

451st Bomb Group Newsletter No. 10 May 2017



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451st Bomb Group
c/o Susan Tudor Prince
14 Reservation Road
Andover, MA 01810

Cell: 978.866.0024 Email: susan451bg@gmail.com

A MESSAGE FROM SUSAN:

Time really seems to be flying by. It is late April already- wow. I appreciate your letters, emails and phone calls- thank you for your positive comments regarding the newsletter.

I want to personally thank Win "Big" Jones for his monumental winter "mission" of personally contacting the individuals on the current list of 451st BG members. He wanted to update the list, and touch base with everyone.

Most importantly, please note the following information regarding the joint BG reunion this September.

Sincerely,

Susan

2017 REUNION

The welcome bells are sounding for our upcoming reunion September 14th-17th at New Orleans. We again will be meeting with our partners and friends from the 376th, 455th, 461st, 464th, 465th, 484th and 485th Bomb Groups. All in all, this should be a very special Reunion. If you happen to be the last living member of your crew, do come to our 2017 New Orleans Reunion. You will enjoy a great program and find many survivors in attendance with your situation.

Please send in your Registration relatively soon, this will facilitate our planning. Should you later need to cancel, your Registration payment will of course be refunded to you. Also, in making your hotel room reservation be certain to mention our booking code **"BGR"** to assure receiving the reduced special room rate of \$99 plus tax. Hope to see you in New Orleans!

REUNION ACTIVITIES**Thursday, 14th September**

1:00 PM - 7:00 PM Early Registration – Hospitality Room will be open
 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM Optional Informal Dinner & Info Meeting

Friday, 15th September

9:00 AM - 5:30 PM Registration
 9:00 AM - 1:30 PM Optional Tour – Cavanaugh Flight Museum w/Lunch
 Hospitality Room will be open for those not on tour
 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM Evening Sit Down Dinner including 451st & 455th B.G.s

- 5:30 PM - Cash Bar *
- 6:30 PM - Sit Down Dinner

Saturday, 16th September

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM Optional Tour - National WWII Museum
 Hospitality Room will be open for those not on tour
 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM Veteran led presentations & discussions
 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM Gala Banquet - All Bomb Groups.

- 5:30 PM - Cash Bar*
- 6:30 PM - Sit Down Dinner

Sunday, 17th September

8:30 AM – 9:30 AM Memorial Service
 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM Optional Tour – City of New Orleans
 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM Optional Casual Farewell Dinner

*Registration & dinner fees do not include the tours or cash bars.

REUNION HOTEL

DoubleTree New Orleans Airport Hotel
2150 Veterans Blvd., Kenner, LA. 70062
Front desk phone: 504-476-3111

- Reservations for the 2017 reunion may now be made.
- The group rate of \$99 (plus taxes) includes breakfast for up to two people per room and is good from September 11 – 20, 2017.

- To reserve a room, it is recommended that you call 1-800-222-8733 and mention the **booking code BGR**. This is the fastest and easiest way to reserve a room: a room close to the elevator, a room on a lower floor, refrigerator in your room, handicap accessible room or any other special request, please call Jonathan Hurst at 504.303.3010 between the hours of 8:00am – 5:00pm CST, Monday – Friday.
- **Please reserve your room NO LATER THAN 3:00pm CST, August 25, 2017.** Rooms may be reserved after that time at the group rate only if they're available. No guarantees are made after this cutoff time and date. To ensure that you get the room you want at the group rate, reserve before this time and date. If a reservation is being made after 8/25/17, call Jonathan Hurst at 504.303.3010.,
- Any reservation may be cancelled WITHOUT PENALTY if cancellation is made 72 hours or more from the check-in date. If a reservation is cancelled less than 72 hours, one night's room rent will be charged.
- There is free airport shuttle that runs to and from Louis Armstrong International airport 24hours.
- Onsite parking is complimentary for our group.

REUNION TOURS

- Tours are first class venues that you will really enjoy.
- For some tours, there may be substantial walking.
- All tours are optional. Tour cost is not included in base registration fee.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15TH - WWII War Museum Day One of Two-Day Visit

- We will all ride down to the museum together, buses will **leave the hotel at 9:00AM.**
- **At 10:45AM we will meet at the Solomon Victory Theatre** to see the movie. Those who purchased the lunch and stage show will do that right after the movie and then tour the museum on your own.
- **Those who DID NOT purchase the lunch and stage show** will continue touring the museum on your own and the museum has an excellent café if you want lunch on your own.
- **2:00PM — Shuttle buses will be available to pick up anyone who wants to leave the museum.** They will pick up where we dropped off in the morning and then will continue on to the French Quarter by 2:15PM where they will stop momentarily to let off anyone who wants to explore that area and then return to the hotel.
- **The shuttles will pick up again at 3:00 & 4:00PM** at the museum where you were dropped off and **3:15 & 4:15PM at the French Quarter.**
- **The last pickup at the museum is 4:00PM and last pickup in the French Quarter is 4:15PM.**

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16TH - WWII War Museum Day Two of Two-Day Visit

- The buses will **leave the hotel for the museum at 9:00am**. Tour the museum on your own. The museum has an excellent café for lunch.
- **2:00PM — Shuttle buses will be available to pick up anyone who wants to leave the museum.** They will pick up where we dropped off in the morning and then will continue on to the French Quarter by 2:15PM where they will stop momentarily to let off anyone who wants to explore that area and then return to the hotel.
- **The shuttles will pick up again at 3:00 & 4:00PM** at the museum where you were dropped off and **3:15 & 4:15PM at the French Quarter.**
- **The last pickup at the museum is 4:00PM and last pickup in the French Quarter is 4:15PM.** Lunch is on your own Saturday; the museum has an excellent café.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH - City of New Orleans

- A tour of the city's significant sights with stops at an above ground cemetery and the Morning Call Coffee Shop & Café.

REUNION REGISTRATION

Please return the registration form with payment – mail to:

451st B.G.
c/o Susan Tudor Prince
14 Reservation Rd,
Andover, MA 01810

DONATIONS

We truly appreciate your generosity and support – without it, we would not be able to provide this newsletter.

Should you desire to honor a crew mate or family member, just make a memorial donation of \$50 or more. Please send this along with the full name and duty position of the person being honored.

Please send all donations to:

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Tribute contributions recently received:

Donor	In Tribute To
Aschenbrener, Dean (son)	Martin A. Aschenbrener, Top Turret Gunner on Cannon Fodder, 726 th Squadron
Cosby, Stan	451 st Bomb Group
Gust, Robert & Shunta, Pamela	Edward Gust, Ball Turret Gunner-Armorer, 724 th Squadron
Hamborsky, Roma (wife)	Rudolph (Rudy) Hamborsky, Sr., Bombardier-Navigator, 725 th Squadron. 36 missions at the age of 19.
Kelly, Bobbi (wife)	Thomas Kelly, Mechanic, 724 th Squadron
Mason, Verne (Nose Gunner)	In tribute to Winson “Big” Jones for his dedicated service to the 451 st BG
McElheny, James	Milt Boyce, Co-Pilot 727 th Squadron
Mitchell, Leora (wife)	In memory of her husband Robert P. Mitchell, Navigator, 727 th Squadron. Flew 33 missions, received DFC.
Murak, Peggy (daughter) & Dan	Martin A. Aschenbrener, Top Turret Gunner on Cannon Fodder, 726 th Squadron
Pollino, Michael (grandson)	Martin A. Aschenbrener, Top Turret Gunner on Cannon Fodder, 726 th Squadron
Pollino, Gail (daughter)	Martin A. Aschenbrener, Top Turret Gunner on Cannon Fodder, 726 th Squadron
Prince, Susan Tudor	In tribute to Win Jones for his support and guidance plus all present members of the 451st
Reise, David & Jeffrey (sons)	Alvin Reise, Bombardier, 725 th Squadron
Rose, Charlie (725 th Sq.) & Jan	451 st Bomb Group
Steffan, Lea (daughter) & Matt	Martin A. Aschenbrener, Top Turret Gunner on Cannon Fodder, 726 th Squadron
VanBenschoten, Earl	451 st Bomb Group
Weber, Carl	Original crew of the Sod Buster- Cortland Read, Pilot 1943-45

LAST FLYBY

Here are the death notifications received since our January 2017 Newsletter:

451st Member	Squadron	Duty Position	DOD
Bell, M.D., Paul J.		Physician	07.15.2012
Blue, Allan			04.02.2016
Branch, Harold			12.16.2015
Cutchin, Walter	724 th	Flight Engineer-Gunner	10.11.2016
DeMayo, William S.			05.04.2014
Dunn, Edwin M.			03.21.2014
Forte, Frank	727 th	Tail Gunner	03.04.2017
Gillies, Robert W.		Bombardier	09.16.2016
Gore, Warren Y.		Ball Turret Gunner	01.17.2017
Hamborsky Sr., Rudolph	725 th	Navigator-Bombardier	10.19.2015
Henslee, Jr., Lewis W.			10.04.2016
Margaritis, Constantine (Gus)		Ball Turret Gunner	07.17.2016
Nagel, Donald L.			01.04.2014
Newman, Bernard S.		Pilot	05.13.2013
Pachter, Leo		Aerial Photographer	
Park, James W.L.		Pilot	01.21.2013
Reutelle, George W.			12.17.2016
Seidlitz, Charles N.			10.26.2014
Sellers, Harold E.			01.13.2017
Tranchida, Jack F.		Navigator	04.16.2011
Woodford, Lindley C.			07.03.2010
Wyman, Carroll A.			01.27.2011

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

If you have a write-up of your war time experience, song, poem, letter or diary entry that you or a family member is willing to share for possible inclusion in a future newsletter, we encourage you to email (susan451bg@gmail.com) or send a copy to Susan Tudor Prince, 14 Reservation Road, Andover, MA 01810.

FIRST MISSION BY ALVIN REISE

On December 17, 1944 I was sitting in my tent with the other officers on the crew while outside the wind was blowing down out of the mountains and the rain was falling as usual. We had been in the squadron about two weeks but had not flown a mission because of the weather. Everyone was uneasy and anxious to get started when suddenly a flash light was seen outside the door and then a knock was heard. Captain Miller, the operation officer walked in. He said, "Lieutenant Reise, you are flying bombardier for Captain Beasley tomorrow so you had better turn in and get some sleep.

At 4:30 the C.O. woke me and told me briefing would be at 5:30. I dressed and paddled off through the mud to the mess hall. After breakfast, a truck picked us up and took us to the group briefing room. We walked in and saw the target. It was Brux. Four hundred heavy guns would be brought to bear on us. Every one swallowed and the Colonel proceeded with the briefing. After briefing we returned to the squadron area and got ready to go to the ships. I did not tell my tent mates what the target was for security reasons, but they knew it wasn't a milk-run from the expression on my face.

At our ships, everything went like clockwork. The green flare went up and we started the engines and taxied out to the take-off strip. As I saw the field roll by I wondered if I would ever see it again.

The trip to the target was uneventful except that we were burning more gas than we should.



(l-r) Alvin Reise, Jim Williams, Ed Blair
at their "home" with the 725th Squadron,
451st Bomb Group, Castelluccio, Italy, 1945.

Ten minutes before the I.P. the navigator called me and I went up into the nose. I took the heated cover off the sight and proceeded to set it up. Out ahead I could see fires burning that the group we were following had set. Well, this is it, I thought, and said a little prayer I put the cross hair on the spot they told us the cracking plant was in and continued synchronizing. The flak was really knocking us around. The ship was bouncing and it sounded like someone was

beating on the sides with a sledge hammer. The bombs went away and everybody dumped on me.

Immediately we started the rally. We made a sharp right turn and dove. I looked out the window for the first time since we started the run. Flak was everywhere. I didn't see how we could get through it. It seemed like hours but in reality, it was about thirty seconds before we were out of it.

All the way home we sweat out the gas because it was going to be close at best.

Over the northern Adriatic number one engine coughed and stopped. We had ten minutes flying time left for the other three engines. Captain Beasley headed for the coast to see if we could find a place to crash land before the other engines conked out. The crew was ordered to snap their shutters on and be ready to bail out. Minutes dragged by and finally we were over the Coast and an English fighter strip. We were on our side of the lines. That was a lucky break. Captain Beasley started letting down. We were on our downwind leg just turning final when number three engine stopped. Every one held their breath. If we lost another engine it was the end. We were braced for the crash we knew was coming. The landing strip was too short for a bomber, but somehow, we managed to stop before going off the end. The plane was not damaged too much from the landing but we had over fifty flak holes. The English fed us and gave us drinks while they gassed up the ship. Later that night we took off for our home field. What a relief when we finally sighted the field.

As we taxied into our hardstand I thought to myself; only thirty-four more to go. I hope they are not all like that.



Al Reise, Al Sherman & Jim Williams (taking pictures) seeing the sights of Foggia , Italy, Headquarters of the 49th Wing. 1945.

PICTURES FROM THE 451st

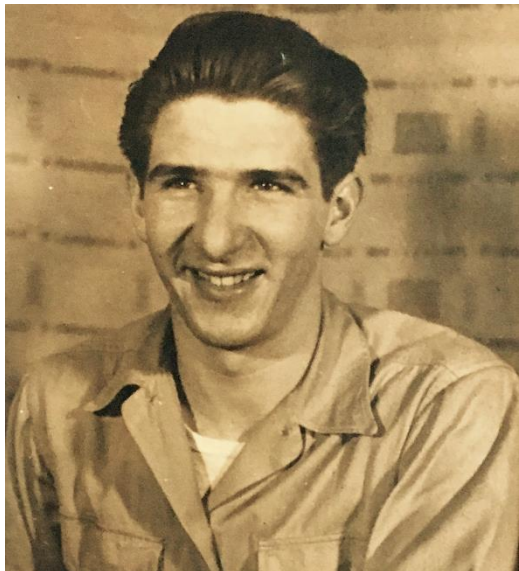
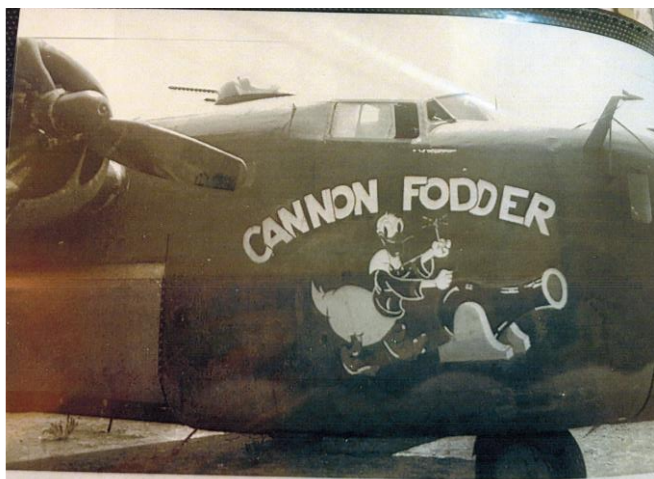
James McElheny & Crewmates



Left to Right: John Freidrich – Navigator James McElheny – Pilot Milt Boyce - CoPilot

451st Office Mess – Converted Horse Stable



Martin Aschenbrener and Crew Mates of Cannon Fodder**Martin Aschenbrener – Top Turret Gunner****Crew of Cannon Fodder:****Wesley Lindley – Pilot****Richer Varnum – CoPilot****Louis Sugarman- Bombardier****Robert Pfielsticker – Navigator****Marty Aschenbrenner- Top Gunner****Howard Holton- Ball Turret Gunner****Wilbur Kaspar – Waist Gunner/Flight Engr.****Frank Allen – Nose Gunner****Carlos Spencer – Tail Gunner****Lloyd Nelson – Waist Gunner/Radio Operator**

Stephen P. Cincala (451st B.G.) – Painting the Nose Art on B-24 Jesse James



451st B-24 's in Flak

B24 Cleanup – Hop Scotch



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