



PANTANELLA NEWS

Volume 9, Issue 1

Winter 2025

464TH BOMB GROUP

Special Interest Items

- Don't miss the 2024 Reunion highlights in this issue.
- Complete Group financial information always available.
- The Group maintains Non-Profit Status.
- Aircraft detail added to the Group website! Check It Out!

Inside this issue:

- [Reunion Photos](#) 2
- [Business Update](#) 3
- [Last Sorties Flown](#) 4
- [Financial Update](#) 5
- [Feature Story](#) 6
- [Cannes Article](#) 7
- [Reunion Notice](#) 8

Visit us on the Web:
www.the464th.org

WELCOME COMMENTS FROM YOUR BG PRESIDENT...

It's certainly been a busy year working to maintain the legacy of the bomb group. The year began with my trip to Canosa, Italy, along with Garrett Hass and DD. We attended the June 12th memorial ceremony in Loconia, remembering the airbase at Pantanella. Following that trip I was honored to represent the group along with Kevin Creighan and Cathy Hampton at the Cannes, France, 80th Anniversary memorial service for the three Liberators lost in southern France on the May 25th, 1944 mission to the Givors, France marshalling yards in preparation of the D-Day invasion.

Of course the highlight of the year was the combined bomb group reunion in Tucson, Arizona where over two hundred people gathered to remember our heroes. Reunion attendees enjoyed a Sonora Desert Museum Tour and a visit to the

Old Tucson site as well as the Pima Air and Space Museum tour and a stop at the San Xavier Mission. Always a favorite at the reunions is the day set aside to share stories and listen to the many interesting presentations.

Make sure to check out the special reports in this newsletter that tell the story of our trips to both Italy and France. The trips were experiences of a lifetime for all stepping on the hallowed grounds where our veterans fought and served. Readers may find several detailed trip report presentations along with many more pictures on our website, see inside this newsletter for details.

We look forward to remaining in contact with everyone as we continue the effort to remember the sacrifice of the Greatest Generation. We hope to see everyone at our next reunion!

Tom Will, President



European Theater of Operation, Pantanella Air Field Home of the 15th Air Force 464th & 465th Bomb Groups. Circa 1944—1945



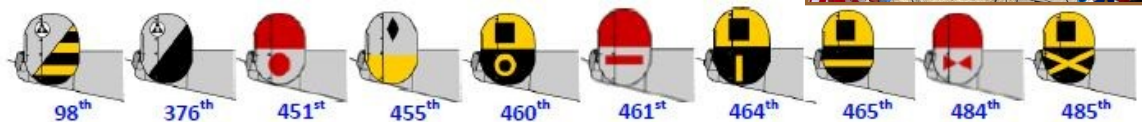
France Remembers —The 80th Anniversary of the Lost B24 Liberators

Our American delegation attended the 80th Anniversary ceremony July 4th, 2024 in Cannes, France, remembering the planes lost on the May 25th, 1944 mission. Pictured at right with Philippe Castellano and family is a French WWII veteran. Tom Will, Cathy Hampton and Keith Creighan



with the Mayor of Cannes and the US Consulate General

from Marseilles leading the solemn ceremonies conducted at the Croix des Gardes hill crash site.



COMBINED BOMB GROUP 2024 TUCSON REUNION PICTURE GALLERY



Tucson, Arizona 2024 Reunion October 26th—29th, 2024



The Double Tree Suites Tucson Airport Hotel
7051 South Tucson Blvd., Tucson, Arizona

Eighteen members from the 464th Bomb Group attended the four-day combined group reunion at the Double Tree Suites Tucson Airport Hotel, October 26th thru October 29th, 2024. In all over two hundred people attended the combined group banquet Monday evening enjoying the music of the Kenny Ray Horton for after dinner entertainment. Though no 464th BG veterans were able to attend we heard many of their favorite stories and memories.



The 464th Bomb Group Leadership team—Jan Engle, Garrett Hass, Tom Will, Sharon Goode and Don Krynovich.



464th BG Tucson reunion attendees gather for pictures after the individual group dinner.



Dee Dee, Garrett and Tom welcome attendees to the 464th BG Tucson Arizona reunion.



Tom, Jan Engle, Nora Mazotti, Dan & Eva Krynovich, Donna Sivanich and Don Krynovich.



George and Margaret Sparks, DD and Garrett and Joe Osentowski enjoy conversation.



Richard Karow, Luara Karow and Jaelyne and Kent Hathaway enjoy the 464th BG dinner.



Reunion attendees tour Main Street at the Old Town Tucson movie set used for filming westerns.



Palace Hotel and Saloon on the Old Town Tucson movie set's main street.



Old Town Tucson McClintock Mercantile store used filming Gunsmoke and many westerns.



The Pima Air and Space Museum outdoor with all types of aircraft.



B24 Liberator 'Bungay Buckaroo', display at the Pima Air and Space Museum.



Major General David Lyons, Commander of the current Fifteenth Air Force inspires the crowd.

Tucson Arizona Reunion Sunday, October 27, 2024 Business Meeting

The Business Meeting was called to order October 27th at 8:30 AM by President Tom Will with a total of 13 members present. Also attending were guests from the 465th BG, Michael and Julia Deslatte and son Jeremy.

Tom highlighted the successful zoom call Saturday, October 26th, with 464th Veterans 2nd Lieutenant Luke Mc Laurine, navigator and bombardier, and T/Sgt Carl Will, radio operator and waist gunner. Our group was able to chat with Luke and Carl as each man told stories and shared memories. It was a delightful experience!

On a large screen, Tom shared views of the current website the464th.org, with attention to the History section that contains monthly records of Bomb Group activity from July 1943 to March 1945. Members of the group are in the process of transcribing old archives to the new format. This process enables search capabilities to locate information within the records. Webmaster, Hughes Glantzberg is leading the effort for the benefit of all interested in the operational reports.

Garrett Hass gave the Treasurer's report denoting several generous donations. Garrett acknowledged Sharon Goode and Paula Archazki for their accounting work. Sharon does an excellent job overseeing communication with the hotel for bomb group arrangements. Garrett also led the group in showing appreciation for President Tom Will's extensive amount of work and leadership on behalf of 464th BG, both at home and abroad.

Tom Will, Garrett Hass and DD Sanson travelled to Laconia, Italy for the annual commemorative ceremony remembering 30 people, who died in a

tragic accident March 1, 1945 at the Pantanella air base ammunition depot. This is the second-year members of the 464th BG or 465th BG attended the ceremony. Michael Deslatte, his wife Julia and son Jeremy, were part of the American Delegation this year. Tom and Garrett shared a wonderful presentation highlighting the trip and memorial ceremonies held on June 12th, 2024. Jeremy Deslatte presented fascinating photos from their trip to Loconia and from the Pantanella airfield.

All members of our delegation felt an 'outpouring of appreciation' expressed by the Italians for what the US 15th AAF did for them during War II. The 464th and 465th Bomb Groups supported this event with donations last year. Don Krynovich suggested that we donate again in 2025. Nora Mazotti voiced agreement with the suggestion which was followed by unanimous support from those in attendance. Archaeologist Dr. Maria Nunzia Labarbuta from Bari University is very interested in researching and telling the Pantanella story.

Tom Will then shared a trip report and presentation on his trip to Cannes, France, for the 80th anniversary memorial remembering the loss of three Liberators May 25, 1944. Accompanied by members Cathy Hampton and Kevin Creighan our delegation represented the 464th BG at the July 4th, 2024 ceremony. The US Consulate General from Marseilles and Cannes Deputy Mayor laid American and French wreaths on the memorial stone. The ceremony, held each year on our Independence Day, is in deference to the sacrifices the US made liberating France.

Respectfully submitted, Jan S. Engle

464th BG Presentations:

View the presentations on our website <https://the464th.org> Stories Tab by clicking the respective link below:

Pantanella Trip Report

Bomb Groups representatives attended the 12 June Loconia, Memorial Ceremony and set foot on the old airbase.

Link -> [Canosa Presentation](#)

Cannes France Trip Report

Bomb Group representatives attended the 80th Anniversary Ceremonial Recognition of the 25 May 1944 Liberators lost over southern France.

Link -> [Cannes Presentation \(the464th.org\)](#)

15Th USAAF by Philippe Castellano

Laura Karow tells Philippe's story of the air war in southern France.

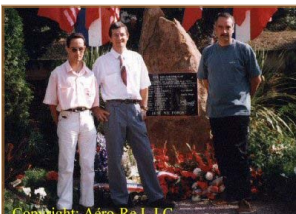
Link -> [15Th USAAF by Philippe Castellano 2022 \(youtube.com\)](#)

464th BG History:

Visit the 464th BG website History page <https://the464th.org/history/default.html> for the Pocatello, ID special orders extract as the group formed with crew assignments and processed thru Lincoln, Nebraska Army Airfield for assignment to the 12th Army Air force travelling to North Africa for phase training before transfer to the 15th AAF in Italy. See the official orders on the website History tab under the [Air Echelon \(the464th.org\)](#) link.

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.



464th BG Presentation to Combined Bomb Group Members

Here's a little background on Philippe Castellano, President of the *Aéro-Re.L.I.C.* Philippe spent a lifetime researching WW II airplanes lost in southern France. His website *Aéro-Re.L.I.C.* (aero-relic.org) has a lot of information on the bombers and fighter planes lost defending France. He is a recognized country expert and contributor to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), an agency within the U.S. Department of Defense whose mission is recovering American military personnel listed as prisoners of war or missing in action. A resident of Vidauban, France, Philippe helped establish memorials at the three crash sites and reconnected veteran families with the stories of those lost planes and souls. Philippe working with the Mayor of Cannes planned the 80th anniversary memorial ceremony of the downing of the three Liberators over southern France. Our bomb group delegation was invited to attend the Independence Day, July 4th, 2024 French event.

In Memoriam — Remembering Our Veterans Who Flew their Last Sortie

'Flying the Last Sortie...Missing from our ranks but never forgotten'

776th Squadron

Stanley E. Fowler 2011

777th Squadron

Edmond Aubrey 3/18/2023

Robert Ray, Jr. 6/23/2024

Rollin Joseph Kennard 11/27/1994

Jack F. Rohner 12/2/2024

778th Squadron

James J. Francesconi 3/19/2019

Gerald Felzen 1/8/2022

Hubert Bert Gallagher 10/24/2023

Alfred R. Karow 4/16/2008

David A. Kellog 1/21/1989

Jerome McGrath 9/2/2005

Robert E. Ringel 1/10/2021

Francis J. Villano 10/22/2021

779th Squadron

Zdzislaw B. Dewicki 12/16/2021

George R. Frazier 9/1/2021

John M. Henderson 3/14/1980

Alton L. Perington 4/17/2024

Freddie Jack Riggs 5/14/2021

Virgil E. Willbur 3/17/1980



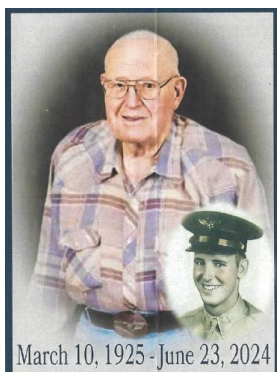
**All BG Veterans are
True United States of
America Patriots**



Plan to join us in September for the 2025 Bomb Group reunion to help us remember and pay a fitting tribute to these great men just recently added to our Last Sortie List.

An Airman's Story—Remembering One of Our Own

Robert Sherman Ray was born March 10th, 1925, in Crow, Texas and graduated from Mineola High School at the age of seventeen. With the permission of his parents, in 1943, he joined the Army Air Corp and proudly served his country during WWII. He trained in Texas, Oklahoma and Colorado. Robert was a 1st Lieutenant in the 15th Air Force, 777th Squadron. He was a pilot and flew 41 combat missions based in Pantanella, Italy. During his 6th mission, the B-24 bomber he was piloting had a mechanical failure



and he and his crew had to bail out over the Austrian mountains. God was with him, and he was able to return to his home base after being missing in action for twenty-two days. He was wounded in action over Yugoslavia in 1944 and was discharged from the Air Corp on November 16th, 1945. He was the recipient of an Air Medal, Two Oak Leaf Clusters (OLC), a Purple European Theater Operation (ETO), 4 battle stars, District Unit Citation, and numerous ribbons. After the war, he returned home to Crow, Texas and married his love, Opal Daphna Counts on July 20th, 1946. They were married for sixty-nine years and had one son, Robert Wayne Ray. Lest we never forget the supreme sacrifices of the 'Greatest Generation' securing the freedoms we all enjoy today.

The Missing Man Table



Tucson Reunion Financial Recap and Summary of 464th BG 2024 Income & Expense

\$4,084.34	\$3,832.00	(\$452.34)		\$8,456.00	\$5,913.27	\$2,542.73
Reunion Expense	Reunion Income	Net Total		Group Income	Group Expense	2024 Net Balance

464th Bomb Group Financial Report | Profit & Loss January 1, 2024 thru December 31, 2024

Revenue		Expenses	
Reunion Fees Collected	\$3,632.00	Reunion Registration & Paid Guest Fees	\$3,632.00
Direct Public Support	\$4,289.00	Reunion Luncheon Expense	\$452.34
2021 Shirts, Plaques & Mugs	\$35.00	Office Expense, Printing, Mailing, Shipping	\$761.65
Misc. Donation 465th BG IAAA	\$500.00	Web Master Expense	\$500.00
		Veteran Funeral Expense	\$201.32
		Memorial Donation & Gifts	\$365.96
Total Income	\$8,456.00	Total Expense	\$5,913.27

2024 Net Income
\$2,542.73
Cash On Hand
\$6,478.16
December 31, 2024

*Financial Notes: Registration fees collected and reunion meals and tour costs normally break even with the exception of the 464th Saturday luncheon which is a cost to the Group. Donations support the newsletter printing and mailing, website, reunion lunches, reunion group dinner extras and supplies and miscellaneous expenses. The group also provided small gifts of appreciation to our hosts in Italy and France for their hospitality during the memorial ceremonies this year. Donations are necessary and very much appreciated. Reunion attendance is vital to be able to provide a separate meeting room at the reunion to support the group, **please plan to attend the 2025 reunion.***

The Pantanella Airfield Legend Lives on Today with Annual June 12th Memorial Ceremonies



In the eighteen months of existence the Fifteenth Air Force, operating principally from the complex of airfields in southern Italy, destroyed all gasoline production within its range in southern Europe; knocked out all the major aircraft factories in its sphere; and destroyed 6,282 enemy aircraft in the air and on the ground during 1944 and 1945.



464th & 465th Bomb Group Delegation

The municipality of Canosa, Italy, and Italian Associazione Arma Aeronautica (IAAA) military personnel conducted a memorial ceremony on the occasion of the eightieth anniversary of the 15th Air Corp service in the area. The mayor of the Municipality of Canosa di Puglia welcomed our delegation at municipal headquarters on 11 June 2024 followed by a visit to the Canosa section of the Italian Air Force general offices. After a wonderful lunch with our hosts we were treated to a city tour highlighting the history of this ancient Roman town.



Pantanella 779th Officer's Quarters

We travelled to the nearby city of Loconia, formerly called Pantanella the following day for the official memorial ceremony conducted by LGT Francesco Di Pinto, section head of the IAAA. In the morning there was a laying of a wreath at the memorial stone dedicated to the victims of the March 1, 1945 Bomb depot explosion and the two bomb groups. After the official ceremony we attended a conference on the former airport of Pantanella, with speakers Dr. Maria Labarbuta (Contemporary Archaeologist), Dr. Morra (expert in history and geopolitics) and Mr. Ieva (President of Storia Patria di Canosa di Puglia).

Perhaps the highlight of our trip was the opportunity to actually set foot on the twin hills occupied by the 464th and 465th Bomb Groups during the war. It was exciting to walk among the old buildings that once housed the headquarters unit, officer's club, chapel and field hospital taking in some of the faded wall art still remaining. We were also privileged to be able to actually stand on the old road that once served as the dual, steel matted runways for the groups.



Old runway with the twin hills in back

The 464th Bomb Group extends our sincere thanks to our Italian friend, Tommy Caporale, for supporting the memorial ceremonies and hosting our group.

CANNES FRANCE 80TH ANNIVERSARY MEMORIAL CEREMONY REPORT

25 May 44 Commemoration

By Cathy Hampton (Hornbaker)



Every year on July 4, our U.S. Independence Day, the City of Cannes on the French

Riviera coast conducts a ceremony to commemorate the liberation of France after the Second World War. A key focus is to 'Never Forget' the sacrifice of the Americans and the Allies who fought and died so that France could be free and we all could secure the freedoms we enjoy today.

The commemoration occurs annually at the Liberator Memorial at Croix



des Gardes, a hillside nearby park overlooking the city. The wonderful monument

was built to honor the crew of a B-24 Liberator named *Strictly from Hunger* that was shot down nearby. *Strictly from Hunger* was shot down by flak and enemy fighter attacks, and seven of the ten crew members were killed in action. This Liberator was one of three B-24's shot down in this area on the May 25, 1944 mission bombing the rail yards in Givors France in preparation for the D Day invasion. All twenty crew members on the other two B-24's, *Angels in the Sky* and 'Lucky Lady', perished.

As a cousin of Captain Robert Hornbaker, the pilot of *Strictly from Hunger*,

it was an absolute honor to be invited to Cannes, and more so, I was humbled when asked to speak at the 80th commemorative memorial ceremony.

In October 2023, along with my husband and family I attended the 464th Bomb Group Reunion in Virginia. We met Tom Will and became re-acquainted with Philippe Castellano, who I had not seen since 1989.

From the time we arrived at Cannes train station to the day of departure, we were given red-carpet treatment! We met the Assistant Mayor charged with international relations and were presented with tokens of appreciation from the City of Cannes. He explained to us the importance of ensuring that memory of the sacrifices be kept alive.

On July 4th, we were driven in vintage WWII jeeps to the memorial site where we met the American Consulate from Marseilles who welcomed us to France. Also present were several French veterans who wore their uniforms with pride. I gave my speech in English, which was translated to French by an aide of the Mayor. Also, Bomb Group President Tom Will made an inspiring speech, also translated to French. It was sobering, and I was proud to represent Captain Hornbaker who lost his life on this hillside near the memorial.

Philippe Castellano of Aero-Relic was our host for the three days we were in Cannes. He and his wife Nathalie were amazing hosts, even inviting us to a large dinner party in their home

in Vidauban, France.

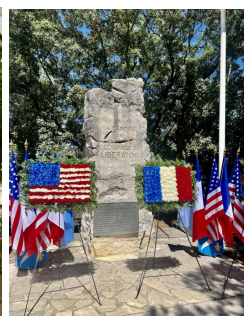
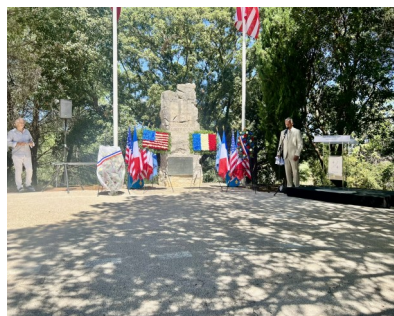
While in the south of France, Philippe provided us with a personal tour of the memorial sites for *Lucky Lady*, which crashed in the nearby le Estérel forest and *Angels in the Sky* which crashed off the coast of Cannes on it's way to Corsica. The French are very proud of these memorials, which are very well kept and visited by both locals and tourists. Finally, we ended our journey by visiting the American Cemetery in Draguignan, where Americans killed in action in south France are interred.



It was truly gratifying to be part of the 80th anniversary commemoration and to see the respect and honor that the French place on sacrifices made on their behalf in the fight for their freedom. This trip was truly the trip of a lifetime. As the French like to say, 'Souvenons-nous' - Never forget.



Cannes Harbor and Croix des Gardes Hill Just Northwest of Cannes center



Entrance to Croix des Gardes Site Memorial Gardens Stone Marker Mayor & US Consulate General Memorial Plaque

Returning from the 25 May 1944 Givors, France marshalling yard bombing mission three Liberators from the Group crashed in or near Cannes. Each year on the US Independence day the city of Cannes pays tribute to the brave airmen lost that day with a memorial service on the crash site of Robert W. Hornbaker's plane—here is an article from the Cannes city magazine. (ed noteltranscription)



CANNES CELEBRATES ITS 80TH ANNIVERSARY FROM 24 AUGUST 1944 – 2024

It was August 24, 1944. The city and its inhabitants were finally liberated from the enemy occupation. To celebrate this 80th anniversary in a festive, solemn and dignified way and to pay tribute to the sacrifice of those who fought for our freedom, the City of Cannes has developed a program of events and meetings that are cultural, historical and patriotic open to all. A tribute to be discovered also on the dedicated space of cannes.com - through five exceptional podcasts telling the epic story of the Liberation of Cannes and its heroes - as well as an interactive tour of the city to learn more about the history of local resistance fighters and pay tribute to their memory (see page 19). In this special report, you will find events not to be missed, exclusive interviews and archives from Cannes Soleil that go back in time and history. Our story.

One doesn't turn 80 every day. And freedom, our freedom, acquired in Cannes on August 24, 1944, celebrates this army its eight decades. Through this anniversary, the municipality pays tribute to all those who worked for its advent after four years of world war, at the cost of exemplary individual commitments among the inhabitants who chose to fight against the occupier, the Vichy regime and the Gestapists. Sometimes, at the cost of their lives. And it is by telling their stories, by highlighting the courage, honor and sacrifice of these men and women, by exhuming from the archives the images of a tragic era full of lessons, by visiting the places that still bear witness to them - places of memory and heritage - that Cannes pays tribute to its heroes and remains faithful to its history.

Exhibitions, screenings and conferences: showing, telling, perpetuating

From 15 to 25 August, the City of Cannes and the Cannes Historic Vehicles Association

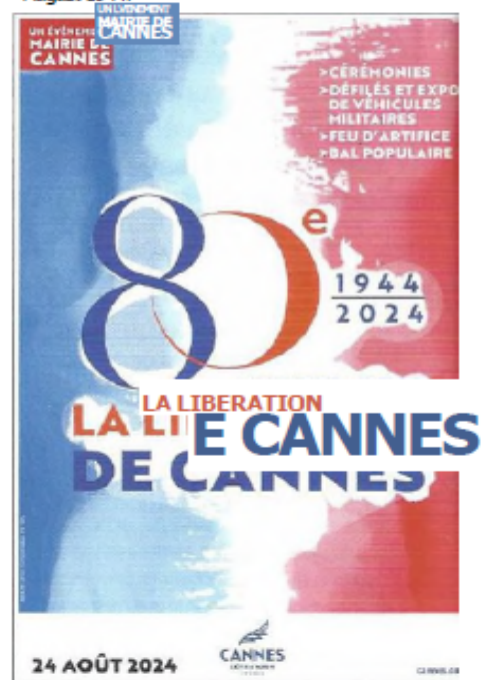
will present at the Espace Miramar a retrospective of the period of the Second World War and the Liberation through photographs and various objects - including Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's bracelet found in 1998 by the Marseille fisherman Jean-Claude Bianco -, and a reconstruction of the characters in period clothes. 80 mannequins will thus be dressed in original clothes. On 24 August, on the square in front of the town hall, an exhibition of fifteen tarpaulins entitled The Forces of Freedom will accompany the visitor through the advance of the Allies and the local Resistance since the D-Day landings of Provence at the Liberation. Designed by the National Office for Veterans and Victims and



**95 HISTORIC
VEHICLES AND
250 EXTRAS IN THE
STREETS OF CANNES**



Delivered from the yoke of the occupier, the people of Cannes cheered their American liberators entering the villa center via Avenue Georges Clemenceau on 24 August 1944.



Victims of War, the exhibition is presented by Aurélien Michel, head of the operations office at the Armée de l'air. Another important event of this commemorative summer: from August 11 to November, the Philatelic and Cartophile Association of Cannes will offer at the Temple of the United Protestant Church of Cannes an exhibition of stamps and other philatelic documents depicting the Landings of Normandy, Provence, as well as the Liberation of Cannes and Provence. It can be visited on Thursday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. and on Sunday from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. And last summer memorial highlights:



464TH BOMB GROUP

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The 464th BG wishes to recognize and thank Mr. Dave Blake, 461st BG for serving as our reunion committee chairperson for so many years. Dave does a wonderful job getting input from all the groups and coordinating the combined group reunions—Thank You Dave!



www.the464th.org



464th COMBINED BOMB GROUP 2025 REUNION

September 25th—September 29, 2025



Best Western Ramkota Conference Hotel
 2111 N. LaCrosse Street, Rapid City, SD 57701
 Reservation Desk: (605) 343-8550

Watch the website for registration form posting. Invitations and registration forms will be distributed to those on our roster in the spring time frame. The room rate is \$137.00 per night, plus tax and includes a full, hot breakfast buffet for two. Group rates are available from September 22—October 2, 2025 for those planning to take in the many sites the area has to offer. Guests must reference the 15th Army Air Force Reunion when calling to receive the group rate. This two-story hotel conference center with no elevator so book early to reserve a first floor room!

RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA

September 25th—29th, 2025

Plan to make your hotel reservation for this year's reunion early—NO LATER THAN September 4th, 2025. Reunion notices and registration packets will be available in May for those on our BG roster and registration emails will be sent to everyone on our eMail list. Also look for the registration form on the 464th BG's website—the registration form can be printed and mailed to the address shown on the form.



A Special Thanks to our Supporters...

The 464th Bomb Group does not have annual dues. Contributions from reunion attendees and members cover publishing newsletters and maintaining the website. For those planning to join the group at this year's reunion in Rapid City, SD make sure to complete and submit the registration form. If your unable to attend the 2025 reunion consider making a contribution for continued group support.

Thank you to our many donors for your continued support of the 464th Bomb Group's mission honoring our Veterans and the legacy of the Greatest Generation! Were honored to have such great support over the last ten years.



From the collection of John R. Gottschalk. Pictured Left to Right, Tony Schneider, Gerald Welsted, Matthew Arlington & John Gottschalk.

Cathy Hampton	Kevin Creighan
Patricia Clarke	Caroln & John Espil
Jan Engle	Sharon & Keith Goode
Garrett Hass	JaeylInne & Kent Hathaway
Tom Jenior	Laura Leyanna
Don Krynovich	Nora Mazotti
Julian Metzger	Joe Osentoski
Robert Ray	George & Margaret Sparks
Dan Wilbur	Tom Will

Mail all registration forms and contributions to the group's primary mailing address shown in the banner on the left. We hope to see everyone in this year for another great reunion!



Ed Note: We need your help! If your address changes or you know a someone who should be receiving newsletters please contact us. We strive to keep the 464th BG roster and mailing lists current. There are 180 names on our mailing list and 230 people on our email list. Sending BG newsletters electronically helps contain group expense.