

2nd Bombardment Association "Second to None"

www.2ndbombgroup.org



Volume 30, No. 1 Winter 2014



Message from President Karen Nelson

Dear Veterans and Friends of the 2nd Bomb Group,

Here we are again, gladly starting another year together. I hope that 2013 was good to you all and that 2014 finds you healthy.

Those who attended the 2013 reunion in New Orleans were treated to some unexpected but very welcome guests. Please see Todd Weiler's article in this newsletter for an update on his, and our, friends from NATO and the Czech Republic who joined us for our Saturday banquet.

Our next reunion will be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from Wednesday, October 22, through Sunday, October 26. Those dates were chosen so that we did not conflict with the famous Albuquerque Hot Air Balloon Festival and various religious holidays.

As is our usual agenda, Wednesday will be our arrival day. Our banquet will be on Saturday night. We are planning trips to Santa Fe and a city trip in Albuquerque. We hope to take the tram to the top of Sandia Peak. Our general meeting will be on Saturday, before our banquet.

At the last reunion, we voted to join forces, for reunions, with the 463rd Bomb Squadron. Unfortunately, I received an email from their organizers, saying that they would be in Albuquerque, but, for various reasons, needed to schedule their reunion the week before ours. So, we will be our own and will try for a joint reunion next year. They plan to be in Pittsburgh which may, or may not, be appealing to our group.

If I may ask a favor of all of you, would you kindly send me an email at karenwnelson@msn.com letting me know if you think you will be attending the reunion? I realize that with health and other issues, it's far too soon to get an accurate head count, but even having rough numbers will greatly help in conversations with the bus company.

Our hotel will be the Hilton Doubletree, near the Convention Center. The address is 201 Marquette Ave. The group director has offered us a free airport shuttle, free buffet breakfast and a hospitality room. The hotel also has a free city shuttle within a five mile radius of the hotel.

Please encourage your friends and family members to join us. Every week the 2nd Bomb Group gets emails from those with family members who served in Foggia and would like further information on their loved ones. There is a lot of interest in the incredible work you did, on behalf of all of us. We thoroughly enjoy corresponding with our new friends from around the world and would like to share that information with your family and friends. You'll read a few of these requests in the newsletter.

You'll also find excerpts from War letters which Linda Gartz

See President's Column continued on Page 2

Inside this edition...

- 2013 Reunion Highlights from New Orleans
- Update on 70th Anniversary in Czech Republic Mission #263 Commemoration
- "My Baby" Flies again!
- Bulletin Board messages you missed!
- Getting Ready for Albuquerque 2014
- A war man's stories...Frank Gartz
- Success stories...finding lost veterans
- New Officers and Board Members 2014

Highlights from the 2013 Reunion in New Orleans

by Todd Weiler

November was a great time to be in New Orleans. The summer heat was on the run and one of the most quietest hurricane seasons I can remember made me regret buying trip insurance. But you never know. I do know that those who made it to New Orleans were in for a reunion like no other. It sounds like a tall boast, but just read on and see.

I arrived from Milwaukee in a light rain. I struggled to see the gulf coast but clouds obscured most of the ride down. When I thought we were over the ocean, we were on a long approach and I could finally see water once we were below 2,000 feet. It turned out to be Lake Pontchartrain. Man is that lake huge! (My clear visibility night departure confirmed this.) You had better pack a life jacket if going by car as there is a 24 mile bridge to cross. Fond memories for our vets crossing the Adriatic, or for the early vets, the Mediterranean.

Water had to be the first stop of the reunion. The mighty Mississippi turns into a coiled snake winding around the city in such a manner it is also called "Crescent City". [In fact it is another 40 miles as the crow flies to the gulf despite every map showing on the gulf.] The group boarded a bus and then a boat. No ordinary boat, but a real steam powered paddle-wheeler and like a page from an 1800s history book we dined on authentic "Nawlin's" cajun cooking. As we enjoyed the food the ship paddled up the river with a narration from a guide.

The devastation from Hurricane Katrina was still visible from the "holes" along the wharf where large warehouses once existed. The docks were so twisted in some places one would think it was a 2nd Bomb target result. Big freighters still work the area though. Bulk carriers, ocean freighters, tugs and barges galore ply the waters in a choreographed dance of giants to give any traffic cop a permanent headache. I know where the sugar on my cereal comes from as we passed the Domino sugar company. Equally large are the petrol chemical facilities reminiscent of our Houston tour a few years back.

We headed back to the hotel and saw the repaired "Super Dome" now monikered with a BMW name. We also saw the unusual burial arrangements. The above ground tombs from the cemeteries look like little concrete houses lined up along the highways. The below sea level terrain results in water just inches

See 2013 Reunion Highlights on Page 3



2nd Bomb Group makes an entrance to the WWII D-Day Museum in New Orleans, LA. The museum is located in the heart of downtown within walking distance to French Quarter and the Mississippi river.

President's Column continued from Page 1

has volunteered to let us publish. These first-hand accounts make the War very real for those of us who didn't experience it and should bring back many memories for those of you who did. You will find a web link in her article. Linda is a talented author and we hope to hear more of her stories in Albuquerque.

May 2014 be good to you all. If you have any questions or comments, please let me know. I can't wait to see you in Albuquerque and look forward to our time together.

Kindest regards,

Karen Nelson, President 2nd Bomb Group

Welcome from the new Newsletter Editor

by Todd Weiler, Editor

As many of you know, past president of the 2nd Bomb Group and editor of the 2nd Bomb Newsletter Loy Dickinson was taken ill this past summer. After medical issues continued to plague him it was clear Loy could not continue as editor despite a valiant fight with his medical issues.

Such conditions being what they are, I, Todd Weiler am now your Editor. I still will do my work as Historian, but as you can see, I will need your help.

From the veterans, I hope you will correct me when I make a mistake. Only you know directly what happened in WWII and I respect every word you provide. I hope you will continue to provide me with the insight that best serves to preserve your legacy. I also hope I am worthy of your trust to share your values and accurately represent the 2nd Bomb Group.

From the family members of the veterans, I am asking for your help to think about sending features about your veteran whenever a special moment occurs such as a recollection of a memory, a perspective of an experience (what do vets think of drones?), or anything that would bring their story to light that can be shared with everyone.

I am very fortunate to be supported by a global network of WWII historians. More than once they have been the success to finding a lost plane, a lost history or a lost veteran that a family or loved one is searching for after contacting the 2nd Bomb Group. I can never amass the knowledge that they have, but together, we can be a powerful force. I hope those of you reading this in that historian group will continue to support us in this critical junction. Many of these historians are also advancing in years.

To the youth of the families with veterans, I am asking you to talk to your veteran. It may seem awkward. They might not want to talk. But I can say this without reservation you will regret not asking after your veteran is gone. Many vets in their sunset years are more willing than before to talk. Start with the easy questions like where were you when the war ended? A happy thought can trigger a conversation that hopefully will lead to more conversation.

I turned 60 this year. I am the second generation, born of the greatest generation. You third generation "kids" can add greatness to your generation too. Pick up the torch. Carry the legacy. Learn where you came from. Know those who sacrificed, so that you may enjoy the fruits of their service. Do this and you too will become part of the legacy that is the 2nd Bomb Group.

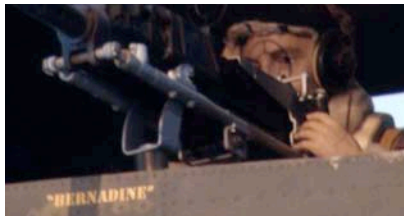
2013 Reunion Highlights continued from Page 2

underground. The next day when we toured one such cemetery, we learned that the cost of these could buy a new home!

Next, we visited the D-day museum. The city is famous because the Higgins landing craft used in WWII to land troops on the beaches was made there. The museum is a “must visit” for any WWII historian. It starts with a heart throbbing, seat pounding, 3D hybrid film chronicling the war’s impact on the world. Parts of the illusion drop from ceiling, pop out of the ground in sync with a Tom Hanks narration that will leave you with a lump in your throat and an appreciation of what our veterans did to turn back one of the most evil chapters of mankind.

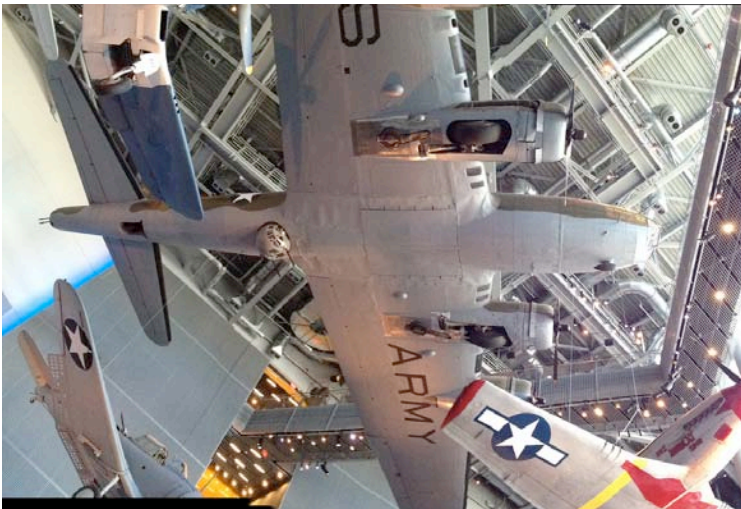
All venues of the war are covered. We really didn’t have enough time to take it all in. I focused on the invasion display. The realism was perfect. The detail of the interviews in the small video rooms covered both the protagonist and the antagonist. Truly the greatest battle the planet has ever faced.

In the aviation hall where a B-17 was the centerpiece, everything seemed done to exquisite detail. But more than one vet was quick to mention “they missed the gloves” as the waist gunner was clearly seen holding the M-2 .50 cal machine gun bare handed. That would be a painful no-no for any gunner on that plane.



The next day we got a tour of the city. Surprisingly, the city has rebounded in generally good condition since Katrina, but at a cost. As our own tour guide admitted, she lost everything and doesn’t expect to own her house ever again. In the graveyards we visited, many of the elaborate ones are the results of generations using the same tomb. A great idea considering how many of my friends will be around after 200 years! We learned the difference between a Cajun and a Creole and God help the poor soul who confuses the two down there.

We got time to walk the French Quarter during a sunny Saturday to see the people, the culture, and the architecture all in sync. They love to party and know how to entertain. Next it was back to the hotel. Read on for one of the biggest surprises of all. (My Baby flies again in New Orleans).



Boeing made a deal to build the “airplane” wing of the museum if they would put a “Boeing” aircraft in it. It hangs next to a Red Tails P-51 Mustang flown by the historic Tuskegee Airmen which actually escorted some of the 2nd Bomb’s B-17’s.



The original and the new! (L-R) George True, Lloyd True and Col. Joe Jones. Lloyd True shakes hands with Col. Jones who named his B-52 after Lloyd’s original WWII B-17 “My Baby” the name sake of George True.

My Baby flies again in New Orleans 2013

by Todd Weiler

The biggest surprise didn’t materialize until a week before the reunion when we were desperately looking for a speaker. Loy Dickinson our newsletter editor of many years suffered a heart attack and was indisposed unable to finish the details of planning the reunion. I was getting ready to fill in with an update on the 70th Anniversary in the Czech Republic to be held in August, 2014 when Col. Joseph Jones, Vice Commander of the 307BW called from Barksdale Air Force Base. Barksdale is the home of the 2nd Bomb Wing and still has an active 20th bomber squadron.

I had been trying to get in contact with the PR office at Barksdale AFB in 2012 to get them interested in the 70th anniversary in the Czech Republic. I never got farther than the PX in the cafeteria it seems. So now I received a call from a colonel who is a pilot and wing commander of a B-52 squadron. As it turns out in 2010 Col. Jones flew a mission to the Czech Republic as part of a NATO air show and was the first B-52 to land there. Roman Susil also attended, took pictures with Jones and the then named “Renegade” B-52 but neither knew the significant of each other.

In 2012 Jones returned to CZ and while touring some jet museums in Vyskov they discovered the parts of “My Baby” from the 20th Sq. and realized that it was a current Sq with the 307BW at Barksdale. After returning to the states and searching Google, they found Roman Susil in Ziln, CZ. Needless to say a 1,000 emails flew back and forth to bring Colonel Jones up to speed on the history there and now he’s part of the story. They agreed to meet at the 2012 NATO days. Roman walked up to the Colonel and said “Hi, my family has been looking after the graves of the 28 airmen killed in WWII. Who do I talk to?”. The bewildered Jones paused and thought graves registration or the embassy in Praha? He didn’t have any idea what this was all about. The next day Roman and some friends arrived and brought with them a plaque built by Mike Zitnik of the Sanov museum containing the wreckage of the 10 planes from mission #263 as a gift to the B-52 commander .

He saw the 20th Squadron name and others on the board and realized that it is the same squadron they are in now with the B-52’s. So now he has taken it a step further.

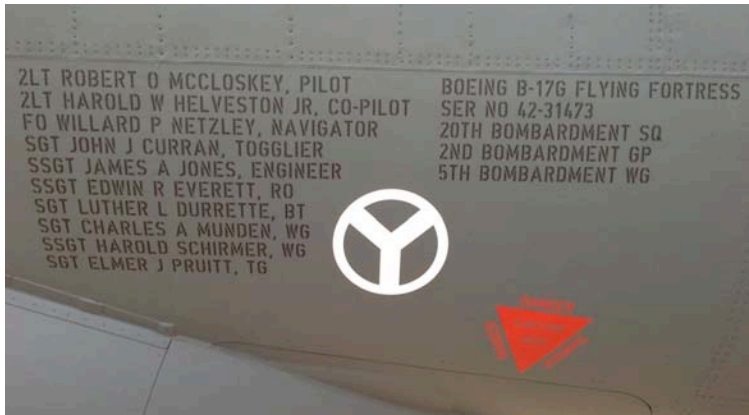
See My Baby II continued on Page 4

My Baby II continued from Page 3

As the Colonel tells it, when they returned home with the remains of the lost planes on the plaque, at the way point check-in on approach to Barksdale, they read the names of the WWII airmen lost on "My Baby" that day. The tower patched the audio into the flight line and everyone heard the names announced of the original 20th squadron "My Baby" vets returning home a final time. The flight line was in reverent awe at the sight. It must have been a surreal magical moment 65-plus years in the making.

Following the B-52 visits, a sister-city relationship has been made between Ostrava and Shreveport, LA the home of Barksdale Air Force Base. Col. Jones is working to help the Czechs build a Cold War museum in Ostrava and a museum at Shreveport commemorating the WWII legacy at Barksdale.

In an unimaginable chain of events, Col. Jones decided to name his B-52 after the first B-17 shot down on mission #263 called "My Baby". In addition to having his plane named "My Baby II" he emblazoned the names of all the original crew member names and positions on the entry hatch doorway to remind all the training crews that use that aircraft about the sacrifices made in that war to allow that B-52 to exist today.



But it didn't stop there. As fate would have it, the date the names were physically applied to the aircraft, aligned with the same time as our New Orleans reunion. At the reunion was the vet for whom the plane was named. As the WWII story goes, Lloyd True was a radio operator on a nameless plane. His wife had a baby but the mother and child's health was in doubt. When all was well nine days later, Lloyd got the belated news and he exclaimed before the ground crew "My Baby". Hence the next day the name was on the plane and "My Baby" took to the skies until its fateful end on August 29th, 1944. Interestingly enough, the name of the first casualty of mission #263 was top turret engineer Jim Jones. How ironic it is the beginning and continuing history are both named "Jones".

In addition, when the name on the plane was revealed, the former head of the Czech Air Force, NATO representatives and City representatives from Ostrava, CZ were on hand to visit Barksdale for the event. Colonel Jones and the Czechs learned that their plane's namesake was meeting in New Orleans. Col. Jones decided to take the CZ representatives and his crewmates on the five-hour one-way trip to visit the 2nd Bomb Group. It was an amazing night. They also brought along a 1/32 scale model of "My Baby". They



Vets, Czechs, and planes! Vets attending the New Orleans reunion are holding the board created by the Czechs containing wreckage from the nine planes that crashed in the Czech Republic on mission #263 on August 29th, 1944. Crewman of the B-52 renamed "My Baby II" attended with their Czech guests from Ostrava (the target City of mission #263) who are working to build a museum in their City. A tenth plane shot down on #263 made it to Hungary where it crash landed.

brought the pictures of the dedication and told the story about how it all came together. It was a night of great celebration and high hopes. Due to recent U.S. budget adoptions, there is a very high possibility that "My Baby II" will be available for flyovers during the ceremonies on August 29th in the Czech Republic. If true, my wildest dream would come true.

Linda Gartz creates blog and website on her uncle 1st Lt. Frank Ebner Gartz

from Linda Gartz, Board Member

Linda Gartz is posting letters written to and from her Uncle Frank Ebner Gartz, on or near the date they were written seventy years ago at her blog, entitled "Letters of a World War II Airman." Frank would eventually become a navigator with the 49th Sqdn, 2nd Bomb Group and successfully complete twenty-five missions through the end of the war in 1945.



Frank Gartz Amendola, Air Base 1945

At the beginning of 1944, Frank was classified as qualified for navigator training at Santa Ana Army Air Base in California. The first letters Linda will post in 2014 reveal Frank's modest announcement of achieving this milestone and his family's supportive letters expressing pride in their nineteen year old son. As the year goes by, readers will be treated to the pressure put on these young men as they struggled through challenging courses with the ever-present specter of "washing out" hovering just over their shoulders.

Follow along and you'll be whisked back seventy years to America in World War II, seen from the point of view of a young navigator-in-training, as well as a view from the home front of Chicago, IL. Linda started posting on the seventieth anniversary of Frank's induction, January 23, 1943. The first three months of letters can be found at her website: www.LindaGartz.com. For all letters after that, just google "Letters of a World War II Airman" and the first site to appear will be Linda's Blog -- now part of ChicagoNow, a vibrant Chicagoland blogging community. Here are two of the letters.

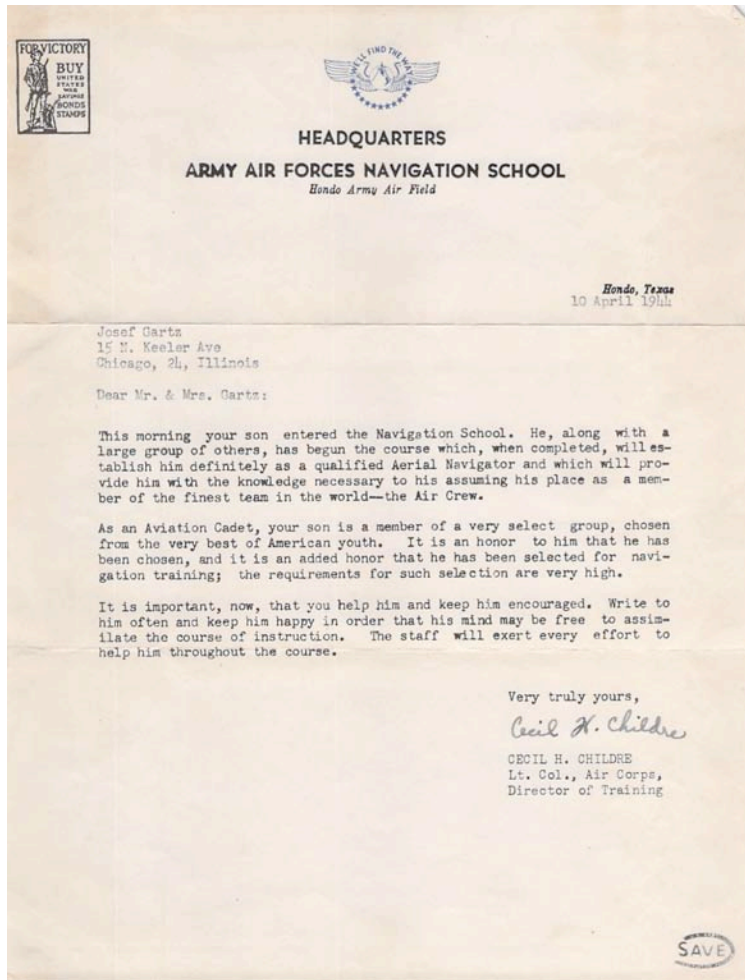
Linda is in the process of writing a memoir about growing up in a rooming house on the West Side of Chicago and how wacky tenants, a live-in psychotic grandmother, her dad's long absences, and 1960's racial change and riots coalesced to disrupt her family's life and challenge her parent's marriage.

See Letters from an Airman continued on Page 5

Letters from an Airman...Frank Gartz

Dear 2nd Bomb Group Friends,

I'm sending along a "sneak preview" of some of the letters that will be shared on my blog, Letters of a World War II Airman, in the coming months. Frank Ebner Gartz, has been chosen for Navigator training, and upon his arrival in Hondo, Texas Navigation School, his parents received this first "official" letter, dated April 10, 1944, announcing Frank's acceptance. Maybe some of your parents got a similar letter, depending on your assignment:



It must have taken a while for this War Dept. letter to get to the Gartz family. Frank's mother writes this to him about the letter's high praise in early May:

Dad and I got a letter from the War Dept. saying that you are beginning the study. How fine and what an honor—only the very best of American youth be where you are. So we always [will] write and keep your mind free from worry. [The letter encourages parents to write to their sons, to keep up their spirits].

Frank knows the War Dept. letter is boiler plate and tell his folks so in his next letter.

Dear Dad and Mom,

I hate to tell you this and disturb your beautiful thoughts but everyone who comes to advanced navigation school, that is, those who last this long, get one of those letters sent to their homes.

Shortly after arriving in Hondo, Frank wrote to his brother, Bill, giving him an hour-by-hour description of a typical day at Hondo's Navigation School:

4-13-1944

Dear Bill,

Well it's about time I wrote to you, chum, and I think that this is an appropriate time. Things have been happening around here pretty fast so I had better start giving out with the news.

Today was a big day so I'll give you an hour by hour description as it went by. Reveille at 0555 and the usual shave and general cleanup then for the day itself. At 0730 we were at the flight line in a small building listening to a lecture about the necessity of oxygen at high altitudes also the use of the chute and the different types. From this we went to the subject of life in a rubber raft. This was a good lecture and was given well.

Time 1000 – a ten minute break for a smoke and a short walk to the auditorium and two movies on high altitude flying. Time 1120 and time to eat. Next formation was at 1220. We had our pictures taken for our Officers Identification Folder. They do all the conversion work before our course starts so no time will be wasted after we graduate. If we have a leave after graduation we can leave this way within an hour. I'm afraid this won't be possible in my case but I think I'll get a three day pass.

This is why it would mean so much to me if the folks could come down for my graduation. Well to get back to the picture, it was taken with bars on my collar and I didn't feel any different at all.

At 1420 we went to cadet supply and drew our navigation equipment. This will really slay you. Here is a list of things we received. All in all the cost is well over \$300.00

We received a swell sextant, an Elgin wristwatch, an Elgin stop watch, 3 different computers, a briefcase full of pencils, triangles, a divider and a score of books. Besides these instruments we got a bunch of charts, logs, and several different blanks that will be used in future navigation.

We took these objects to our classroom and sorted the equipment and checked the amounts missing. I was lucky to have only one book missing. At 1530 we went to P.T. and played a little softball (our team won!). At 1640 we took our showers and cleaned up for Retreat and evening mess. At 1755 we went to Retreat and mess. Then for a break of an hour and we were ready to go again. At 2000 we were due at our class room for an evening military lecture. It's now 2130 and I'll have to prepare for bed soon so I'll cut out the military setup of my writing and get down to some chummy talk....

Your Brother, Frank

About ten days after he wrote his brother, Bill, about a typical day at Hondo, Frank wrote his friend, Ted, about his first exam. The tone of the letter to his buddy is a little raw—but probably typical among friends. Funny too! (It's typed because Ted loaned this letter to our family, and my mother typed it up from the original)

See Letters from an Airman continued on Page 6

Success Stories

...helping to find missing airmen

By Todd Weiler, Historian

About every week I get an e-mail from some family member who lost a father, a grandfather or a relative who was in the war. Their quest begins to find more about the service of their loved one. More times than not, they land on our web page www.2ndbombgroup.org.

It seems our group is the fortunate beneficiary of record keeping that other groups shredded after the war. Next, I can't thank enough the work of Dick Drain who painstakingly reviewed the old reports and entered the data for all the missions and all the flight crews. We are fortunate to have access to this information or else we would not be able to provide a glimpse of what the service record of an individual was. Yes...we know there are errors, but we lease, not own the data base. We've added an addendum page on our web site to help correct any newly discovered records or reports.

The following is a sample of a recent inquiry.

How can I identify which bomb group the B-17 "The Blind date" was attached to? We believe it was shot down over Germany in 1943. We are trying to do a memorial for one of the airmen that perished. We don't know if his body was recovered and if so where he is buried. Can you point me in the right direction? Thanks

*Bil Pederson
111 W. Monroe
Mauston, WI 53948*

So began my search looking for a plane named "Blind Date" with an unknown date, unknown name of the airman, in 1943 over Germany. Sounded hopeless.

The first step was to search the Dick Drain database for a named plane. Struck out there. Tried all variants, no luck.

Over the years I've learned to connect with other historians all over the world. I am an amateur compared to the company I keep. I am so lucky they put up with my steady stream of inquiries. So I naturally copied them all in hopes I might find a connection. As I said, I was not very optimistic.

Within a day my friend Marty UpChurch who collects pictures of nose art, said he found a hit. But it was in the 8th Air Force & the 388th so at first we thought we struck out. Much to our delight we hit gold. Such are the serendipitous moments of this work.



"BLIND DATE" from the 8th Air Force is found with the help of the 2nd Bomb Group

Letters from an Airman continued from Page 5

UNITED STATES ARMY AIR FORCES

HONDO, TEXAS

April 24, 1944

(To Ted Symon)

Well Fella, it's like this:

I know now what a brain cell is and I'm learning how to misuse it. We have been here two weeks and have had one week of solid school. It sure deserves a double underscore. I've learned more this week than I had all the time I was in C.T.D. and Santa Ana, Pre-Flight put together.

We received our first weekly exam yesterday and it was a lu-lu. I spread my cheeks, got my head out and went to work. There were only 2 guys in class with a higher grade than myself. I came out with a sweet 95. This gives me a good start on my last leg before my commission. If they don't decide to quit training Navigators. I don't think that this will happen yet.

Well, I guess when we get back to normal living again many of our friends won't be with us to see it all and then again we may not be there to see it ourselves.

I'll try to keep you posted as things go by but the only time we have absolutely to our own is on our week-ends if they don't decide we will fly instead. But we have our nights between 2200 and 0600 to sleep.

Till I write again, I'm still your buddie,

Frank

You never know where in your search the "holy grail" is found. I wish I could take credit for it, but it is the dedicated work of others who pay attention to detail. I hope they continue with their work.

As Marty comments, it too was a tragic mission. *Todd, They e-mailed me back to confirm the crew photo included the man they were working on the memorial for. They included the MACR number so I was able to look it up on Fold3. It was a really senseless loss of a crew and plane. A plane from another group in front and higher than them had fallen out of formation. It drifted over the top of them and released its bombs when everyone else did. Its incendiary bombs hit the plane and knocked it to pieces. Only the navigator was able to bail out and survived although he lost his leg when he was hit by flak as he drifted down.*

Amazing that they saw the other plane drifting back over them, but no one kept an eye on it to see that it had settled right above them. The ball gunner in the higher plane should have seen they were over the other plane as well.

In the 388th book, it said another plane from the group was lost on the same mission when it was rammed by another B-17. They said they thought the other B-17 might have been a captured one the Germans were intentionally using to ram unsuspecting planes, but that seems kind of far-fetched as it would be hard for the ramming plane to survive. — Marty UpChurch

Thanks to Marty and others like him around the world, we will make sure that we never forget!

2nd Bomb Group family members to attend mission #263 70th anniversary commemoration in Czech Republic August 29, 2014

It was the worst loss of life in 2nd Bomb Group history. It was probably the worst loss over the country of then Czechoslovakia. In a fifteen minute battle on Mission #263 ten heavy bombers, including all of 20th Sq. were shot down. Forty-one airmen were killed on August 29th, 1944.

Seventy years later in a combined effort between families in both countries, an anniversary commemoration is planned. Everyone and anyone is invited. It promises to be an unforgettable tribute to our veterans and a country who looked upon them as liberators and saints. God willing, we plan to have 2nd Bomb Group vets attend. I cannot underscore enough how rare this event will be. Read the details in the newsletter about the developments shaping this event.

For those interested in attending, we need numbers and commitments so we can plan logistics and provide hotels and transportation accordingly.

The primary plan is to fly to Vienna, AU. It is the nearest international airport to the area where the events will be held. We plan to run a shuttle bus once a day. We'd like to gather as many as possible at one time for obvious cost savings. It's about a three-hour drive one way. The best date for arrivals is August 28th, departures September 1st .

The Czech organizers have already pre-booked a nice hotel for US citizens (Hotel Kopanice – see www.hotelkopanice.cz). This place is in the heart of the 29th August battle. It's a wonderful place seven miles from Bojkovice. The price should be maximum \$45 USD /person/night. They will try to negotiate a cheaper price but we need numbers to do that.

We will work out local group travel to and from the hotel for the events. There are typically social gatherings after the events.

The Czech people hold our vets with great reverence. At the time of this battle, it was their “Pearl Harbor” moment and the tide turned to their liberation.

During this visit you can see the fields where the planes came down. Parts are being discovered every day. Talk to the witnesses



Program of the commemorations

Friday 29 August 2014

14:00 - commemoration Bosaca (Slovakia) Robert McCloskey

16:30 - commemoration Antonstal (Nemšová – Luborca, Slovakia (Billy Ray)

Saturday 30 August 2014

9:30 – 10:30 – commemoration Sanov (Thayne Thomas)

10:30 – 11:45 – museum Sanov

12:15 – 13:40 – lunch Bojkovice

13:50 – 15:00 – museum Bojkovice

15:30 – 15:45 – Prečkovice – commemoration family Pesat (Edward Sallings)

16:15 – cemetery Rudice (Russell W. Meyrick & Joe Marinello)

17:00 – Holy mass Rudice (open air)

Sunday 31 August 2014:

9:00 – 10:00 museum Slavicin

10:00 -11:00 cemetery Slavicin (mass grave 28 buried)

11:30 – 13:00 lunch Slavicin

13:30 – commemoration Krhov (James A. Weiler)

15:00 – commemoration Vyskovec (Merrill A. Prentice)

Please declare your intentions below using the signup form. We will coordinate further as we get the final numbers. Please let us know no later than April 30th, 2014. Follow the Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/mission263/>. This is a closed group so to get the access please befriend Roman Sušil on Facebook first and he will add you among the group members.



who saw the battle and remember the sights and sounds of the day. See where an airman hid with a Czech family until the end of the war. See the museums filled with the memorabilia and artifacts from the battle. Experience the wonderful CZ people!

The hospitality of the Czech people is second to none. If you are interested in followup travel to Prague or Vienna, let us know. Many are adding on from this event. Hope to see you there.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ 9 digit zip _____ - _____

Phone Number (____) _____ e-mail _____

Date of arrival _____ Date of Departure _____

I need transport from/to Vienna to CZ

I need hotel reservation in CZ

I am interest in a post visit to Prague Vienna Other _____

MAIL this reservation information to : Todd Weiler, 2nd Bomb Group, 2761 N. 37th St. Milwaukee, WI 53210 USA

OR you can e-mail this information to Todd Weiler at: “308M14@gmail.com”

News from the internet you might have missed

by Sid Underwood, 2nd Bomb Group Webmaster

One of the great powers of the internet is its weakness. As the younger generation grows more connected, the older generation can't keep up. Knowing many of you do not have a computer or access to the internet, we are trying to bring you news that normally is available on the internet, but you might have missed. People are posting requests for information that you might have. So here is a compilation of the latest requests that we hope you can respond to by call or letter.

Posted 2/3/14

Subject: Requesting Information about Myron R. Brown, a Bombardier with the 2nd Bomb Group and 96th Squadron I am writing to you in hopes that within the Second Bomb Group there is some info regarding the B-17s My Father flew in. My Father was Myron R. Brown, a Bombardier with the 2nd Bomb Group and 96th Squadron. During his tour he was a Bombardier on the following Aircraft:

AC# 446443 STARFISH, 446116, 446655, 446395, 446677 Take IT EASY, 446448 HUBBA BUBBA (Big Nose), 446778, 4338483

As far as I can tell, all of these aircraft came back to the USA for salvage. Some went to Kingman, some to Walnut Ridge, and one to Albuquerque. Any photos of aircraft and crew members would be so greatly appreciated. I plan to take my second flight on a B-17 this summer.

Raymond R Brown, FCNS1

317-509-2022, rbrown46140@gmail.com

Posted 3/6/13

Subject: Requesting Information about James Leon Lowe of the 49th Bomb Squadron of the 497th Bomb Group

My dad was stations in Italy toward the end of the war. He was a tail gunner in a B-17. His Air Base was close to Foggia, Italy. I just got this site from my sister and trying to find out more of my father, he never talks about it. He just passed away 2 Jan 2013. My mother has a lot of paperwork and pictures of him after the war in B36 and B52 but not any from Italy. I was hoping to find a picture of him here or mention of his name (James L. Lowe) on your web site. I'll keep looking. If you want a copy of his flight record about the missions let me know and I'll get them to you.

Thanks for the web site

Kenneth L. Lowe, Ret MSgt USAF, zener6@knology.net

Posted 2/22/13

Subject: Seeking Information on William D. Leet of 20th BS for Austrian TV Documentary

We are Austrian Filmmakers, currently preparing a documentary film for TV on a story about the so called "Foo Fighter" phenomenon. We are looking for members of the Second Bomb Group stationed in Amendola, Italy in 1944. More precisely we are looking to contact William D. Leet or his brother Warren R. Leet or anybody who served with them. For any information you can give me I would be most grateful.. With kind regards from Vienna, Austria,

Daniel Wunderer - d.wunderer@blueandgreen.info

Friedrich Moser - f.moser@blueandgreen.info, Writers & Directors

Posted 2/6/13

Subject: Requesting Information about Lt Col Robert E Haynes of the 497th Bomb Group

Do you have any records or obit on Lt Col Robert E Haynes of the 497th Bomb Group. Harold Plunkett is trying to find any information on him from after the war. Trying to help finish a history request for another WWII veteran. Any leads appreciated.

Todd Weiler, 2nd Bomb Group Historian, 308m14@gmail.com

Posted 1/25/13

Subject: Requesting Information about Arthur R (Bob) Dixon and/or Sudden Crash of B-17 "Jocko" #42-31682 After Takeoff

Here is my question: Is there anyone in the association who might be able to shed additional light on this event? In particular, is there anyone who may remember Arthur "Bob" Dixon or can explain why the event was not documented in an Accident Report or Missing Air Crew Report. As a footnote, there is evidence that 42-31682 was involved in a "landing incident" on 21 July 1944, the pilot of record was William Watlock and the aircraft was classified to be seriously damaged, if not written off completely. The Second Was First does not mention this incident, though the personnel data base indicates William Watlock flew 42-31682 on 19 July 1944 and Carl Shade flew the aircraft on 20 July 1944. Finally, the database indicates there were no missions flown by 42-31682 until 6 December 1944. From my other research focused on the 8th AF this would not be the first B-17 written off, to be returned to service after major repairs (i.e. 42-97880 Little Miss Mischief of the 91 BG having the rear portion of the B-17 replaced after suffering serious flak damage on 15 October 1944 only to return to combat on 25 November 1944). Also, is it possible that somewhere in your records, the serial number for Arthur Dixon is available (so that Don can track down part of his family history)? I have copied Don on this email, so if you wish you can contact him directly at djdixon1@cox.net.

Thanking you in advance for your assistance.

Paul M. Andrews, piccadilly864@aol.com

Posted 10//8/12

Subject: Requesting Information about Vernon D. Morrow and Crewmen of B-17 "60-50"

I recently came across the 2nd BG website and it is the best. I am hoping you can help me out. I am writing a book about all the men from my hometown of Hawthorne, NJ who died in WWI - Vietnam. One of the men Vernon D. Morrow flew with the 96th BS and was KIA on July 14, 1943. I have the MARC report for his plane so I know what happened to him. Below is a list of the crew:

MISSING AIR CREW REPORT: A/C #42-29583 - "60-50" - 96TH SQUADRON, 2nd Bomb Group

1st Lt. Vincent J. McIntyre, 0-791314, P. (DED)

2nd Lt. Richard M. Bentley, 0-730343, CP. (POW)

2nd Lt. Wayne M. Greathouse, 0-664884, N. (DED)

2nd Lt. Vernon D. Morrow, 0-730605, B. (DED)

S/Sgt. Otis W. Wharton, 37188611, U/T. (POW)

S/Sgt. James D. Kingsland, 12024924, L/T. (POW)

T/Sgt. Jacob M. Hauber 17040777, R/W. (DED)

Sgt. Casimir C. Manka, 33346371, L/W. (DED)

S/Sgt. George H. Tucker, 37175260, T/G (POW)

T/Sgt. Phillip E. Zimmerman, 17034035, R/O. (POW)

Five of the men were POWs and must have survived the war. Here is where I need your help as Historian:

1. Do you have a crew photo of this crew or a picture of the plane "60-50"?
2. Do you have any idea as to the meaning of the plane's nickname "60-50"?
3. Do you have a picture of the officer club in Italy which was named "60-50"?
4. Do you know if the above men listed as POWs are in the BG association and how I may contact them?

I would really like to talk with any surviving members of Morrow's crew. It would greatly help me write a good story about the his crew, plane and him. I appreciate any assistance you can give me.

Best Regards,

Paul Chepurko, pchepurko@optonline.net
Posted 6/27/12
Subject: Requesting Information about Willie J. Schonage

I have been searching for information on my father and those he flew with in 1945. ... I had heard stories for years about the plane being damaged and an emergency landing in Russian occupied territory. That was confirmed in the article. There were many stories like this which I unfortunately did not absorb fully as a kid. My father died 20 years ago and now I am trying to get a better understanding of what these men went through. I was hoping to locate other crew members or families of them. Share pictures (of which I have very few) and any stories. I had attempted to get military records but it seems they were destroyed in a fire. The information I found in "The Second was First" is the most I've been able to locate so far. The B-17 AC that made the emergency landing on March 23, 1945 was #682. The crew were as follows:

2nd Lt. Arthur K. Forest, P.
2nd Lt. Libero P. Casaccia, CP
2nd Lt. Walter F. Javor, N.
2nd Lt. Louis Etter, B.
S/Sgt. Hugh W. Sexton, U/T
Cpl. Willie J. Schonage, L/T (This was my father whose name was William J. Schonage)
Cpl. Hugh A. Stenvenson, R/W
S/Sgt. Herbert W. Wendt, L/W
Cpl. Joseph F. Klykamp, T/G
Cpl. Vernon H. Sanders, R/O
Any information would be greatly appreciated!
Thanks,
John Schonage, johnso@searhc.org

Posted 4/21/12
Subject: Requesting Information about Frank J. Sims

I'm looking for information about Frank J. Sims of Ft. Dodge, Iowa, who flew co-pilot in the Donald L. Smith crew on the 24 February 1944 mission. His was one of the many crews that were shot down that terrible day. He was in my uncle's 8-man squadron at Blackland AAF in 1943 and I'd sure love to know what happened to him and if he is known to the 2nd BG organization today. Any information at all would be much appreciated.

Thank you very much,
Ahron Shapiro, ashapiro@aijac.org.au

Posted 4/18/12
Subject: Requesting Information about S/Sgt. John J. Bradley, Waist Gunner, 20th Bomb Sqdn, KIA 8/18/1944, Mission 254, Ploesti, Ro

I'm attempting to find information on my uncle, S/Sgt. John J. Bradley, waist gunner, 20th Bomb Sqdn, KIA, 8/18/1944, mission 254 over Ploesti, Ro. His plane number on that mission was # 46275. I would also be interested in knowing if his plane had a name. Any information including personal stories or photographs regarding my uncle would be greatly appreciated. God bless you all for your service and sacrifice to this country.

Sincerely,
Bob Bradley, rbrad55@hotmail.com

Posted 3/27/12
Subject: Need B-17 Photos for Book about Operation Frantic

I'm writing a book about Operation Frantic (shuttle bombing missions that utilized Russian bases). Would you have, or anyone you may know of have any original B-17 photos that could be used in the book (originals will be returned). I know this is a long shot but I figured I would take it anyway. Seems my Grandfather did not have a lot of photos of aircraft, mostly men on the ground at Amendola. Thanks so much, any help would be greatly appreciated.

Best Regards,
Jim Oliveri, onenyankfean@yahoo.com

Posted 3/17/12
Subject: Searching for Dyersburg AAF Trainees and Photos

Hello 2nd BG,

I am the historian for the Dyersburg Army Air Field, TN. I would like to hear from any members who did their training here from 1943 to 1945. I am especially interested in crew photos taken here or any of the base's B-17's and G's.

Sincerely,

Tim Bivens, tbivensb17@cableone.net

Posted 3/17/12
Subject: Searching for a Photo of Col. Maurice A. Berry

Dear Sirs,

Could you please let me know whether you keep a picture of Col. Maurice A. Berry that you could kindly share? He led the mission on March 25, 1945. I am writing you as a co-author of the book entitled "Praha v Plamenech" (Prague in Flames) on U.S. air raids against Prague during WWII. We are working the second, updated edition that is supposed to be published in May 2012. Could you please let me know how many ships flew the mission on March 25, 1945 and how many of them were reported damaged? Are there any details on this mission in your collection you could kindly share? Thank you for your assistance in advance.

Kind regards,

Filip Vojtasek, Prague, Czech Republic, filipvojtasek@gmail.com

Posted 2/21/12
Subject: Staff Sgt Les Potter

The attached photo's were of my father Staff Sergeant Les Potter who served as radio operator 429th Bomb Squadron, 2nd Bomb Group. He was wounded on his 15th mission over Austria, 25 July 1944. I have very little information regarding my father's military career and would like to know if any of his fellow squadron members are still alive and if they remember him. Like so many, my father never talked much about his experience. The two pictures are of the aircraft and original crew that my father went through training. There is a note on the back of the aircraft picture saying Montana 1944. Any information you can provide would mean a lot to me. My dad passed away two months ago. He was proud of his participation in WW II. My phone number is: 818-624-6344 and email is: gpotter@uasc.com

Greg L. Potter

Posted 1/30/12
Subject: Francis A Abbott - Vienna Mission 379 Crash Landing - 15thAF / 2nd BG / 49th BS.- March 16, 1945

I would like to connect with anyone part of the group or had family within the same group. The details of the crash landing (all made it back), are nicely detailed on this website:
<http://www.2ndbombgroup.org/TheSecondWasFirst.pdf> Printed pages 488 - 491 (PDF pages 500-503). There are two Photo's meant to be in that PDF, that aren't appearing. I would love to see the photo of my grandfather, the second one with the caption: "T/R-L/R - E. Wade, H. Taylor, J. Swift, C. Freeman, Russian Doctor, A. Pierard B/R-L/R - Lisa (Russian Nurse), F. Abbott Courtesy - E. Wade)" Anyone, can reach out to me at david@barbella.com

Thanks very much,
David Barbella

2014 Reunion – Albuquerque, NM

Go West Young Man – Horace Greeley

Take it from an 18th century newspaper editor. We've gone south, we've gone east, we've gone mid-west. Now we are going southwest!

Hopefully this venue and new location will meet everyone's approval and we'll have a great time.

The accommodations at the Double Tree Hotel are top notch with a regular rate of \$145 per night being offered at \$90 a night, plus taxes, etc. The rate includes a breakfast buffet. The hotel has a free airport shuttle. The hotel phone number is (800) 584-5058. Please tell the reservations clerk that you are part of the 2nd Bomb Group.

Here is the suggested itinerary:

Wednesday, October 22nd

- Arrival day. Hospitality room will be open and used for registration. Bring your war mementos to share with the group.
- Light dinner (salad, soup, sandwich)

Thursday, October 23rd

- 9 AM-3 PM - Albuquerque city tour including a stop and the Nuclear Museum.
- 6 PM - Dinner - light, casual, buffet.

Friday, October 24th

- 9 AM- 4 PM - Bus to **Santa Fe** for shopping and lunch on your own.
- 6 PM - Dinner - light, casual, buffet



Saturday, October 25th

- 9 AM- 4 PM - Take advantage of the free hotel shuttle to visit the museums of Old Town Albuquerque. Lunch on your own.
- 4 PM - 5 PM - General meeting in the hospitality room
- 6 PM - Our usual banquet with a speaker and Todd Weiler's presentation on the 2014 Czech Commemoration of the Mission #263 Anniversary.

Sunday, October 26th

- Return home

Optional side trips may include:

Take the **Sandia Peak Tram** ride to the top of Sandia Peak. Ride the world's longest tram 2.7 miles. The observation deck atop 10,378 foot Sandia Peak in the Cibola National Forest affords an 11,000 square-mile panoramic view of the Rio Grande Valley and the Land of Enchantment.



Balloon Festival Museum-Downtown Albuquerque



International Balloon Museum in downtown Albuquerque



Shopping town squares in Albuquerque and Santa Fe



The atom and how it changed the world...all in one spot.

2014 2nd Bomb Group Board of Directors



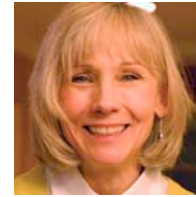
President:
 Karen Nelson
 1300 Army Navy Drive # 107
 Arlington, VA 22202
 (703) 892-5176
 Email: karenwnelson@msn.com



News Editor: Emeritus (Past President)
 Loy Dickinson (2004-2006)
 16685 Cielo Court
 Parker, CO 80134-3592
 (720) 851-9663
 Email: karolandloy@denvertest.com



Vice President:
 Patrick J. Kennelly
 1628 N. Mountain View Place
 Fullerton, CA 92831
 (714) 879-4076
 Email: kennelly.patrick@att.net



Assistant News Editor:
 Linda Gartz
 2825 Lincoln Street
 Evanston, IL 60201
 (847) 328-5647
 Email: lindagartz@gmail.com



Vice President Emeritus:
 John D. Sisson
 Dam Site Box 242
 Mill River, MA 01244-0242
 (413) 229-6638
 Email: jsisson242@aol.com



Historian/Newsletter Editor:
 Todd N. Weiler
 2761 N. 37th Street
 Milwaukee, WI 53210
 (414) 688-6401
 Email: 308M14@gmail.com



Secretary: (Past President (2007-2008))
 Judge Bonnie Blackford Crane Hellums
 3030 Eastside Street
 Houston, TX 77098
 (713) 521-4650
 Email: bonniehellums@yahoo.com



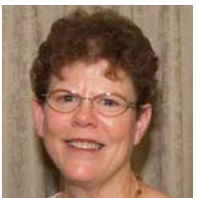
Assistant Historian:
 Donna Conway
 25 Clearview Road
 Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889
 (908) 534-4198
 Email: daconway51@comcast.net



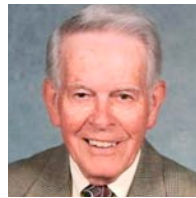
Treasurer:
 Matt R. Bryner
 8386 Fenton Way
 Arvada, CO 80003
 (303) 412-0030
 Email: mrbryner@gmail.com



Webmaster:
 Sid Underwood
 7920 Garden North Drive
 Garden Ridge, TX 78266
 (210) 651-5666
 Email: sidunderwood@prodigy.net



Past President
 Nancy Martin
 (2012-2013)



Past President
 Lew Waters
 (2009-2011)



Past President
 Richard K. Radtke
 (2002-2003))



Past President
 Edwin S. Hodges
 (2000-2001)

2014 Directors

Patrick J. Kennelly
 (Agent to Calif. Secy. of State)
 1628 N. Mountain View Place
 Fullerton, CA 92831
 (714) 879-4076
 Email: kennelly.patrick@att.net

John H. Bryner
 PO Box 2207
 Aimes, IA 50010
 (515) 232-7706
 Email: jbzpvf@yahoo.com

Charles Childs
 4201 Elm Avenue #312
 Rapid City, SD 57701
 (605) 721-1800
 Email: drummer90@rushmore.com

Robert J. Fredericks, Jr.
 401 Ruth Road
 North Syracuse, NY 13212-1942
 (315) 415-1396
 Email: robtjfl@verizon.net

Jack Norwine
 575 Elm Street
 Calvert City, KY 42029
 (270) 395-7359
 Email: polly26@newwavecomm.net

Paul Skalny
 56340 Copperfield Drive
 Shelby Township, MI 48316-4808
 (586) 781-8956
 Email: secondhistory@yahoo.com

Joseph W. Flowers
 719 Greensburg Street
 Columbia, KY 42728
 (270) 384-2878
 Email: jwf2@windstream.net

Carl Nastoupil III
 4504 Salerno Circle
 Plano, TX 75093
 (972) 689-9485
 Email: carl.nastoupil@verizon.net

Kingman D. Loomis
 4055 Wallman Rd.
 Barnes, WI 54873
 (715) 795-3051
 Email: b17tailgunner@cheqnet.net

George H. True
 3518 N Graham Road
 Madison, IN 47250
 (812) 273-3938
 Email: truegh-@hotmail.com

Directors Emeritus
 Fred Fitzpatrick
 2334 E. Helen
 Tucson, AZ 85719
 (520) 403-7682
 Email: fitz_robles11@msn.com

Second Bombardment Association
A Veterans Organization of the
2nd Bomb Group and Bomb Wing
Todd N. Weiler, Historian/Newsletter Editor
2761 N. 37th St.
Milwaukee, WI 53210 USA

Prsrt Std
US Postage
PAID
Permit 479
Denver CO

Address Service Requested

Second Bombardment Association
www.2ndbombgroup.org
MEMBER APPLICATION

Name _____ Date _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ 9 digit zip _____ - _____
Phone Number (____) _____ e-mail _____

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Dues – \$25 for 2 years

If WWII Vet – Tell us Squadron No. _____

If family of Vet, name of Veteran? _____

Make checks payable to:

Amount enclosed \$ _____

SECOND BOMBARDMENT ASSOCIATION

Mail to: Second Bombardment Association

c/o Matt Bryner

8386 Fenton Way

Arvada, CO 80003