



PANTANELLA NEWS

Volume 3, Issue 1

May 2018

464TH BOMB GROUP

Special Interest Items

- Don't miss the 2018 Dayton reunion information highlighted in this issue.
- Complete Group financial information now available.
- News Flash—the Group Now has Non-Profit Status.
- The updated Group website is now live! Check It Out!

Inside this issue:

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WELCOME COMMENTS FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

The 464th Bomb Group 2017 New Orleans reunion was another truly memorable event. Forty five people including four veterans and family members of eight fallen heroes attended our first combined bomb group reunion. Veterans Edmund Aubre, James Corr, Champ Vinet and Carl Will made this event special. We are pleased that our group included two veterans attending their first reunion and one new family representing a fallen hero. We joined forces with seven of the fifteen other bomb groups in the 15th Army Air Force. In all thirty six veterans and two hundred ninety people attended the reunion. Active duty Army Captain Chaplain Chris Cairns led a poignant memorial service in true military fashion honoring our Fallen Heroes. Yet another highlight of the reunion was certainly our visit to the National World War II Museum

featuring the IMAX story 'Beyond All Boundaries' and the 'Road to Berlin' exhibit depicting the Allied war effort to defeat the Axis powers. However, surely the most gratifying outcome of the events from September 14th thru September 18th, 2017 was the time we shared together with our veterans, their families and the families of fallen heroes bringing to life the many stories and remembrances of time in the Army Air Corp. It was an honor to continue the legacy of those who answered the call and served so bravely in Europe affording us the freedoms we all enjoy today. Though the reunion is now but a pleasant memory it certainly won't be soon forgotten. So as you can see the 464th Bomb Group's legacy does live on...

Tom Will
BG President

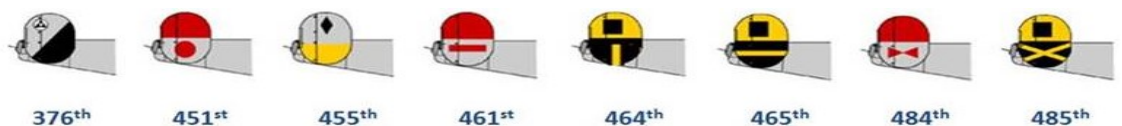


European Theater of Operation, Pantanello Air Field Home of the 15th Air Force 464th & 465th Bomb Groups.



REUNION ROUND UP—NEW ORLEANS SEPT 14, 2017

Thirty six proud veterans from across eight different Bomb Groups came together with family and friends for the 2017 reunion. Mayor Ben Zahn presented a proclamation from the city of Kenner Louisiana along with a key to the city and a lapel pin to the veterans at the Saturday evening banquet.



COMBINED BOMB GROUP 2017 NEW ORLEANS PICTURE GALLERY



Forty five members of the 464th BG attended the four-day combined bomb group reunion at the New Orleans Double Tree Hotel in Kenner, Louisiana, September 14th thru September 18th, 2017. In all 290 people including thirty six veterans from across eight bomb groups participated.



Veterans Champ Vinet (779), Edmund Aubrey (777) Carl Will (776) (James Corr not pictured)



Carolyn & John Espil



The 464th Bomb Group Attendees at the First Combined Group Reunion



Veteran Champ Vinet and Family Enjoying Reunion



Ryan Sewel & His Mother Linda O'Mara-Freeman



Joe Osentoski



Dan, Eva and Don Krynovich Enjoy Banquet Dinner



Garrett Hass and Teresa Karazim Share Memories



Chuck Stanley Enjoys His First BG Reunion



Linda and John Dersch Listen to Mayor's Proclamation Recognizing Our Veterans



Veteran Carl Will & Family—Susan Skillman, Matt Skillman, Jan Daley, Tom Will and Patricia Will



Keith & Sharon Goode and Barb & Joe Lape



Edmund Aubrey, Mary Rodgers & Toni Aubrey Enjoy Another Great Reunion



Major Wm. Shoemaker Daughter Jan Engle & Family

New Orleans Reunion Business Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2017

Doubletree Hilton Hotel | New Orleans, LA

President Tom Will welcomed 37 guests to the 464th Bomb Group dinner at our first combined Bomb Group Reunion.

It was reported that the first day visit to the National World War II Museum was a great experience where we saw the IMAX presentation of "Beyond All Boundaries". Many also enjoyed the Canteen lunch and the Victory Belles performance.

Member John Dersh read a poem from 1944 called "The Real Victory" and gave a blessing. The group then recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Tom opened the business meeting after dinner. He announced that Captain Cairns will present the fallen soldiers at the Sunday memorial service following the Ecumenical church service. Tom then read the Last Sortie List for the 464th Bomb Group, Squadrons 776,777,778, & 779.

Also recognized were the RCAF 408th Squadron (Goose Squadron) and a member of the British Royal Navy. Tom introduced Tim and Barbara Leadbeater, friends of Dan and Eva Krynovich. Dan gave a short history of Tim's uncle Doug Havill (RCAF 408th Sqd) and his father William F. Leadbeater, British Royal Navy.

Tom paid special tribute to George Krynovich, founding member of the 464th bomb group reunions, who passed away Oct. 8, 2016 and to Still-

man J. Harding another founding member who passed away March 23, 2017.

Three veterans in attendance were recognized and honored: Carl Will, Edmund Aubrey, and James Corr. A fourth veteran, Champ Vinet, will attend the Group Banquet on Saturday.

Also recognized in attendance were family members of veterans unable to attend, and family of fallen heroes. Janice Engle, daughter of Major William G. Shoemaker (pilot of "Shoo Shoo Baby"), presented Tom with a copy of the book "Tomorrow's Promise" from the diary of Edward Kofke and published by his son, Bruce Kofke.

Tom also recognized eleven 464th veterans who had attended past reunions but were unable to travel to the 2017 reunion. Contact information for these members was given.

The Treasurer's report was given by Garret Hass, who thanked Sharon Goode for her assistance and hard work. The current balance is \$1,464.87. It was reported that we now have group tax-exempt status which will aid in the reduction in the cost of mailing newsletters. Tom led a discussion about the group's preference for receiving the newsletters.

Dan Krynovich mentioned the possibility of the group making a donation to the memorial museum in the Czech Republic.

It was announced that Jaelynn and

Kent Hathaway, secretary/historian and newsletter editor, were unable to attend this year's reunion due to the passing of her father, Stillman Harding.

The new website www.the464th.org is now up and running thanks to the efforts of Hughes Glantzberg from the 461st Bomb Group. Tom recommended the group compensate Hughes for his work. Jan Engle made a motion to do so, seconded by Mary Rogers. Carolyn Espil gave a brief history of the website.

Tom announced the current officers and mentioned there was an opening for the office of vice president. Don Krynovich volunteered to assume the duty. Carl Will made a motion to accept, seconded by Teresa Karazim with unanimous approval from the group.

The membership application form was discussed, as was the frequency and distribution of the newsletter.

The reunion attendance for the 464th Bomb Group at our first combined reunion was 45; the combined eight bomb group's attendance was 290 with thirty six veterans.

Tom announced that the 464th veterans present will receive a special commemorative plaque in honor of their service.

President Tom Will adjourned the meeting.

Remembering Our 464th BG Founding Members...



George R. Krynovich
5 November 1923 –
8 October 2016



Stillman J. Harding
24 October 1918 –
23 March 2017

Remember Their Sacrifice...

It is not out of heedlessness or cowardice that the Germans keep abandoning immense numbers of tanks and armored vehicles by the roadsides of France. These tanks and trucks are out of gasoline.

General H. M. Arnold, Oct 1944

In Memoriam — Veterans Flying their Last Sortie

776th Squadron

Kenneth E. Bailey	10/31/2016
James Russel Brien	11/26/2016
Leigh R. Freeman	10/20/1973
Charles Ray Skinner	4/14/2016
James Sowell	1/5/2017
Robert Weinberg	5/12/2016

777th Squadron

Bernd 'Bernie' Simon	9/3/2014
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778th Squadron

Roland Bunker	2/12/2015
Elmer 'Butch' Griffiths	4/7/2017
Stillman J. Harding	3/23/2017
George Krynovich	10/8/2016

Headquarters

Melvin J. Sykes	5/22/2017
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The Missing Man Table...

The Missing Man table occupies a place of dignity and honor. The table is round to show our everlasting concern for those who are no longer with us and are missing from our ranks. They are the men and women who served our country. We call them

POW's, MIA or KIA. We call them comrades, friends and family. They are unable to be with their loved ones so we join together to pay a humble tribute to them and to remember them..

As we look upon this empty table, don't remember ghosts from the past, but remember our comrades, those whom we depended on in battle. They are the ones we love—who loved life and freedom as we do. Please honor and remember them forever.



Bomb Group Tributes

Plan to join us at the 2018 Dayton Ohio Bomb Group reunion to help us remember and pay tribute to those on the recent Last Sortie List.



**“Flying the Last
Sortie...
Missing from
our ranks but
never ever
forgotten”**

A Business Update from Our Bomb Group Treasurer

Hello BG Members,
Our 2017 New Orleans reunion was an amazing time with our new friends from the seven other 15th AF bomb groups. It was great to share stories and pictures with the other BG group members. As for our financial situation, we broke even on our expenses and income for the 2017 reunion. Our

goal is to make all reunions self sustaining by having income from donations and the reunion fees pay for each reunion. Your donations are greatly appreciated to help fund the reunions. We can always use your help. We are selling TShirts and other items to help offset the cost of the annual newsletter. This will

help keep the newsletter self sustaining as well. I look forward to seeing everyone in Dayton, OH for the 2018 reunion. One of my favorite events at any of the reunions was going through the U.S. Air Force Museum with the Air Force One aircraft and a the static B-24 display!
Garrett Haas, Treasurer



BG Veterans are United States of America Patriots

New Orleans 2017 Reunion Financial Recap

Here is a summary of the New Orleans reunion income & expense

\$8348	\$8348	\$ 0.00		\$320.10	\$278.00	(\$42.10)	Note: Two Shirts
Reunion Expense	Reunion Income	Net Total		Shirt Expense	Shirt Income	Net Total	On Hand for Sale

464th BG Financial Report | Profit & Loss January thru December 2017 |

Revenue		Expenses	
Direct Public Support	\$2,818.75	Business and Tax Exempt Org Fees	\$472.00
Reunion Fees Collected	\$8,347.25	Office Expense, Printing & Mailing	\$807.34
Shirt Purchases	\$ 278.00	Reunion Registration Payments	\$8,348.00
		Shirts, Plaques and Misc. Expense	\$675.08
Total Income	\$11,444.01	Total Expense	\$10,302.42

2017 Net Income = \$1,141.59
Cash On Hand = \$1,865.54

Financial Notes: All reunion registration fees collected are passed thru to cover actual reunion expenses at the combined

group event. As of the newsletter publishing date there are two 464th BG veterans and seven veteran families planning to attend the 2018 Dayton reunion in September. **Please make your Dayton Hotel reservations early!**



Historical Record of the 15th AF in the Mediterranean Theater of Operation

Between 1940 and 1945, U.S. and British air forces dropped 2.7 million tons of bombs on Europe, half of that amount on Germany. By the time the Nazi government surrendered, in May 1945, the industrial infrastructure of the Third Reich—railheads, arms factories and oil refineries—had been crippled, and dozens of cities across Germany had been reduced to moonscapes of cinder and ash.

Constituted as 464th Bombardment Group (Heavy) on 19 May 1943 (activated 1 August), activated as a B-24 Liberator heavy bombardment unit; assigned to II

Bomber Command for training, primarily trained in Idaho and Utah and received deployment orders for the Mediterranean Theater of Operations (MTO) in February 1943.

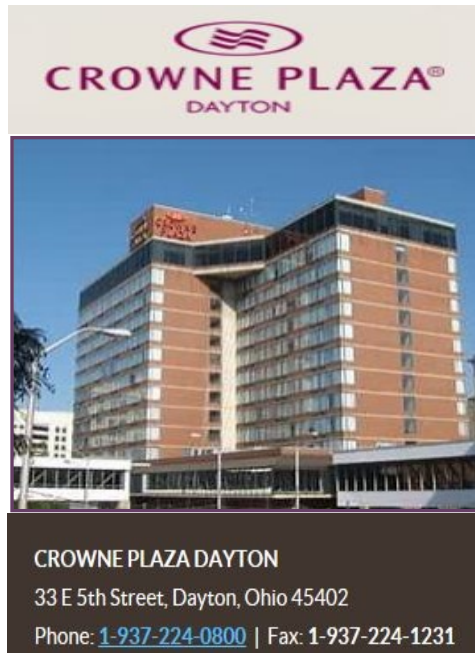
Deployed to Southern Italy in February 1944; entered combat in April, being assigned to Fifteenth Air Force 55th Bombardment Wing. The group completed Air Echelon training for a few weeks in Tunisia before joining the remainder of the group in Italy. Engaged in very long range strategic bombing missions to enemy military, industrial and transportation targets in Italy, France, Germany,

Austria, Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia, bombing railroad marshalling yards, oil refineries, airdrome installations, heavy industry, and other strategic objectives.

Comprised of four Squadrons with 18 aircraft each the 464th BG had between sixty and seventy two aircraft ready for combat operations at any given point. It's significant to note that a total of 270 B24 (H) airplanes processed thru the group during the war to replace aircraft lost in combat—less than sixty planes returned to the US after the war.

“Without the work of the ground crew, our pilots would march with a gun...”

COMBINED BOMB GROUP 2018 REUNION HOTEL INFORMATION



Single, Double or Handicap Accessible rooms are all \$114 per night plus taxes. Room rate includes hot breakfast buffet. Group rates are good from September 8 through September 20, 2018. To make your reservation, call (800) 689-5586 and mention the Bomb Groups Reunion. Complementary valet parking is available. This is a downtown hotel with a parking garage across the street with a 2nd floor enclosed skywalk to the hotel. You can leave your car at the front door, check in and they will park your car for you. A complimentary airport shuttle is available, call the hotel in advance with flight information to reserve a hotel pickup.

Please reserve your room NO LATER THAN August 16, 2018. Reservations after that date are NOT guaranteed at the group rate and are subject to availability. There are no overflow hotels available downtown so to be sure that you get the room you want at the group rate, reserve before this date. Reservations may be cancelled **WITHOUT PENALTY** if made 24 hours before the check-in. A free airport shuttle that runs to and from Dayton International airport is available 24 hours a day.



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH — Arrival day and reunion check in. The hospitality room and registration desk will be open from 10:00AM till 5:00PM and then again at 8:00 PM. Heavy hors d'oeuvres and beverages will be available.

✦ From 5:00-7:00 PM the hotel is hosting a welcome reception that will feature assorted cheeses in addition to fresh fruit and vegetable trays with dips, coffee and fruit punch.

✦ At 7:00 PM The All Group Welcome Meeting convenes to review the upcoming schedule and events for the Dayton BG Reunion.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14TH — Activities at the National Museum of the United States Air Force.

Depart the hotel at 8:00 AM for the Air Force Museum for a ropes down visit to the amazing B-24 "Strawberry Bitch" exhibit, an original B-24D assigned to the 376th BG—one of our participating bomb groups and veteran Flash' Gordon Byfield, Pilot.

✦ At 9:15 AM Assemble in the Museum's Carney Auditorium for the traditional Military Memorial Ceremony conducted by Chaplain Captain Chris Cairns, Grandson of the last CO of the 485th BG and Reunion Chaplain.

✦ Following the memorial service everyone will be free to tour the museum; Lunch is on your own and buses will leave the museum at 1:15, 2:30 & 3:45 PM to return to the hotel.

✦ At 5:30 gather for the 464th Bomb Group Dinner beginning with a Social Hour then pictures at our Tail Insignia following dinner.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15TH — A focus on our Veterans. The day features an expanded program of Veteran speakers, discussion panels and outside speakers. We 'stay in house' to visit and attend speaker presentations.

✦ Saturday morning begins at 9:00 AM with the 464th BG Business Meeting followed by a 464th lunch and Veterans Presentations.

✦ Saturday evening All Groups Banquet—Social Hour at 5:30 PM in the ball room with a cash bar and Dinner served at 6:30 PM.

✦ After dinner entertainment program to be announced as the program details are finalized closer to the reunion.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 16TH — Church Service, Tours and our Farewell Dinner. The day begins with the 376th Reverend Bob Oliver hosted church service at 9:00 AM.

✦ Buses depart at 10:15 AM to return to the Air Force museum for more exploration. The museum is large and was recently expanded with a fourth large hanger area featuring modern aircraft and presidential aircraft thru the years.

✦ Lunch is on your own at the museum; Buses depart the museum at 1:15, 2:30 & 3:45 PM for return to the hotel.

✦ An alternative tour that departs the hotel for the Dayton Art Institute at 10:15 AM and continues to the Second Street Market at 12:30 PM for shopping and lunch on your own. Departure for a return to the hotel will be at 2:30 PM.

✦ Sunday evening will feature our Farewell dinner which will be served at 6:30 PM at the hotel.



Our Veterans speak to the history of our great nation.

“Veterans and family members... please share your favorite ‘day in the life’ of story for a future 464th BG newsletter”



Through many group reunions we’ve remembered veterans service to our great country.

Memories of Leigh R. Freeman—Last Sortie October 20, 1973

Last Words, by Ryan Sewell

Until recently, my family did not know much about my maternal grandfather’s World War II service. He died young from his third heart attack at 49 years old. He talked about the war sparingly, but shared he was a gunner on a B-24 nicknamed “Boozin Suzan,” was shot down over Austria, suffered a badly broken arm that continually pained him, had a very difficult time bailing out of the aircraft, and was a POW for a long time in a very cold place.

I never met him, as he died in 1973, two years before I was born. We learned what he went through from Missing Air Crew Report (“MACR”) 7111, a VA disability case of one of his crewmates, and his pilot’s affidavit about their final mission.

It is a harrowing story that stunned our family. After the war, one of his fellow surviving crewmates was adjudicated to have a 100% total mental disability from PTSD. We had no understanding of the trauma they suffered before, during, and after their final mission.

On July 16, 1944, the crew of the Boozin Suzan reached the Initial Point 40 miles from the target, Weiner Neudorf. Waist gunner, Sergeant Beauford Johnson gave his crewmates a forbidding warning over the inner-phone: “Here they come.”

Dozens of ME-109s attacked their formation. Nine broke through the fighter escort and fired on the Boozin Suzan. They hit the No. 1 engine. Fire began to burn the wing. Pilot, 2nd Lt. Richard “Dick” Williams, reported in the MACR that Sgt. Johnson’s last words warned of substantial engine and wing damage.

With fire growing and no hope of saving the aircraft, the bail out signal was given. Sergeant Johnson tried. He leapt out of the bomb bay as the aircraft went into a “flat spin.” Lt. Williams watched him get “swept through” the No. 1 and No. 2

propellers. Lt. Williams and his co-pilot escaped through the top hatch due to fire below. When the survivors reached the ground, sergeant Johnson’s body was there, parachute unopened, with a completely severed left arm. Four other men, in the waist, ball, and tail gun positions, were likely killed by the German fighter attack and their bodies crashed with the aircraft.

Five men survived. Five men gave the ultimate sacrifice. My grandfather, Sgt. Leigh Freeman, was a 20-year old nose gunner. An explosive 20MM shell shattered his left arm and knocked out many teeth. He lost the power to rotate the nose gun cockpit while the nose gun cockpit entrance was askew from the opening to the aircraft, making it half the normal size. With his injuries, he pushed and pulled himself through the misaligned opening. He got to the nose hatch before the wing broke off.

In December 1945, six months after the five survivors had been liberated from Nazi Stalags, Lt. Williams wrote a letter to my grandfather asking about his arm and informing a crewmember remained hospitalized. At the end, Lt. Williams shared he had received a Christmas card from the deceased Engineer’s mother. He mentioned how much she missed her son. With brevity about grief common to these veterans, Lt. Williams wrote, “I feel so badly about it all.”

Lt. Williams closed his letter to my grandfather with, “Well you take it real easy just like I would. Your Buddy, Dick.” Those last words were for a lifetime.

They never wrote or communicated with each other again. I imagine both men understood thousands of emotions in those words and they had to be the last. It was time to move on.



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We're on the web!

www.the464th.org



The mission of the 464th Bomb Group is to recognize and honor the service of the brave men who answered the call of duty during World War II and served their country so valiantly in the 15th Army Air Corp based in Pantanella, Italy. Bomb Group reunions were started in 1955 first by the 778th Squadron and then in 1968 expanded to include all four flight squadrons and Headquarters operations. To date thirty seven reunions have been held in cities from coast to coast and points north to south. Hosted by veteran families, reunions are always a fun gathering affording veterans the opportunity to share their stories and family and friends a chance to learn about war time experiences and most importantly to thank our veterans. Bomb Group newsletters work to foster communications and connect with those unable to attend the reunions.

DAYTON 2018 REUNION

Plan to make your hotel reservation for this year's reunion early—NO LATER THAN August 16th, 2018.

Reunion notices and registration packets will be mailed in May to those on our BG roster. Also registration eMails will be sent to everyone on our eMail list. Look for the registration form to be posted on the 464th BG's website—the registration form can be printed and mailed to the address shown at the left. Additional interest this year with limited overflow hotels makes **early registrations a must!**



A Parting Thought...

As a reminder, the 464th Bomb Group does not have annual dues. Newsletters and other administrative costs are funded entirely by contributions from reunion attendees as well as those not able to attend. For those planning to join the group at this year's reunion in Dayton make sure to complete and submit the registration form. Even if you are unable to attend the 2018 reunion please consider making a contribution for continued group support.

We ask that you mail all registration forms and contributions to the



From the collection of John R. Gottschalk. Pictured L-R Tony Schneider, Gerald Welsted,

group's primary mailing address shown in the banner on the left.

Thank you for your continued interest in the 464th Bomb Group hon-

oring our Veterans and the legacy of the Greatest Generation! See everyone in Dayton!

Ed Note: We need your help! If your address changes or you know a veteran or spouse who should be receiving newsletters please contact one of the officers. We would like to keep the 464th BG roster and mailing lists current to keep group expenses in line. There are 310 names on our mailing list and 160 people on our email list. Sending Bomb Group newsletters electronically helps keep our costs down.