



# 451<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group

## Newsletter No. 16

### MAY 2020



Published for the preservation of our 451<sup>st</sup> heritage.

451<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group Association Manager  
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### “We Did it Before (And We Can Do It Again)”

In the days following Pearl Harbor this patriotic song was written by Cliff Friend and Charlie Tobias and made popular by Dick Robertson and the American Four.

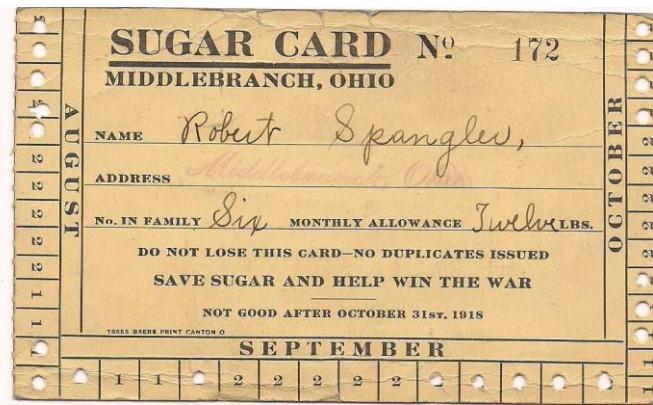
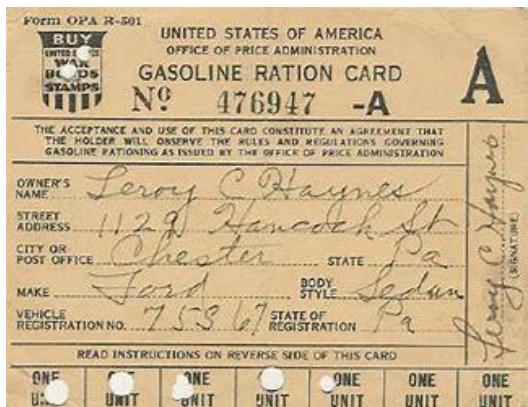
You can listen to it from the link below (or copy and paste into a browser):

[https://www.historyonthenet.com/authentichistory/1939-1945/3-music/04-PH-Reaction/19411216\\_We\\_Did\\_It\\_Before-Dick\\_Robertson.html](https://www.historyonthenet.com/authentichistory/1939-1945/3-music/04-PH-Reaction/19411216_We_Did_It_Before-Dick_Robertson.html)

The song speaks of patriotism and suggests that based on our victories in previous wars, we can defeat the enemy again in WWII.

In WWII Americans were asked to make sacrifices in many ways to support the war effort. Rationing was one of the primary ways most on the home front could support the troops overseas.

Ration cards were issued for sugar, meat, dairy, coffee, dried fruits, jams, jellies, lard, shortening and oil (I don't see toilet paper on this list?). Additionally, automobiles, tires, gasoline, fuel oil, coal, firewood, nylon, silk and shoes were all rationed. Americans learned, as they did during the Great Depression, to do without. Sacrificing certain items during the war became the norm for most Americans. It was considered a common good for the war effort, and it affected every American household.<sup>1</sup>



We are forever indebted for the service and sacrifices made by the Veterans of the 451<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group in WWII, and our country came together to support them.

I hope you are all well and staying safe. We can do it (again)!

*Jonathan*

<sup>1</sup> (nps.gov)

We are pleased to feature an article in this edition of the newsletter from John Rohrer, Historian for the 455<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Association. Thank you, John!

Reunion Update:

The reunion is still planned at this time in Albuquerque, NM, from September 10-13. However, at this time the CDC is still advising against all non-essential travel. All information associated with the reunion including hotel reservations, registration, itinerary and events & activities can be found from the link below:

<https://www.451st.org/Reunion/Reunion.html>

What's New on the Website: <https://www.451st.org/>

**451<sup>st</sup> MACRs added:** In May 1943, the Army Air Forces recommended the adoption of a special form, the Missing Air Crew Report (MACR), devised to record relevant facts of the last known circumstances regarding missing air crews, providing a means of integrating current data with information obtained later from other sources in an effort to conclusively determine the fate of the missing personnel. MACRs are arranged by aircraft serial number, which is also known as the tail number. These reports had to be filed within 48 hours of an aircraft or its occupants being declared either destroyed or missing in action.

Congrats on a job well done: Thank you to Susan Tudor Prince for her efforts to preserve the heritage of the 451 Bomb Group over the past four years.

Did you Know the 451<sup>st</sup> is on Facebook? <https://www.facebook.com/groups/451stbg/>

This is a fantastic group currently consisting of 380 members. Pictures, Q&A, and more. It is a closed group, but you can request to join. This picture by 451<sup>st</sup> Staff Photographer Leo Stoutsenberger (courtesy of Dave Evans), is the most beautiful picture I've ever seen of B-24's:



**LAST FLYBY**

Here are the death notifications received since our December 2019 Newsletter:

| <b>451st Member</b>   | <b>Squadron</b>   | <b>Duty Position</b>         | <b>DOD</b> |
|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| Custer, Wayne L.      | 727th             |                              | 01.25.2019 |
| Goodson, Ray M.       | 725 <sup>th</sup> | Bombardier                   | 11.12.2013 |
| Martineau, Louis C.   | 726 <sup>th</sup> | Armament                     | 01.28.2019 |
| Owens, Wayne H.       | 724 <sup>th</sup> | Bombardier                   | 07.17.2017 |
| Osofsky, Meyer        | 725th             | Flight Engineer/Waist Gunner | 11.30.2019 |
| Stauffer, George      | 725 <sup>th</sup> | Bombardier                   | 11.20.2016 |
| Stokes Jr., Joseph F. | 725 <sup>th</sup> | Tail Gunner                  | 06.21.2019 |
| Tedesco, Frank L.     | 727 <sup>th</sup> | Pilot                        | 02.29.2020 |

**THANK YOU, DONORS!**

| <b>Donor</b>                   | <b>In Tribute To</b>                                                                 |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Crum, Norm (son)               | Captain George W. Crum, 455 <sup>th</sup> B.G., 742 <sup>nd</sup> Sqd.               |
| Horn, Lawrence                 | 451 <sup>st</sup> Bomb Group                                                         |
| Alibright, Floyd and Andrea    |                                                                                      |
| Karstensen, Bob (son)          | Robert Karstensen, a founder of the 451 <sup>st</sup> alumnae group                  |
| Mole, Richard & Kathleen       | In memory of Linn Newman, Nose Turret Gunner 451 <sup>st</sup> B.G.                  |
| Reise, David (son)             | In memory of Alvin Reise, Bombardier 725 <sup>th</sup> Sqd. 451 <sup>st</sup> B.G.   |
| Reitz, Mary (sister)           | In memory of Louis Martineau, Armament 726 <sup>th</sup> Sqd. 451 <sup>st</sup> B.G. |
| Tedesco, Frank                 | 451 <sup>st</sup> Bomb Group                                                         |
| Wood, Dorothy Cloud (daughter) | Robert Cloud, Radio Operator/Gunner 455 <sup>th</sup> B.G. 743 <sup>rd</sup> Sqd.    |
| Yates, Jane                    | In memory of Lt. Robert Finehout                                                     |

Should you desire to honor a crew mate or family member, please send the full name and duty position of the person being honored. Please send to:

451<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group  
c/o Jonathan Tudor  
112 Park Street #5  
Portland, ME 04101

## NOTE FROM HAROLD BENNETT

"Hi You People

As you see, my name is Harold T. Bennett. I am on your mail list and really appreciate receiving each issue of the Newsletter.

I am now 98years of age. I was in Italy in WW2. In the 451st bomb Group, 726th Squad and on the crew of William Slater. Slater's crew was the first crew to complete enough missions to qualify to come home. Come Home we Did! They gave us a desert Sand colored B-24 to bring back. We flew a return mission just the opposite of the flight over.

The bulk of our missions were flown in B24 Three Feathers.

I used to attend each meeting of the 451st. But have not been for quite some time. All of my Crew 49 are now passed away so. There is no one I know anymore.

When I got back to the States, I went to Pilot school and washed out. Then I entered Navigation School and was there when I qualified to be discharged from the AF. After discharge I returned to Maryland and graduated from The University of Maryland with a degree in Financial administration and ended my working years with an Auto, Home, etc. insurance agency representing Erie Insurance Exchange for 40 plus years.

I was married and had three children. My wife passed on 2 years ago after many years of marriage and three children.

I do appreciate having been on your mail list and still am. It is admirable that you people have kept the organization alive.

So, keep on as you are doing.

Best Regards."

Harold Bennett

[harold178@verizon.net](mailto:harold178@verizon.net)

Dear Mr. Bennett,

Thank you for your service and your letter. We're glad you're enjoying the newsletters. See page 11 below for a picture of "Three Feathers".

## TRIBUTE TO MEYER OFOSKY

**Note – the following tribute to 451<sup>st</sup> member Meyer Ofosky was originally posted on Veteran's Day on Facebook by his grandson Ryder Kessler.**

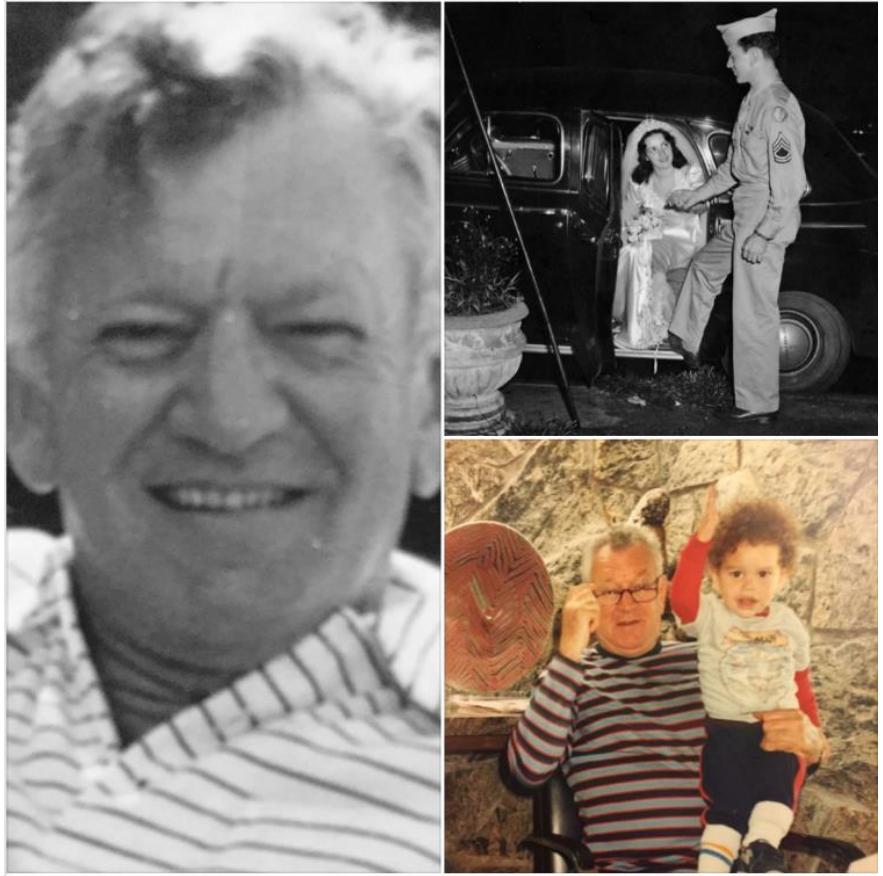
"Today, I'm remembering my grandfather, Meyer Osofsky, who died two weeks ago at the age of 95.

My grandfather served in the Army Air Corps during World War II. He flew 31 missions over enemy territory as a waist gunner on a B24, eventually parachuting into American-controlled Italy after his plane was brought down by engine failure. He was a living link to an ever-receding era when American waged and won a crucial fight for freedom.

Though he lived a full and exciting life in the nearly 75 years after his service—starting the womenswear business named for my grandmother, Aileen, that brought his family out of poverty and into prosperity; traveling the world; raising three children; showering boundless love and

opportunity on seven grandchildren—he always spoke with the most vivid and vital recollection about his army service. My grandfather was grateful to the army for shaping him, we are grateful to him for shaping us.

On every Veterans Day since I can remember, I have called to thank him for his service. Though he's no longer here to answer that call, I will continue to think of him each year with gratitude for the commitment he made to this country—for answering the country's call when it came."



## THE VULGAR VULTURE: 455<sup>th</sup> BOMB GROUP EMBLEM

**Note – John Rohrer, the historian for the 455<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group has provided the following discussion of the origin of the group emblem.**

“The origin of the Group emblem, the Vulgar Vulture, is not known for certain. Legend has it that Tom Mitchell, Intelligence Officer for the 743rd Squadron, came up with the creative idea and wrote the specifications. These were given to the Walt Disney Studios who accomplished the final artwork. Tom is remembered for his early work in finding 455th Group personnel for the establishment of the Association (now disbanded) and he organized the first meeting that was held for the Group following the end of WWII. The emblem, sometimes referred to as “the patch,” was originally painted on a piece of leather and was worn on the breast of flight jackets by the crew members and on other clothing by support personnel. It was a distinctive item that helped give everyone a sense of belonging and pride in the organization.



As stated above, the origin of the idea for the Vulgar Vulture is not known for certain. However, when the Walt Disney Studios completed their rendering, they sent their artwork to Mrs. Voila Crowell in Bakersfield, California, wife of Major Philip P. Crowell the Group Engineering Officer. In their letter to Mrs. Crowell it was stated that “Major Crowell requested a group insigne and separate insignia for four bombardment squadrons.” Lt Mitchell more than likely received credit for the patch because at one point there were membership cards issued to all members of the 455th Bomb Group and Mitchell signed them.

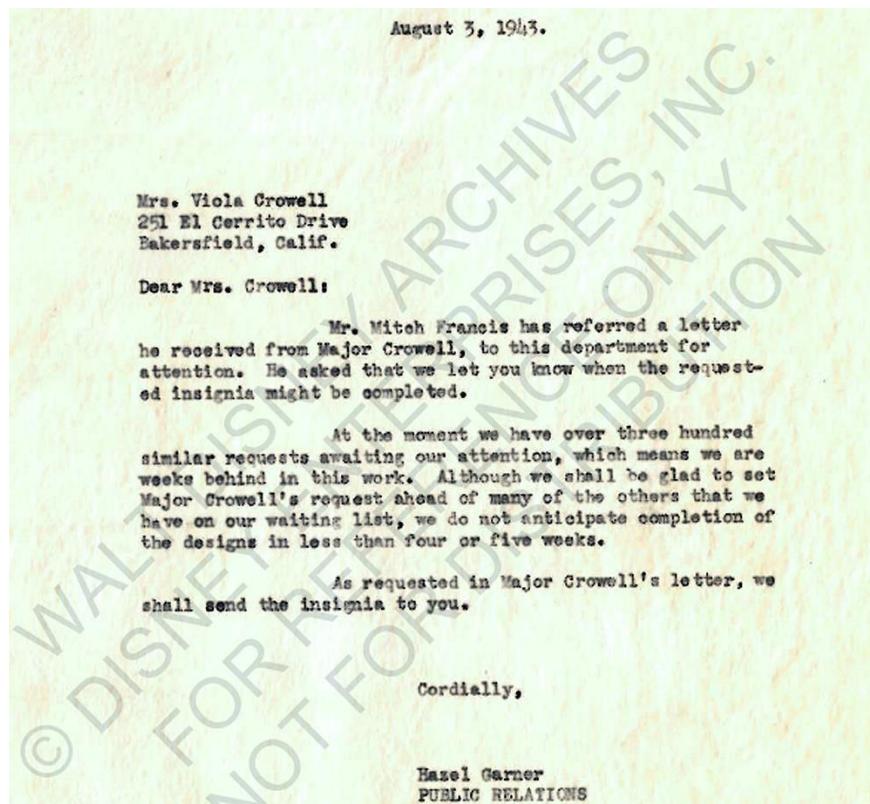
From what we can glean from various sources, the individual squadrons each had the black and white drooling vulture riding a bomb, but there were different bomb colors used to designate the individual squadrons: yellow for the 740th, green for the 741st, black for the 742nd, and red for the 743rd. The group patch is usually depicted with a yellow bomb, but we have no corroborating evidence that this was so.

740<sup>th</sup> Missile Squadron Decal743<sup>rd</sup> Squadron Decal

455th Expeditionary Medical GP

The Vulgar Vulture has lived on in Air Force lore and exists even today. The 455th Bombardment Group (Heavy) was deactivated in September 1945 as one of the last Groups to leave Italy after the war. Since then it has been at various times the 455th Bombardment Group (Very Heavy), the 455th Fighter-Day Group, the 455th Fighter-Bomber Wing, the 455th Strategic Missile Wing, the 455th Air Expeditionary Group, and finally the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing, stationed at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan."

#### Letters between Mrs. Viola Crowell and Walt Disney Productions:



August 20, 1943.

Mrs. Viola Crowell  
251 El Cerrito Drive  
Bakersfield, Calif.

Dear Mrs. Crowell:

We enclose insignia designed by us for  
the 455 Bombardment Group.

Major Crowell requested a group insignia  
and separate insignia for four bombardment squadrons.  
In this regard, we suggest that the group insignia be utilized  
by the bombardment squadrons. This could be accomplished by  
each Squadron utilizing a different colored bomb, as indicated  
on the enclosed chart.

With all good wishes, we are

Cordially,

Vernon Caldwell  
PUBLIC RELATIONS



©WALT DISNEY—

August 20, 1943.

Major Philip P. Crowell  
Orlando, Florida

Sir:

Walt Disney is happy to present this insignia to the FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP, for unrestricted use within the Armed Forces of the United States, with the stipulation that before you permit any profit-making civilian firms to reproduce this insignia in any form for commercial sale to the service personnel, such firms or individuals must first obtain a license from Kay Karen, Agent of Walt Disney Productions, at 1270 Sixth Avenue, New York City. This condition applies only to private merchandise for sale, and in no way affects your official use of this insignia on your standard equipment.

We hope that the design will meet your approval.

Cordially,

WALT DISNEY PRODUCTIONS

Vernon Caldwell  
PUBLIC RELATIONS

I agree to the above condition

SIGNED

COMMANDING OFFICER

Done in two copies

on \_\_\_\_\_, 1943

#83-158

455 BOMBARDMENT GROUP  
ORLANDA FLORIDA

## FINANCIAL REPORT

The 451st Bomb Group Association does not charge annual dues. Your generous contributions help cover expenses for printing/mailing the newsletter, and for maintaining the website, [www.451st.org](http://www.451st.org). Please let us know if an electronic version of the newsletter is acceptable in lieu of a paper copy, as that helps lower costs.

| 451st BG Association Financial Report |             |  |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|--|
| Beginning Balance January, 2020       | \$ 6,832.63 |  |
| <u>Income</u>                         |             |  |
| Donations                             | \$ 1,315.00 |  |
| Interest                              | \$ 0.43     |  |
| Total Income                          | \$ 1,315.43 |  |
| <u>Expenses</u>                       |             |  |
| Newsletter:                           |             |  |
| Printing                              | \$ 589.00   |  |
| Postage (estimated)                   | \$ 242.00   |  |
| GoDaddy/Secure Website                | \$ 127.98   |  |
| Total Expenses                        | \$ 958.98   |  |
| Ending Balance May, 2020              | \$ 7,189.08 |  |



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