)



**PLEASE CAREFULLY NOTE:** If a hotel reservation is cancelled after 7-29-03 there will be a \$39 charge for the Branson Belle Dinner & Show. Other Welk Package charges are fully refundable through 9-12-03.



Welk Lobby

**THE SQUADRON REGISTRATION:** The Fee is \$113 & this covers: Transportation To/From All Shows, the Banquet costs, Happy Hour before the Banquet, Hospitality Room supplies, Attendance Prizes and Miscellaneous like name tags, rosters, favors, etc.).

**THE YAKOV SMIRNOFF SHOW,** scheduled for Wed. morning is optional at \$25.50 per person. This is a great show, and in Branson vies for primacy with the Tabuchi Show. Strongly recommend you not miss it.

**ADD IT ALL UP:** Hotel Package \$273.11 + Sq. Registration Fee \$113 + Smirnoff Show \$25.50 = \$411.61 per person. Single total is: \$534.84. Be sure to read other details on the Sq. Registration Form. (Note - Depending on participation, there could be a funds surplus which would be refunded equitably.)

**YAKOV WOULD SAY:** Is this a Great Bargain, or What!!



THE CROW FLIGHT is a publication of the 47<sup>TH</sup>, 48<sup>TH</sup> & 396<sup>TH</sup> Bombardment Squadrons, 41st Bomb. Group, (M) 7<sup>th</sup> AF, WWII

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Mail to Urban A. Gutting, address above

**DUES NEWS: CALENDAR YEAR DUES FOR THE 47<sup>TH</sup> IS \$12. THE 48<sup>TH</sup> & 396<sup>TH</sup> SQUADRON DUES ARE \$15. MORE IS ACCEPTED. \$3 EXTRA WILL PURCHASE A RESPECTIVE SQUAD ROSTER. MAIL CHECKS PAYABLE TO: URBAN A. GUTTING FOR THE 47<sup>TH</sup>, JOHN HELMER FOR THE 48<sup>TH</sup> & DOC EYER FOR THE 396<sup>TH</sup>. ADDRESSES ABOVE.**

**\*REQUEST A FORM\*** - TO FILL OUT & RETURN FOR PUBLICATION OF HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR SERVICE & LIFE SINCE DEACTIVATION. WE REALLY!! ARE INTERESTED. 47<sup>TH</sup> OR 48<sup>TH</sup> OR 396<sup>TH</sup> CONTACT URBAN A. GUTTING, AT ADDRESS ABOVE.

### \$\$ 47<sup>TH</sup> BOMB. SQ. FINANCIAL REPORT \$\$

The Good Guys and Galls since last report are: **DOROTHY GROBE – PAUL & MARION KENWAY – JOHN & MADELEINE WATERS – CHARLES & PRUDENCE SALTS – MYRTLE SCHILLER (MEMORY OF LEO) – JAMES BAIN – WILMER & BETTY DEITRICK – EARL & LEE GRUNEWALD – ED & VERA NAYLOR – JIM & BETTY MC GRATH – KEM SITTERLEY – BUZZ SITTERLEY – KEMARY CROWDER (KEM'S DAU.) – DALE & ARLENE STORMS – BRUCE HANSON – MARY ELLEN RAMSTACK (MEMORY OF RICHARD) – JOHN & MARY WIDENER – GEORGE TOLBERT – VINCE & MILDRED BARGER –**

39 *The Crow Flight* supporters have contributed a total of \$687 during 2003. Our USAA Bank

Accounts balance as of 6-01-'03 was \$2763.36. We're doing fine thanks to all you generous folks.

**More Mailing Glitches:** Only 4 #23 TCF that I know of were PO mangled, vs. about a dozen #22. So we're improving. A trip to the PO and several phone calls resulted in not much help until I got ahold of (figuratively) a pleasant & knowledgeable lady named Jo Ann who informed me the stamp should be placed on the "open end" and advised that I visit the Main PO "bulk mail on the south dock." I did.

**A Math quiz:** Bulk mail fee is \$150/year. Bulk mail postage per piece is \$0.268. How many bulk-rate pieces would it take to reach the break-even point vs. \$0.37 per piece? a) 1182 b) 1760 c) 1471 d) Who cares. We currently mail about 1200 TCF a year; if the 396<sup>th</sup> joins with us I'm guessing it would be about 1600. Where I'm coming from or getting to here is that, for now, the 396<sup>th</sup> has joined *The Crow Flight* so that the Branson Reunion news will reach the 396<sup>th</sup> members. Details are to be worked out, but if the 396<sup>th</sup> elects to stay with us for at least a year, it would be feasible to use the bulk mail program.

There isn't much monetary saving in going "Bulk Rate," but it does allow up to 3+ oz at \$0.268 a piece. That allows flexibility in configuring the newsletter without worry about bumping over the 1 oz. limit for regular mail. So I'm gonna do it starting with this issue and see how it goes. The answer to the quiz, by the way, is c) 1471.

There is one drawback. Undeliverable mail will not be returned unless "ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED" appears on the envelope; then, a returned piece incurs an additional \$0.70 charge. To avoid this charge, PLEASE SEND TIMELY CHANGE OF ADDRESS info to Urban A. Gutting at address shown in the masthead at left, and save us MONEY.

L.L. Boyd quotes Joseph Addison: "Something to do, someone to love, something to hope for," these are "the grand essentials to happiness in this life."

A man may be rich, and yet, he  
is poor,  
If he is minus a friend,  
But a man without means with a  
Friend to endure.  
Is rich to his heart's content.



# The 48<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron

## John Helmer Reports

Branson is on my mind, hope you have it on your calendar. Some folks who have mentioned to me that they are planning to attend our Branson Reunion are: Paul and Helen Hopson, Alvin Gazda, Bruce Atkinson, B.A. Harmon, David Crane and Tom Carson.

Since our last letter I have received the following dues and gifts from BILL CHILSON, JAMES HEGG, JOHN BEDDALL, JESS RAMAKER and DIANE LASSITER (In memory of her Father, MERRITT MILLER. A total of \$176; our bank balance is \$2429.48

Beverly and I are leaving for our Japan visit on May 17<sup>th</sup>. We will be gone three weeks, two weeks with our forest tour and one week with our interpreter, Mr. Kowatre from World War II.

Today, 4-23-03 had a phone visit with ED NAYLOR in Gresham, OR. You gave me his name and phone number. Found out his wife graduated six months before I did from the same high school. He was stationed at the Portland Air Base with the 47<sup>th</sup> in 1943. See you in Branson, John Helmer

At the time John wrote the above, he was not aware that JAMES LOUIS DOROUGH, SR., 48th Bomb Sq., pilot of the 2<sup>nd</sup> "Paper Doll" crew (See TCF #23) had died on Tuesday May 6, 2003. The following notification was received from Jim's son, Bob: "Gentlemen, This e-mail is to let you know that my father, James Louis Dorough, Sr. died this past Tuesday, May 6. 2003. He was the 2nd pilot of the "Paper Doll" in the 48<sup>th</sup> Bomb. Squadron, taking the plane after Bob Brandt. He really enjoyed reconnecting with his wartime memories recently, and especially enjoyed reading "The Crow Flight." The February issue featured the Paper Doll and its crews, so that was of extra significance to him. As a great father does, he passes many of his memories on to my siblings and me, so if I can contribute to your cause in any way, please let me know. Thank you for all you're doing now, and especially for what you've done in the past. Thanks for my freedom! Bob Dorough, Digital Video Arts, Inc., 4901 Belfort Road, Suite 165, Jacksonville, FL 32256; Phone 904-281-1001"

Our sincere condolences are extended to Jim's widow Elaine, to Bob, his siblings and all the Dorough family.

++++  
Along with his message above, John forwarded over a dozen notes and letters from 48<sup>th</sup> Sq. members, some with pictures, and most dating back into 2002. Sorry, there is not time to even sort them out, nor space for all of them in this issue. But I do promise to include them in future issues. Here are a couple of current ones.

From B.A. "BUZZ" HARMON: John, HARRY BRUBAKER, Hollywood, FL designed our Squadron "Flying Fist" at Hammer Field. He was our Sq. painter and I have many Pictures! Will make copies and send. Dot and I will be at Branson, also one guest. Many regards, Buzz H.

From DAVID CRANE: Hi John, Thought I better get my dues in and thank you for all the time and effort to keep the 48<sup>th</sup> running. Just came back from Oahu. My daughter wanted to see the places we had been. Kahoka Camp area is mostly shrimp ponds and condos now, from what I saw. Talked to a man that said he had been in a group that took over the air strip for car racing some time back. Wheeler still had a few of the old housing and many hangers. Shofield Barracks has built up a lot. I flew P-40s off the golf course there before I went to the 48<sup>th</sup>. It never had a metal mat so it'd get soft and we'd sink in. Caught the left wheel on the edge of a green & broke a strut. Got back in the air & went to Wheeler & landed in the grass next to the runway. Probably best landing I ever made! Hopefully we'll see you in Branson. Best regards, Dave & Nettie



**IN MEMORIUM - DONALD HASKELL, 47 Bomb. Sq.** We extend our sincere condolences to Don's widow, Dorothy and to all Don's family. It was recently learned that Don passed away in 2002. No details are available. Don did tremendous work in setting up and keeping personnel rosters current. He also did an outstanding job in creating web pages for the 41<sup>st</sup> Bombardment Group and its four Squadrons. Due to the onset of illness in 2001 Don was unable to continue work on these projects. Fortunately, his web pages remain intact as he left them, serving as a legacy to Don's attachment to the 47<sup>th</sup> Bomb. Sq. and the 41<sup>st</sup> Bomb. Group. Many people are still making visits to Don's web pages. His site has provided a critical link for several family members seeking information about their deceased father or grandfather.

You are already familiar with one: **JIM BOTSFORD**, seeking recollections regarding his grandfather, **HERBERT "BERNIE" BOTSFORD** 48<sup>th</sup> Bomb. Sq., as written in the last *The Crow Flight* issue. Jim's contact with Bob "Pappy" Brandt's web site was made possible by a link on Don's site.

If anyone should harbor any doubts about the wonderful aftereffects of the continued presence of "Don Haskell's Memorial Website," the following account should dispel all such doubts.

**DIANE MILLER LASSITER** is the daughter of 1<sup>st</sup> LT. **MERRITT S. MILLER**, 48<sup>th</sup> Bomb. Sq. pilot whose plane and crew were lost on a low-level mission against Ponape on 26 March 1944. His



plane was B25G No. 42-64832. Diane was one year old at that time. Here is a picture of Diane wearing her father's pilot wings. I'm sure it will tug at your heart, as it did mine. Again, Diane's initial contact was

with, who else, Bob "Pappy" Brandt; and again, Diane found him via Don Haskell's web site. Subsequent to Diane's initial contact with "Pappy," there has been a plethora of correspondence between Diane, Bob Brandt, Matt Holly in Majuro, Dick Monzingo, Gen. Bywater and I. May even have missed a few, but Diane has expressed profound thanks to all those who are helping her gather precious memories of her father. Contact: 105 Cedar Rock, Williamsburg, VA 23188; 757-564-0158; [glassitter@aol.com](mailto:glassitter@aol.com)

We know the crew names, but except for Pilot Miller top center, not sure of position. Perhaps, top left CP Alexander Ruchko, on the right Nav.Bomb. Vincent Ginkus. Kneeling L - R, Radio Oper./Gunner Henry Wolasky, Eng/Gunner Gregory Frankland and Tail Gunner Steve Salla.



MERRITT S. MILLER



THE CREW

**BOB "PAPPY" & JO BRANDT, 48th:** You've seen that name many times in this and past newsletters. "Pappy" seems to be in the right place at the right time and it is high time you now see what this kind and caring gentleman looks like. With him is the love and inspiration of his life,



Josephine (JO). Married 58 years, they have three children: Robert Eugene Jr. (Rob), Jo Marlene and Barbara Joan.



Bob “Pappy” Brandt was most helpful to Diane. Bob was intricately involved in the fateful events of 3/26/44 as a witness of Lt. Miller’s plane trailing smoke after being hit by enemy fire to the successful ditching, and as the radio operator who relayed coordinates and all pertinent information to the Navy DUMBO sea rescue operations. Those of you who save copies of *The Crow Flight* (Doesn’t everyone?) can read “Pappy’s” account of this in #23 p. 3.

As you can well imagine, dredging his memory for images he has suppressed for these many years has not been easy for Bob. Diane’s first call to Bob lasted over an hour, so exuberant was she to have found someone she could communicate with about her Father. Bob said, “I was so choked up at first that I hardly knew what to say. But Diane asked questions and soon it was just like talking to one of the kids. As things smoothed out I could tell her things that have been hidden in my memory for so long. It is good to get some of these past feelings out into the open. The ‘WHY ME’ feeling may finally be put to rest, at least it will be made a little easier.”

Ed.: Bob seems to be in agreement with the suggestion that perhaps his having to recall some of the tragic memories turned out to be good therapy for him too, knowing that in doing so he provided these folks an attachment to their loved ones memory that perhaps no one else could.

**VINCENT C. SHATLOCK, 48<sup>th</sup> Bomb Sq.:** His son, Vincent J. also made contact with “Pappy” via Don Haskell’s web site. Vince’s father was born in Homestead, PA in 1918 and passed away in 1986. Vince said his dad never said much about his war years, but knows he did basic training in South Miami Beach in mid 1943, arrived in the South Pacific sometime in 1944 as a pilot in the 48<sup>th</sup>, and returned home in March 1946. He knows his father was stationed on Okinawa and later in Japan as part of the occupying force. Vincent would be most grateful to anyone who would share with him any information about his father’s military service and wartime experiences. In particular, he would like to know, if possible, serial numbers and/or nose art of the planes his dad flew. Contact Vincent J. Shatlock at 1222 Baypoint Ct., Longwood, FL 32750 or e-mail: VShatlock@aol.com

**NOW AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM  
“DOC” EYER, ACTING SECRETARY &  
TREASURER OF THE 396<sup>TH</sup> BOMB. SQ.:**



**We have lost an engine but we are still airborne!**

We are going to join up, at the least temporarily, with the 47<sup>th</sup> & 48<sup>th</sup> in publication and distribution of *The Crow Flight* newsletter, copies of which will be mailed to all our 396<sup>th</sup> people. “Gutts,” working publisher of the newsletter, rather selfishly I think, expects us to pay a fair share for printing and mailing costs.

Therefore, we ask that you resume 396<sup>th</sup> Bomb Sq, annual dues at \$15 with 2003, of course, payable now. Please make your check payable to: Warren L. Eyer and mail to 3733 Calle Guaymas, Tucson, AZ 85716. (email: docterr@mindspring.com; Tel 520-881-7229)

**Bring any changes or suggestions to the Branson Board meeting. Signed: Doc Eyer, Acting Sct/ Trs.**

Ed.: We welcome the 396<sup>th</sup> as a working partner. We’ll try to keep everyone informed about news and events from all three squadrons. To that end, I am certain that “Doc” will need help from someone to gather, compose and forward 396<sup>th</sup> news for publication in *The Crow Flight*. Maintaining the 396<sup>th</sup> Roster is another important squadron chore for which a stout hearted volunteer is needed.

**WELCOME: EDWARD J. NAYLER 47<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Sq.** Ed was a 50 mission Gilbert/Marshall “Old Crow,” who recently made contact by phone calls to Bob Gollnitz, Ned Burris and Gen. Bywater. Ed moved to crew pilot when Ray Cramer was severely injured on their 2<sup>nd</sup> mission. See TCF #20, p 5. Note to Ann, widow of Ray Cramer: Ed tried to call you but the Tel. # we have is not current. Note to Ed: We send *The Crow Flight* to Ann at the address in the roster and it doesn’t come back.

**GEORGE KNIGHT, 48<sup>TH</sup> BOMB SQ. WROTE:**

I received the last The Crow Flight (No. 23) and found it interesting.

Please send me a reservation form for the reunion at Branson. I would like to see what it is like and we might go.

As I was with the original bunch that flew to Hawaii, trained at Kapapi Gulch, went to Apamama and got in 50 missions and went back to Hawaii before the group went on to Saipan, I know only a few members. Lefty Pfingst took over the 48<sup>th</sup> when Willis lost his life. Taps has always bothered me since his funeral.

I will try to contact Matt Holly at Majuro. That island sticks in my memory as we were the first plane to land on their runway, partially finished, after we flew an hour and fifteen minutes reaching altitude of 150 ft. as a result of our left prop governor being shot off by the Japs on a low level raid on some Jap atoll. Interesting experience. Got a DFC, I think for it. My radio operator JOHN BEDDALL of Mesa, AZ visited that island last year. Lt. Col. Willis was flying as my co-pilot that day and feathered my right engine. Enough power in runaway prop on left engine to keep us aloft until I got right engine going again. I was just the driver and most extra weight was thrown overboard except the tail gun remained in place as its operator didn't want to be there when the plane was ditched. John Beddall, 8700 E. University #1935, Mesa, AZ 85207 could make a better story of it. Our 75mm cannon jammed as we attacked and I swear I could see the gun firing that hit us.

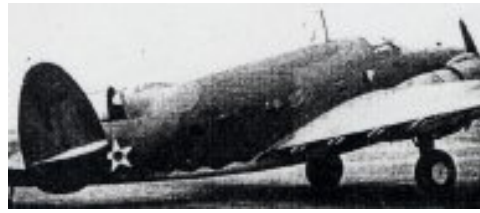
Willis and I alternately moved the throttles back and forward. Another plane, with its flaps down, flew with us to Majuro and made a pass at the air strip so we would know where to land. I never wrote to thank the engine makers. Later, I understand, an engine was flown to Majuro and the plane flew again before the right engine had to be replaced. By then we had another plane and were now bombing from medium altitude.

Look forward to getting info on Branson. Sincerely, George W. Knight, 48<sup>th</sup> Bomb. Sq.

Ed.: George, thank you for sharing your very interesting recount of your experiences. Hope you found all the info re Branson you were looking for in this TCF issue and that you found it to your liking; your Sq. Registration form in the mail will be sufficient response.

**ANOTHER GEORGE – HARRISON, 47<sup>TH</sup>**

**BOMB. SQ. WROTE:** You folks are doing a great job with the “newsletter.” Last report on “OLD CROWS” was right on, we are old crows. Thought you might like the enclosed picture of our A-29. It's not too good as it was taken from



an old post card they sold in the BX at Hammer Field, CA.

At Tucson when Pearl Harbor came we had two old B-18s and a PT-17--- not much to go to war with. Then, for some reason we left a first class air base and went to tent city at Muroc dry Lake. We still had no planes to speak of until the Lockheed Hudsons which were ready to be shipped from the factory to the RAF, were instead sent to us. When we first saw the later to be designated A-29s, they were painted camouflage and had RAF insignia on them. Then we moved to Visalia and got into training the A-29 crews, which later scattered all around the country flying submarine patrol.

At the Navy's North Island base in San Diego where most of the Sq. was later stationed, we lived in a hanger where we slept on cots and had our meals served by our own field kitchen. There, we flew patrols at dawn and at dusk to catch the subs surfaced while recharging their batteries. I can't remember the count any more but we did sink a few of them. I do remember that one of our planes not only sank a sub but dropped life rafts to the sub's crew members to stay afloat until the Navy got there to pick them up.

I remember one evening when one of our planes was going on dusk patrol and it crashed on take off right on the field at N. Island. As the plane was on fire, we sweated out those depth charges for many hours, afraid they'd blow a big hole in the field. ERNIE JACOBSON and I were standing on the flight line waiting for the plane to get airborne and when it crashed we grabbed a parked ambulance and went out to the plane and picked up the crew, who were unhurt. I can still hear the pilot telling me to slow down, he hadn't been killed in the crash and he didn't want to die in the ambulance. My only aim at that time was to get as far and as fast (Cont'd p7



(Cont'd. from p. 6) as I could from the 50 caliber ammo and depth charges. Everything turned out fine, just another day at the office! Interesting note, the only self protection that plane had was a flexible 50 caliber machine gun in an open cockpit looking aft. George (Harrison)

MYRTLE SCHILLER, widow of LEO, 47<sup>th</sup> BS, wrote: I've just been re-reading my Crow Flight describing the reunion in Biloxi, Miss. and the fact that some of you had come to Lafayette, La. for a couple of days. I live in Lafayette and wish I could have gone to Biloxi. Leo and I had often gone there on our camping trips and I know what you mean when you describe Biloxi so well.

Leo and I were never able to go to any reunions, too bad 'cause I know he would have enjoyed them. Some of the names of the guys who served in the 47<sup>th</sup> are familiar---like **George Harrison**---who was at our wedding in Los Angeles in 1942.

I will include my dues for 2003. I've enjoyed The Crow Flight. I wonder how many of you remember **Leo Schiller**. I am enclosing a picture of the 47<sup>th</sup> Engineering Office taken somewhere in the South Pacific. Leo is the one with the pith helmet, 3<sup>rd</sup> from left in the front row. Can anyone identify themselves or friends?



You asked if anyone remembered that the 47<sup>th</sup> Sq. was stationed in Portland Air Base---I certainly do. I had to come back home to Lafayette to wait for our first child (Phyllis) to be born. Leo didn't see her 'till the day after her 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday.

Our son Craig has just moved to Beaverton, OR, right outside of Portland. So when you have the reunion I will try to make it there. I can kill two birds with one stone, visit him and maybe attend some functions with you guys. Sincerely, **Myrtle J. Schiller**. (Contact Myrtle at 267 Bertrand St., Lafayette, LA 70503)

Ed.: As mentioned in my reply to Myrtle and will take the opportunity to repeat here---all kin and friends of our members are very welcome at our reunions.

NED BURRIS, 47<sup>th</sup> Bomb. Sq. wrote upon he and Ginny's return from their 32<sup>nd</sup> vacation in Hawaii (Kona) and 1&1/2 months of sunshine. Ned said: Found your interesting Crow Flight. Thought I'd answer a few questions (Re NL #23): 1) PDX is Portland Int'l Airport; 2) My time overseas was Oct. 43 to Nov 44; 3) Vassar McConnell was our navigator (I had demoted him to co-pilot); 4) The crew on the bottom of p.6 is: bottom row center pilot Lt. Keun; on his right co-pilot Lt. Klotz; on his left, the Nav. Lt. Mc Carthy.

(Ed.'s interjection: Bob Gollnitz identified Warren Fenno, center top of the photo. Who are the other two in top row of the picture? I am particularly interested in identifying the Sgt. on W. Fenno's left (our right); when I first saw the photo I experienced an immediate and strong déjà vu; a feeling that I knew him somewhere as someone whom I admired as a nice and competent person. Here is the picture again. If you recognize him please let me know.)

(Back to Ned) I was on the mission (low level) over Mal-oelap Atoll on Jan 22, 1944 when this crew was lost over the target; also another crew. Cobb's plane was hit but they ditched & were picked up.



From an earlier Burris note: West Point Col. George Kinney (then 1<sup>st</sup> Lt.) & myself (2<sup>nd</sup> Lt.) flew a B-25G from Hamilton Field to Hickam on Oct. 11, '43. George was pilot for the first 25 missions & then moved to operations. I then took over the crew for the next 25; finishing my 50<sup>th</sup> over Nauru on Sept. 10, '44.

**ED NAYLOR** in the other picture on p.6 (NL #23) called the other night & we had a nice chat. I still have notes on the 50 missions I flew & the names of the crews lost on those missions almost 60 years ago. See you at PDX. Ned Burris

**GEORGE TOLBERT IS BACK.** And with a very nice article this time: Hi Urb, Thanks for inviting me to write an article for The Crow Flight newsletter. I was involved in instituting the current newsletter and located many former members of the squadron for the roster. May the interest and growth of the publication continue.

Each of us has special memories of people, events and experiences shared during the WWII years, some good, some bad. The reunions plus the newsletter have brought many former members of the squadron in contact after an absence of more than fifty years. For example, I found out forty years later that it was the 396<sup>th</sup> that I had tagged on to after failing to form up with my squadron. The target was Chiran. The aircraft in front and to my right received a direct hit, I assume in the bomb bay, which left a permanent picture burned in my memory. Ten years later at a reunion in NH I met the flight leader on that particular mission. What a coincidence.

I recently visited Vince Barger in a rehab center recovering from a crippling stroke. He was one of the original navigators assigned to the 47<sup>th</sup> and had rotated back to the states prior to my joining the unit. Anyway, he reads and looks forward to receiving "The Crow Flight." He lived through some of the toughest missions flown in the Marshalls and Gilbert Islands and would like to contact others of that era. Vince's telephone number is 918-355-6458 and he is in Room C-38.

I hope to see many of the original "Old Crows" as well as replacements at the upcoming reunion in Branson.

Again, thanks for the great job that you are doing. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.  
george tolbert

**NOTE FROM AUDREY KEHOE:** I am the widow of Max Kehoe, 47<sup>th</sup> Bomb. Sq. who died in an automobile accident in Oct. '96. I still get The Crow Flight and enjoy reading about some of the people I met when we attended the reunions. I found several names and pictures in TCF #22 & 23 of members I had met. Because Max enjoyed these reunions so much, I enjoy reading about them. Before Max died he tried so hard to find A.J. (Gus) Fisher (last known of Seattle) and T.S. (Tom) Tobin (last known somewhere in New York state) who were members of his crew. If anyone

knows anything about either one of these men I would be pleased to know. Sincerely, A. I. Kehoe.

**Comments & Corrections – TCF #23 :** On p. 1 lower right, the "object" sticking out of the B25 fuselage is a result of my superior eyesight after having cataract lens implant surgery; I now see things most others cannot, like optical illusions.

On p. 5 the menagerie lower left belongs to Eldon Ray Ford who still lives with his backyard friends in Torrance, CA and Bob Gollnitz still lives in Westfield, N.Y. without any backyard friends he knows of. The mix-up was a result of a last minute switch of articles to get more color on the same page. Cheaper that way, but forgot to also switch the names.

Charlie Salts and the "Island Babe" on p5 were not really holding hands. Charlie sent the pictures separately but I thought being together transformed them into a handsome, romantic, tropical paradise kind of couple. Charlie said the composite picture did not get him into any trouble with Prudence, but I'm still trying. He also asked that we call off the MP posse and they'll try to make the Portland Reunion, about 150 miles up the road.

On p.6 "Pappy" Brandt's name was changed to "Bryant" but I did get it right in at least 6 other places, so gimme a break.



Lee Grunewald

This is not Lee! It is one of their "finished" Yorkies. Earl "Red" explained that title is earned only after a dog has won 15 show points; he/she is then a Finished Champion forever. Also note Red's 1944 picture on TCF #23 p.4; he claims to weigh the same 124 lbs. today! Should we make him send a current pic to prove it? Better yet if he shows up at Branson wearing tights?

**MORE NOTES:** Thanks so much for keeping me in the "loop." Dick's been gone almost 7 years but I know he'd be attending the reunions if he could. We did attend several and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. Keep up the good work---we are all stronger together than we are alone. MARY ELLEN RAMSTACK, 47<sup>th</sup> Bomb. Sq.

Thank you for sending me The Crow Flight. I was in the 396<sup>th</sup> and I do miss Bill's publication. My address now is just me – as I lost my wife a few years ago. Keep up the good work and include me in. BRUCE HANSON, 396<sup>th</sup> Bomb. Sq.



## Some Important Branson Reunion Notes (Questions? Call Lou Beisser 480-807-2021)

### **GROUND TRANSPORTATION: SPRINGFIELD TO BRANSON & RETURN**

Service is provided 7 days a week by BRANSON SHUTTLE (GRAY LINE).

For Reservations: Call 1-800-237-4466, Mon – Fri. 8:00am to 5:00pm CST. Have available: Credit Card; Airline; Flight Number; Arrival Time; Branson Destination (Welk Resort).

They prefer one week notice but not essential.

Cost: \$36 each way, per person for couples: total \$144 round trip for couples. Singles fare is \$72 each way, total \$144 round trip. The representative said they usually can pair up two singles – for fare purposes only I presume. My thought: Renting a car for 3 days might be more economical.

### **HOTEL RESERVATION INFORMATION**

**In addition to the previously cited Single and Double Package Rates for 3 nights, there are: Triple (3) @ \$243.18 including taxes per person; Quad (4) @ \$228.22 including taxes per person. If you prefer to register in writing call 1-800-505-9355 and request they mail a 41<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group Registration Form – Group #2477. Return the completed form by either mail or fax.**

### **REFUND POLICIES**

**FOR THE HOTEL PACKAGE:** In the event a package reservation must be cancelled, a 14 day notice (29 Aug) is to be given for a full refund. A cancellation can be received up to 72 hours prior to arrival (12 Sept.) to receive all except \$39 per person for the Showboat Branson Belle. Each show/attraction has their own deposit policy and we must honor their contract with us (hotel). We do not guarantee any refund on cancellation of show tickets. Individual reservations will be made by calling 1-800-505-9355. At the time of reservation, a \$100 deposit is required for each room; 24 hour notice for cancellation must be given or deposit is forfeited.

**FOR THE SQUADRON RESERVATION FEE:** The entire (\$113) fee is refundable at any time, with the following exceptions: 1) Banquet meal cost (\$16.75) is **not** refundable after 14 Sept. 2) Refund cutoff date has not been determined as of this writing for bus

transportation (\$38 or less per person depending on attendance)

**YAKOV SMIRNOFF SHOW:** A refund cutoff date for this has not as yet been determined.

**ADAPTING TO CHANGE.** When Kem Sitterley skillfully shuttled *The Crow Flight* writing chores to me about seven newsletters ago, there was a dearth of what most would consider “newsworthy” material available. A while back the Good Lord provided an inspiration: include the “Bio” forms with the Sq. Roster requests. Bob Gollnitz broke the ice submitting his “Bio” published in TCF #20. The response since has been good so there is now an opposite, but most welcome, problem: more material available than can be included in this issue. And that is great!

Now awaiting publication are “Bio” responses sent since the last newsletter from luminaries such as **Edward J. Naylor, John Henry Beddall** and **George W. Knight**, along with the backlog of notes and letters from the 48<sup>th</sup>. We should have material for at least the next issue, but we will need continued input.

**ANNIE BELL** will recognize this note I just found even though it was written on 8-15-2001. Referring to her husband JACK, she wrote: “Hey, Gutts: Have put off writing hoping for a miracle but it didn’t happen fast enough. Here’s the scoop: Jack has been in the hospital since June 30 with Acute Pancreatitis.....” There was more but no longer germane, since we know Jack has since recovered ergo the article he sent and published on p4, TCF #23. My apologies to Annie & Jack and anyone else that might be in the “lost files” category. Kind of a lengthy way around to tell the “Bio” guys to have patience and to apologize to Annie wasn’t it.

**SECRETARY NEEDED.** I am in need of a secretary. Ample qualifications for the position are illustrated at right. Actually, I had hired this nice lady and everything was going **great** until, suddenly, **POW!\*** When I woke up my secretary was gone and I can’t figure out what happened



**JUST IN FROM MATT HOLLY.** I found a memorial list on the web& when reviewing the 48<sup>th</sup> losses, found a 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Folger Adams listed as died from wounds received on a bombing mission over Taroa Maloelap, Feb23, 1944. I am trying to make a complete list so any info you have on this mission or loss, along with Lt.Col Soloman Willis, please keep me informed or add to your newsletter for info requests. <aquamar@ntamar.com>

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**  
**47<sup>th</sup>, 48<sup>th</sup>, 396<sup>th</sup> Sqdn Reunion of 41<sup>st</sup> Bomb Gp**  
**September 15, 16, 17, 2003**  
**Welk Resort, Branson, MO (1-800-505-9355)**

Monday 15 September

Registration in morning & afternoon in the Hospitality Room

LUNCH on your own

6:30 pm Board bus to Show boat  
 8:00PM to 10:10 PM Show Boat Branson Belles show & dinner \* Included in hotel fee  
 10:20 pm Bus returns to Welks

Tuesday 16 September

7:00am to 8:30am Hot breakfast at Welk restaurant Included in hotel fee  
 10:00 am to 11:30am Lowe's Family of Utah show Included in hotel fee  
 LUNCH on your own  
 1:00pm to 5:00pm Hospitality Room open – **Squadron Meetings**  
 6:00pm Lawrence Welk dinner Included in hotel fee  
 8:00pm to 10:00pm Lawrence Welk show Included in hotel fee

Wednesday 17 September

7:00am to 9:00am Hot breakfast at Welk restaurant Included in hotel fee  
 8:00am Board bus to Yokov Smirnoff show  
 9:00am to 11:15am Yakov Smirnov show \$25.50  
 11:30am Board bus to Welks  
 LUNCH on your own  
 2:00pm Board bus to Tabuchi show  
 3:00pm to 5:30pm Shoji Tabuchi Show Included in hotel fee  
 5:45pm Board bus to Welks  
 7:15pm Happy Hour Included in Sq.Reg. fee  
 8:00pm Banquet In The Stage Door Canteen Included in Sq.Reg. fee

Thursday 18 September

7:00am to 10:00am Hot breakfast at Welk restaurant Included in hotel fee  
 Farewell to friends  
 If you are departing Branson allow 2 hours for check in (Check with your airline)

NOTES: 1) All bus fares are included in the Squadron Registration fee. 2) All breakfast times start at 7:00am. Ending times vary – check the schedule.

\*Showboat Branson Belle: Enjoy a cruise, banquet and show featured on this magnificent 19<sup>th</sup> Century paddle wheeler.

FOR YOUR RECORDS:

Hotel Reservations (**1-800-505-9355-Cutoff date is 29 July 2003**) made on (Date) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hotel Deposit made on (Credit Card) \_\_\_\_\_ (Amount) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Airline Reservations made on (Airline) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date) \_\_\_\_\_ (Confirmation No). \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ground Shuttle Springfield to Branson (Grey Lines 1-800-237-4466. Make Reservation one week prior to Springfield arrival date. Have your airline & arrival time handy). Reservation made (Date) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Squadron Registration Form Completed and Mailed (Date) \_\_\_\_\_



Registration for 41st Bomb. Group Reunion

Branson, Missouri, Sept 15 - Sept 17, 2003

(Monday - Tuesday - Wednesday)

Host Squadron - 396th Bombardment Sq.

Coordinators: LOU & CORINNE BEISSER - 396th Bomb Sq.

Phone 480-807-2021 - email: Theeowls@wmconnect.com

1074 Leisure World, Mesa, AZ 85206



(Please Print)

YOUR NAME(S) - As you wish to appear on Name Tag(s)

Blank lines for name entry

Address

City

State & Zip

Phone

E-Mail

Transportation: Fly/Rent \_\_\_ Fly/Shuttle \_\_\_ Driving \_\_\_ Br com \_\_\_

BANQUET CHOICE: HOW MANY

Top Sirloin \_\_\_\_\_

Chicken Parmigiana \_\_\_\_\_

HQ. SQ



47TH



48th



396TH



820th

MAKE YOUR CHECK PAYABLE TO:

URBAN A. GUTTING

MAIL CHECK AND THIS COMPLETED

FORM TO:

Urban A. Gutting

7047 Autumn Chase

San Antonio, TX, 78238-2118

Tel: (210) 647-1651

E-Mail: urbangu@sabx.rr.com

REMEMBER TO MAKE HOTEL RESERVATIONS: Call 1-800-505-9355 Before 29 July 2003

PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS AND REGISTRATIONS AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE - IT HELPS THE PLANNING PROCESS A WHOLE LOT - THANKS

ITEM PER PERSON	PRICE EACH	HOW MANY	TOTAL \$ AMT.
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YOUR COMMENTS:

Registration Fee (Includes the Banquet)	\$113		
Banquet Only	\$30		
Yakov Smirnoff Show*	\$26		
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			

\* Optional - But must be booked by 7-15-03

Would you be willing to help us out a whole lot more? Its easy! REMEMBERING THAT THIS IS NOT A COMMITMENT

just jot the information asked for, snip this off and mail it to the above address (or phone or email). Again, a great help in planning if you DO IT NOW.

Your Name:

No. In Party:

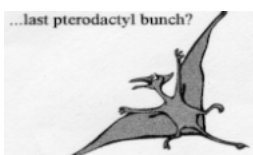
Yes, I We Intend To Be At Branson

How many Intend To See the Yakov Smirnoff Show \_\_\_\_\_



***The Crow Flight***  
**47th, 48, & 396<sup>th</sup> Bomb. Sqds. WWII**  
 Urban (Gutts) Gutting  
 7047 Autumn Chase  
 San Antonio, TX78238

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**



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***REUNION CALENDAR***

**47<sup>th</sup>, 48, 396<sup>th</sup> Bomb. Sqns. At**  
**Branson, Mo. Sept 15 – 17, 2003**  
**Reunion Planners Lou & Corinne**  
**Beisser, 396<sup>th</sup> (480) 807-2021**  
**E-mail: [Theeowls@wmconnect.com](mailto:Theeowls@wmconnect.com)**

**47<sup>th</sup>, 48<sup>th</sup>, 396<sup>th</sup> & 820<sup>th</sup> (?) Bomb.**  
**Sqdns. At Portland, OR., probably**  
**Late Sept. 2004. John & Beverly**  
**Helmer, Reunion Planners.**