



The Crow Flight



Fortieth Newsletter of the 47th, 48th, 396th & 820th Bombardment Squadrons, 41st Bombardment Group (M), 7th AF, WWII, Issued August 2007

WILLIAM ROBERT (BOB) ORR was born April 5, 1916 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. His parents were Presbyterian Missionaries.

His family returned to the US when he was a very young boy. Bob graduated from High School in Grand Junction, CO, and began, but did not complete college in Kansas. He wanted to be a pilot and a writer. He was hired by the US Forest Service as an administrator in 1939 where he worked in Albuquerque until he was drafted in October, 1941. He was taking a pilot correspondence course during this time. His letter to his grandson, John Orr, explains more:

Oct. 2, 2001, Dear John, I enjoyed reading the letter

you sent me in August, but I am not the same kind of "hero" you might think of in the 1942 Doolittle raid over Tokyo. Those guys took off from an AIRCRAFT CARRIER and had no place to land after the raid.

I got into the Army Air Corps in 1942 after being drafted into the Coast Artillery October 14, 1941. So I was already in the Army on Dec. 7, when the Japs bombed Pearl Harbor.

I had tried to get into the Air Corps in 1938 and in 1940 but I couldn't pass their stiff eyesight exam, but when I tried in April, 1942 I was in the Coast Artillery at Ft. Worden, Washington. I took the physical at McCord Field, outside of Tacoma, Washington, and they agreed to take me in the Air Corps, but as an aerial navigator, not a pilot. So after a few months of waiting I started Navigation training. They had many more applications for the Air Corps than they had room for in those



days. Finally, in April, 1943, I was graduated and commissioned 2nd Lieutenant from Mather Field, Sacramento, California. Most of the navigators were assigned to heavy bombers that went to Europe, but all I had to do was go across town – south of town was the Sacramento Municipal Airport, which was headquarters for 396 Medium Bomber Squadron. The squadron was part of the Western Defense Command. The squadron had four flights of four B-25C and D type aircraft plus a stripped down B25A, which could

chug along at 350 mph – a real good speed for those days.

Our main duty was training so we had to go hither and yon to get qualified in gunnery, cross-country, over water navigation and bombing practice. There was always one flight of trained aviators at a US Naval Base on San Francisco Bay, at Alameda, California. We had to fly offshore patrol for the Navy because until 1943, they were short of aircraft due to heavy commitments in the Pacific. There was another 396th flight stationed for three months at a time at a small Navy Base at Arcata, California. When you were there it was like a regular job. Three or four times a week every morning three aircraft would take off and fly a regular search pattern from the Golden Gate. At the end of summer, 1943, we were notified we were going overseas - maybe north to the Aleutian Islands where the Japanese had made a landing on

41ST MISSION REPORT

A large force of the Group's B-25's bombed Kumonoto in Kyushu, August 10th. Their 11 tons of incendiary bombs dropped from minimum altitude started fires among buildings, warehouses, and along railroad tracks. Billowing clouds of smoke rose 10000 feet over the target and were visible for 10 miles on the homeward trip. Enemy machine gun and heavier automatic weapons damaged 11 of our planes and wounded two men slightly, but all planes returned to the base safely.



"Elmer's Hay Crop, and look at those cucumbers..." said Polly Littrell in an email.



Elmer & Polly are coming to ABQ, so we can look forward to again enjoying those delightful, creative & colorful hats like Polly wore at Tucson.

WOUNDED WARRIORES:

About 11 July learned that **Keith Ingstad, 396th** had been hospitalized for heart problems. Conversations with his sons Tim and Richard led to a brief but direct connection with Keith in his hospital bed; he sounded good. Since then, have received reports from son Richard and Jodi Rae, spouse of Keith's son, Tim, that Keith has rallied well and is now being given much TLC at his daughter's home in Ranchos Palos Verdes, CA.

Said Jodi Rae: Keith's legacy will be his children ...each and every one of them are just awesome in their own right. My husband Tim sleeps just outside Keith's room each night to assist with nighttime breathing treatments and such. We honor you for caring, Urban. Friendship helps health. It's proven.

You can respond to this email address as I check it various times throughout the day. I can get Keith's mail to him faster this way. 'jodi@nodaknet.net'

Several years ago, **George Tolbert, 47th** was advised he needed carotid artery surgery. You who know George won't be surprised by his response: "Hell no, why should I? I feel great!" Learning that, I gave George this (or something close) advice: "You'll feel great until you drop dead or have a stroke...get the d... thing fixed!" Well, don't know how much, if any, influence that had, but George did have the operation on 27 July. He was home and recuperating nicely the next day, said his squeeze and TLC provider, Bev. Bev also said that George had made their Vagabond Inn reservations. Next up for George is knee replacement. As a twofer, "Piece of cake," I told him.

WAREHOUSES, REVETMENTS, AND DISPERSAL AREAS

HIT IN SHANGHAI AREA TUESDAY

July 17

Warehouses, airplane revetments and airport dispersal areas were attacked and set on fire in yesterday's raid by the 41st Group on Ta-Chang air port and dock facilities in the Shanghai area.



The warehouse districts on Chu-San island, 40 miles off Shanghai, and buildings areas on Ta-shunOting became additional targets when two B-25's, one of them with engine trouble, hit those bases on their early return to Okinawa.

Flak was thrown up at our B-25's, but it was wide and inaccurate. All bombers, including the ship flown by Lt. Waldron, returned safely to their base.

350 OKINAWA BASED FEAF PLANES
DROP 450 BOMB TONS ON SHANGHAI

July 18

(excerpt from "The New Okinawan")

Japaneses held Shanghai, China's most important port, has been attacked for the third time by local Far Eastern Air Force planes....Over 450 tons of bombs were showered on two vital airdromes, Kiangwan and Ta Chang, in the Shanghai vicinity. Liberator, Mitchell, and Invader bombers left runways and dispersal areas damaged, destroyed five Jap planes on the ground, and hit several others.

Besides airdrome destruction, major refineries and shipping were smashed. Smoke columns one and one half miles high rose from a large refinery..... Engineer gunner Joe Finnerty of Harrison NY. said he thought his plane was attacking the wrong target. "I noticed Standard Oil signs all over the place, and then our bombs started big fires."

NAGASAKI HIT ON SEA AND LAND

BY 41ST GROUP ON WEDNESDAY

August 1

Marshalling yards at Natasaki railroad terminal and shipping in Nagasaki harbor received poundings from 26 tons of GP bombs and torpedoes in Wednesdays 41st Group raid on that city.

In the three-squadron

GP raid, bombs were seen to drop in the center and southern part of the railroad yards. Leaving the target area, columns of smoke were seen to rise up to 4,000 feet and were still visible 30 miles away.

Eighty percent of the bombs dropped were estimated to have hit the target.

Success of the torpedo strike could not be accurately observed because of the distance from the point of launching to the target. However, five torpedoes were seen to enter the harbor where the shipping targets were anchored



NEWS SUMMARY

OKINAWA ----ACTIVITIES OF THE 41ST BOMB GROUP (M).....Bad weather that grounded other Groups on the island, prevented the 41st Bomb Group from hitting their primary target on 7 August 1945. The individual Squadrons broke away from the formation of over 50 planes to hit Naku-razaki, Izumi Airfield, Chiran Airfield, Kanoya Airfield, and Byn, with 45 tons of fragmentation bombs, starting fires and hitting revetment areas and shore installations. The anti-aircraft fire varied at the different targets but at Chiran it was very intense, and one of the Group airplanes failed to come back.

MATT HOLLY is a name now well familiar to our readers as the Marshall Islands chronicler of downed WWII aircraft in that area. Matt has a standing request for information from our 41st Bomb Sq. members regarding their memories and activities in that region.

Following is correspondence from ELMER D. STORMS, 47TH Bomb Sq.

Dear Sir, I piloted a replacement crew for the 47th, and joined them on Apemamma in early March 1944. My second and third missions were over Mille. We "hit" Mille, went on to Majuro for lunch, fuel, and more bombs which we deposited at Mille on the way home. I completed fifty missions over several other Marshall Atolls, Nauru, and Ponape. In 1982 my wife and I spent three days on Majuro at the "Motel" alongside the old runway, ate in what I think was the old Navy mess hall, and drove all over the atoll. It brought back memories. We went on to Ponape, and Guam for a few days each. It was a trip I will never forget. So, thank you for sharing your research and findings of the earlier "raids over Mille. May God bless you, Dale Storms.

From Matt: Did you have any knowledge of the Miller or Phillips crews lost in the ocean after Ponape missions?? They were not of your squadron, 48th if I recall. Any additional comments about Ponape, any other stories?

Sounds like you were based or staged through Eniwetok. Were you there or pass by after August 9, 1944, when the PB4Y of VBP-116 crashed into the fleet aircraft replacement pool??

Any more info is great. Look up my Dad if you are in the PS area. Thanks for your time.... Matt

Dear Matt, Henry Phillips and I, and our crews were among the first "replacement crews". We joined the Group late in November '43, and trained with the group on Oahu, until they left to go "down-under" early in '44. Henry and I flew down, each with our crew, on then Lt.Col. Bywater's "wing" on March 8-9. Phillips was assigned to the 48th, and I joined the 47th. (There were several other replacement crews who kept coming in and they continued to train until needed "down under" as replacements.) I do not remember Miller, but I do remember when both crews were reported lost on a Ponape mission. I never really knew what happened. We were "staged" thru Eniwetok, as you say. However, we used Engebi Island, which is located on the extreme northeastern end of the Eniwetok Atoll. The base was only large enough for one squadron at a time, and the runway was only about 4,000ft long, with no approach or

overrun areas. The 47th did three-fifteen day tours there, as did the other B-25 squadrons in turn. I was there 3/31-4/14; 6/5-6/18; and 8/3-8/15. The B-24 group and Marine fighters were based on the island of Eniwetok, which had a relatively long runway. I was on this "big" island only once, and that was on May 28, when we teamed up with the B-24 group, and all four (4) squadrons of the 41st group, and made a mass raid on Ponape. We even had fighter escort on that one. The 24's mostly bombed Truk, Which was beyond our range.

Yes, I was obviously there on August 9, and was when the crash you mentioned occurred. However, I was on Engebi and the crash occurred probably fifty or more miles away, and we only heard of it. I remember that, at that time the lagoon was filled with all kinds of Navy, troop carrier, and supply ships gathering for the invasion of Guam. We got up one morning and beheld a line of ships, it seemed from horizon to horizon steaming out of the lagoon headed east, and by night the lagoon was empty. I have lots of memories, and when I stop to think about it, more keep returning. I understand you get the current 47th's quarterly newsletter, and it has quite a lot of info in it. Glad to be in communication, and appreciate the info. Sincerely, Dale Storms

Ed: I'm fairly sure the above accounts are fragments of the entire correspondence between Matt & Dale. My filing techniques are admittedly wanting; also, my computer went through the throes of death last year and I'm not sure how much info was lost.

Matt's book should be approaching fruition. When he provides the book ordering information it will be passed on to our TCF readers.

OTHER NEWS: From Skip Thrune: My recall on the 29 Jan 1945 incident, after reading it in the Tommy Thompson Diary:

In 1951, while living in the San Francisco Bay Area, I was negotiating an insurance deal. The salesman was a well-known, a former All American Quarterback at California Berkley, named Vic Bottari.

At some point, the subject of WWII came up, and he told of being in the Navy. His one regret, he said, was a major SNAFU with the IFF, which resulted in American planes being shot down, by his Task Force. Worse, he added, "I was the Fire Control Officer, who gave the order to shoot!"

I asked him if this occurred during the Marshal Islands Campaign, and if the planes were B-25s.

He said, "Yes. How did you know?"

I informed him they were from the forward echelon of our 41st Bomb Group, and that he made a lot of people unhappy that day. Then I asked, "And now YOU want to sell me INSURANCE"? Small world! Skip Thrune.

MEMORANDA
40 MEN KILLED, MISSING, OR WOUNDED
Who have left the 396th

MISSING

F/O John Johnson P
 2nd Lt Frank Castillo N
 2nd Lt John Kimmey CP
 1st Lt Peter Duval B
 2nd Lt Joseph Collopy N
 S/sgt Walker
 S/sgt Wages
 2nd Lt C.J.Murphy
 S/sgt Shaw

KILLED
 2nd Lt Knickerbocker

WOUNDED

2nd Lt Patton
 2nd Lt Provost
 2nd Lt Mikelwitz
 2nd Lt Trucker
 2nd Lt Moore
 2nd Lt Clay
 2nd Lt Taylor
 2nd Lt Cherrington
 2nd Lt Holty
 2nd Lt. Provost

February 1 TARAWA

The Navy and Army have made landings on 10 Islands in the Marshalls. Their task force has bombarded Wotje, Moletap, and Kawajalein. We are having a slight rest before we go at it again. It's pretty monotonous walking around camp with nothing to do. We read, wash our clothes, write letters, and sleep. According to the New combat assignment Tappan is Capt Fiest's new co-pilot and I have one of these new replacements. A big red-headed 2nd Lt by the name of Phyl. He broke the bomb-bay door control handle in 825 when he was riding with Fiest. I hate to lose Tappan but at least I still have the rest of the crew. Still no word on Taylor's crew because he is probably still on the destroyer. Fifteen Army Nurses moved in to help with the evacuation of wounded from the Marshalls. Haven't seen them yet and strangely I'm not interested. Wonder if Kasey knows if I'm down here yet ?

February 2 TARAWA

Tappan has gone to the hospital with Dengue fever and Shirley is suffering from an infected wisdom tooth. MacDonald came over for a short drink which turned out to be a long one. Bill and Doc had the same idea because long about 10.10pm Mac and I stumble onto Doc has taken his usual dine out between fox-holes 6 and 7. We drag him to his tent and see him safely in bed. Met my new co-pilot who is big & red-headed but seems to be eager. These replacements are not all they could be.

February 3 TARAWA TO MAKIN & RETURN

Capt Bullock, Wilbur Shaw, and I flew over to Makin to pick up some parts from our wrecked airplanes and to buy some supplies for our PX. Saw a Jap 4 engine flying boat which was wrecked in the lagoon also Jap trucks (which the Marines are using) a 75mm gun and radar which also belonged to the little yellow men. Makin is not badly shot up but there are certainly evidences of battle. Let Lt Pfyl (File) fly and he is not too sharp but will be O.K. as a co-pilot. Johnny Johnston was in the movie last night - sure was funny to see him again. Brought back dear nostalgic memories of U.C.L.A. The 820th is going out tomorrow so it looks as if the war will be starting again for us. Good reports from the Marshalls where the ground battle still rages.

January 4 TARAWA

The Navy went up to Nauru after we had such a good raid. They ran into fighter interception and heavy anti-aircraft fire. We sure had surprise that day. The 820th went up to Wotje yesterday but we've had no reports on how they came out as yet. Time hangs heavy around here and some of the boys have taken to playing poker. This \$ 1.00 limit stuff is bad on me because I can't play my best game. Fact is I lost \$20.00 of the \$50.00 Bill owes me. Haven't been paid yet this month and it doesn't look as if we will get any money very soon. That's O.K. with me. Rained something awful today and got just about everything in the tent wet. Clean shifts today !

To Be Continued

RICHARD TURNER
Port Jervis, N.Y.

Richard Turner, a lifelong resident of the area, passed away peacefully with the Lord, Sunday, December 10, 2006 at Bon Secours Community Hospital, Port Jervis. He was 85.



The son of the late LeRoy Turner and Florence Lester Turner, he was born March 13, 1921 in Port Jervis. He was married to Mildred Decker Turner. They were married on November 27, 1948.

Richard was a retired Set-up Mechanic for Kolmar Labs, Inc., Port Jervis. He was a member of the First Presbyterian Church, Port Jervis, also of Mahogomock Hook and Ladder Co. #1, Port Jervis Fire Dept.; he was an Honorary Life Member of Fearless Hook and Ladder Co., Walden; Port Jervis Lodge of Elks #645 B.P.O.E.; Veteran of World War II, U.S. Air Corps.; Port Jervis Seniors; American Legion #799, Pleasureville, Pa.

Survivors include his wife of 58 years, Mildred Decker Turner at home; one son, Steven Turner and his wife, Jeanie of Port Jervis; two daughters, Susan Christiano of Owego, N.Y. and Janey Beck of York, Pa.; six grandchildren, James Christiano and his wife, Tara, Michael Christiano and his fiancée, Melissa Morgan, Jason Turner, Kaitlynn, Jaclyn and Devin Beck; one great grandson, Caleb Christiano; as well as several nieces and nephews.

Friends may call Tuesday, December 12, 2006 from 2-4 and 7-9 p.m. at the Knight-Auchmoody Funeral Home, 154 E. Main Street, Port Jervis.

Funeral services will be Wednesday, December 13, 2006 at 10:30 a.m. in The Knight-Auchmoody Funeral Home. Rev. Stephen Huston will officiate.

Burial will be in Scotchtown Cemetery, Scotchtown.

Contributions may be made to The First Presbyterian Church, 8 Broome St., Port Jervis, NY 12771 or the Port Jervis Salvation Army Corp., 99 Ball St., Port Jervis, NY 12771.

Funeral arrangements by Knight-Auchmoody Funeral Home Inc. For information, directions or to send a condolence note to the family visit: knight-auchmoody.com

Above notice was sent along with this note:

Received The Crow Flight and enjoyed catching up. Richard died in December 2006 so we won't be coming to any more reunions.

I had written to Norm Geril and he asked me to send a write-up but I couldn't do it at that time.

It has been nice over the years being in touch.

Have a great reunion! **Millie Turner**

SQUADRON NOTES:

July 4, 2007 I wish to thank you for recognizing George Swindler's being part of the 48th Bomb Squadron. He so enjoys reminiscing of his days in the service. He is in a nursing home. We have been married 59 years and I as his wife enjoy bringing these The Crow Flight letters to him.

Many, many thanks, **Anne Swindler**

7/13/07 Thank you for The Crow Flight. I always read it cover to cover. I don't know many of the group but the articles are very interesting.

I always like hearing that Murray's book gave information to many and that was its purpose.

I'm so glad you are still having reunions and enjoying old friendships.

Here is a small donation...perhaps it will help some.

Thanks again, **Frankie**

July 1, 2007 Please find enclosed my check for dues in memory of Charlie.

Hope you & Carolyn are enjoying the summer.

I look forward to receiving The Crow Flight & read every word about each squadron.

You do an outstanding job of compiling all of the information that comes your way, & it keeps a lot of people happy! Sincerely, **Marian Treagle**

A proud supporter of Guiding Eyes for the Blind

Mr. Albert Hettig

*Mr. Hettig
I thank you & do
appreciate receiving the
news of 41ST Grp.
Enclosed is the sum of \$20
news - dues - whatever
I am interested in
this book on the author
Matt Holly-Marchese
etc. Matt information
Please*



Y068679 SAMMY

*Wishing the
best for all
the 41ST GRP.*

*Al
Hettig*

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO REUNION
47th, 48th, 396th & 820th Squadrons, 41st Bomb Gp. (M)
September 27, 28, 29, 30 & Oct 1, 2007

Questions or Special Assistance? Call Charlie at 505-881-3453

[Last second addition: Check out <http://travel.nytimes.com/2007/08/05/travel/05SantaFe.html>]

Thursday 27 September

- Complimentary Shuttle Service Provided by Vagabond Inn. Call 247-0512 from Airport or use courtesy phone in the baggage claim area.
- Check-in Time is 1:00 p.m.
- 12:00 Noon - Hospitality Room Opens. Closes - ?
- Registration Afternoon and Evening In the Hospitality Room
- Meals Are on Your Own

Friday 28 September

- 6:00 – 9:30 - Complimentary Breakfast Buffet
- 9:15 A.M. - Board Coach
- 9:30 A.M. – Coach Departs for The Santa Fe Tour
- 4:30 P.M. Return to Vagabond Hotel
- Lunch and Dinner is on Your Own

Saturday, 29 September

- 6:00 – 9:30 - Complimentary Breakfast Buffet
- 9:45 A.M. - Board Coach
- 10:00 A.M. – Coach Departs for ABQ City Tour
- 3:30 P.M. – Return to Vagabond Hotel
- Lunch and Dinner is on Your Own

Sunday, 30 September

- 6:00 – 9:30 – Complimentary Breakfast Buffet
- 1200 Noon – Special Snack Treats and Group & Squadron Meetings in the Hospitality Room
- Swimming Pool Available – Mingle in Hosp. Room – ?
- 5:30 P.M. – Happy Hour in the Banquet Room With Cash Bar
- 6:30 PM – Banquet Commences With Color Guard Flag Presentation. Jacket & Tie for Gentlemen is Recommended.

Monday 1 October

- Check-out time is 12:00 noon. Farewells & Plans for 2008: Saddle Up Old Paint and Clip Clop for Home. Do Come Back. There is Always Hay in the Barn, Sunny Days and a Drop of Dew in the Trough to Wet Your Como se Llama. Via con Dios Amigos! [Yeah, this is a holdover from Doc's Tucson Farewell...but how can you improve on that?]

FOR YOUR RECORDS: Hotel Reservations (1-800-522-1555) Made on (Date)_____ (Room-block Expires 19 Sept. '07) Hotel Deposit Made on (Credit Card)_____ (Amount)_____ Airline Reservations Made on (Airline)_____ (Date)_____ (Confirmation No)._____ Squadron Registration Form Completed and Mailed (Date)_____ Ck. No._____ Amt._____

U.S. territory.

The Generals and Admirals don't tell us peons what is coming up. We just go where they send us. In the fall of 1943 the 41st Bomb Group (Medium) had four squadrons the same size as ours. Our squadrons were given new B-25D type airplanes, with the Plexiglas nose, Bendix Top Turret, .50 cal tail gun and four forward facing machine guns .50 cal strapped or riveted to the sides. The navigator was supposed to keep those guns charged by pulling on a cable inside the navigator compartment. The other three squadrons were equipped with B-25G type aircraft, no nose gunner or Plexiglas, but a 3" anti tank cannon that the navigator was supposed to load for the pilot to shoot. The 47th, 48th, and 820th Squadrons had the G model.

We flew from Hamilton Field, outside of San Francisco, to Hawaii, where we became part of the 7th Air Force, assigned to the Central Pacific Theatre of war. Shortly thereafter the Navy attacked the northern Gilbert and Ellice Islands, British administered territory occupied by the Japanese. The U.S. Marines stormed Tarawa, in the Gilbert Islands, about two thousand miles south of Oahu, Hawaii. In December 1943, the 41st Bomb Group was sent to Tarawa and Apamama and we began our combat missions by a low-level raid against Mille, an atoll occupied by the Japs in the Marshall Islands that they had been assigned by a World War I settlement against the Germans by the League of Nations. Mille, Majuro, Kwajalein, and Maloelap had Japanese air bases on them, and also Eniwetok. We were supposed to strike the airfields in preparation for more Marine landings to come. We were used as strafers, coming in 50 feet above the ocean, strafing buildings and dropping bombs to damage runways, etc. The squadrons with the cannon aircraft were especially successful in this. We took losses to ground fire, but the Japanese Zero type fighters practically committed suicide trying to attack 12 to 16 bombers equipped with the Bendix top turret and flying in formation 50 feet above the ocean, all turrets aimed at once.

The Gilbert and the Marshall Islands are atolls – circular tops of underwater volcanoes. Their exposed land has been built by eons of coral activity and covered by coconut palm trees. These coral atolls are spread around the world 20 to 25 degrees of latitude north and south of the equator.

Throughout 1944 the Navy and Army took control of the Central Pacific away from the Japanese. Our group continued to operate although no longer as strafers, until about September 1944, when the group was pulled out and sent back to Hawaii.

We operated as medium altitude, 8000 ft bombers, against Ponape, Kusaie, and Nauru. The only opposition we had was anti aircraft ground artillery and we spent many a mission dropping 500 lb. bombs

at them – occasionally getting stung by exploded metal from their return fire. Unfortunately, we knew that some of the bombs might land amongst the natives who could not get away from the war.

We had done our job using up the Japanese Navy Zero fighters in the Marshalls and destroying their fuel and supplies. All of us who had flown 50 missions against the enemy were returned home. Our airplanes were taken over by new aircrews and I heard that the 41st Bomb Group was assigned to airfields on Okinawa and bombed the Japs in Shanghai, and eastern China.

So, I have given you a short history of my service in combat. I returned home in late October 1944, and met your grandmother, Marion Scott. We were married Dec 23, 1944. We had three children; your Aunt Judith, your father, Charles, and your Uncle David, all born in Albuquerque.

Marion and I were stationed in Texas in aerial navigation training schools until October 1945. I was a 1st Lieutenant then and after being assigned to Air Corps Reserve I was advanced to Captain – then retired.

Well that's it. Nothing like the Doolittle raid on Tokyo, but that is probably what the average U.S. Army Air Corps survivor had to show for. I had Air Medals pinned on me, and the Distinguished Flying Cross. I think it was for enduring, and surviving. Those who didn't survive, and several of my friends did not, were the recipients of \$10,000 insurance policies for their parents or wives.

Pictures: #1 – Mr. Lucky was aircraft #327, a B-25D. Pilot, 1st Lt. Vincent Casey, led the crew, co-pilot, 2nd Lt. August Mirzaoff, radio operator, Sgt. Gill, top



gunner, Sgt. Alkire (he claimed to have shot down two Zeros, but they didn't give him credit because every top gunner was claiming them – all were firing at the same time), Tech Sgt. Amparan (from Anton Chico, NM)– who was the ground crew chief for the airplane. I don't recall who the tail gunner was.

#2 – B-25G with cannon in the nose. [This pic not shown – no crew in the photo] The pilot was 1st Lt. Rueben Mona, and the crews were getting mixed up by that time, so I can't recall who was co-pilot or engineer very easily. I flew many missions with Mona. We talked about getting together and flying around the world after the war. I guess we didn't mean it. It never happened. The B-25 was a fine airplane – fairly easy for the ground crew to maintain. I can't recall a single accident due to faulty maintenance.

I hope you like this information, John. I have a lot more pictures taken from my old 35mm camera. Most of them are getting dim now, and I shot many pictures through Plexiglas, which really messes up everything.

Lots of love, Grandpa Orr

After the war Bob and Marion Orr moved to Albuquerque and had three children. They moved to Alamogordo, NM where Bob was a real estate broker and Marion was a school teacher. Bob later managed a furniture store where he retired. Marion died in 1989 and Bob died in 2002. Their daughter Judy worked for the Navy and GSA in Washington DC until she retired in 2006. Their son Charles is a practicing CPA in Albuquerque, NM. Their son David is an executive with a multinational corporation and lives in Dallas, TX. Bob and Marion have 8 grandchildren.

My Father's Medals

I have my father's World War II medals mounted and framed on a shelf in my office. Around them I have mementos of World War II – an old lamp, my father-in-law's campaign hat, models of World War II aircraft, armor and ships, and my father's old office items. My father received significant medals, including the Distinguished Flying Cross with two oak leaf clusters, and the Air Medal with five oak leaf clusters. Finding out what was required to earn those medals was a real eye opener.

The last time I saw my 86-year-old father coherent was when he was being taken away to surgery that would ultimately be the end of him. He smoked for 70 years so I won't dwell on the ethics and morals of how this accelerated his demise. He was 86. The tragedy of dying parents is not what this is about. All baby boomers have, or will soon have, sad episodes

of their own regarding the passing of their parents.

The grief of losing loved ones is a guarantee in life. I was in a strong state of denial as I watched him being taken away to surgery. I insisted to myself that he was going to make it. He didn't.

My father came to live with me because his COPD became so severe he needed assistance in living, and logistics made me the logical and practical solution. At first I was very apprehensive about him living with me because he was a notorious curmudgeon. He was used to having his own way for the 13 years since my mother died. Even before that he was reclusive and difficult to deal with. But when he moved in with me and my family there was very little trouble. That's surprising because I had no idea how bad off he really was. He seemed to be improving when he suddenly had a fatal setback. The little old guy must have been under extreme stress from leaving his home of 46 years, and having to work for each breath. I was oblivious until it was all over. I must say that the month he lived with me was a blessing because I began to learn who he was for the first time in my life.

Upon advice from cousin Dick, we decided to have him buried at Santa Fe National Cemetery since he was a WWII veteran. This proved to be very convenient and efficient. It also opened up an experience that I am still just barely beginning, and is affecting me progressively.

In order to be buried at Santa Fe National Cemetery we had to document that my dad was indeed a veteran with an honorable discharge. This required us researching my dad's records. One of the only benefits of his compulsively saving every scrap of matter he ever acquired was that we were able to produce the necessary documents. The search for these records produced other things that completely astonished me. We found an article my dad wrote in 1945 for an Army Air Corp publication, Log of Navigation, titled, "Water on Your Wings". It was a vivid account of a B-25 attack mission graphically describing the gripping experience of a low level-bombing mission in the Central Pacific during WWII. This article was intended to explain navigation techniques used in low-level flight around the equator. For me it began to explain why my dad didn't talk much about his war experiences, and probably why my dad was who he was.

Besides the article, we found a treasure of old military records he had kept, including his medals and some of his original navigator equipment – sextant, watches, computer, and many charts. We also have his personnel file with all his orders and documents.

My sister wrote my Dad's obituary. She was cogent enough to mention his WWII service. This mention resulted in Harold Newlander, a member of my Dad's squadron the 396th of the 41st Bomb Group, 7th Air Force - calling me and inviting me to meet with him. I told him of the records my Dad had kept, and how intrigued I was with learning all I could about his experiences back then. He was so gracious in lending me his copies of the squadron newsletters from the past few years. From the newsletters I have been able to acquire my own copies and even a book on the history of the 41st Bomber Group (Medium) written by General Murray Bywater who commanded the 41st. From these resources and many more I have since acquired, I am in a process that is far from complete, but continually and increasingly concluding that the years 1939 to 1945 were the most important and dramatic years in human history - and my dad was directly involved!

To look back now and picture that little old man with pain and stress in his eyes in the elevator at Presbyterian Hospital, on the way to his last moments on earth makes me feel so proud but so grieved that he never revealed what he had really done in his life. My process of grasping the magnitude of WWII and the effect it had on virtually every person on earth then, and even now, puts me in a state of awe that I cannot transcend.

As a baby-boomer American, trying to conceive of the magnitude of the scope of the effort and sacrifice required to successfully conclude WWII is beyond my ability to convey. To grasp the cost in American lives lost on land, in the air and at sea in Pearl Harbor, the Atlantic, the Philippines, Africa, Sicily, Italy, Europe, and the islands of the Southwest Pacific, Central Pacific, and Western Pacific, Mediterranean and Indian Oceans, the Aleutians, China, India, Burma, and all the other obscure places where horrible suffering and dying occurred without much historic note, is not something that can be quantified by a reasonable thinker. This is to say nothing of the effort at home to produce and supply the gargantuan quantity of materiel used by all the allies. And this is just the American part of the global equation. The typical World War II veteran will usually downplay his or her part in the greatest epic of human history since Christ was on Earth. The typical vet, while proud of his service, will say, "I wasn't a hero. The real heroes lost their lives." There is no question that all who lost their lives in that war were heroes. At least the Americans and their allies were. But every one of those WWII vets made a heroic contribution even if they feel it was insignificant. I know my

father never was acknowledged for the enormous contribution he made except for his medals. Now those medals are all that are left to proclaim his heroism - and he is but one of a multitude.

Another mind-boggling concept of World War II is the magnitude and scope of the evil that arose causing the war to begin with. Consider that to overcome this evil required the personal commitment and effort of practically every decent person on earth at that time. That was *global* effort! My dad was directly involved. My mom was indirectly involved, as was every American alive from 1941 - 1945. The British had to participate even longer. The Soviets paid a higher price in blood than anybody. They did it because there was no acceptable alternative. Remember the opening scene in Saving Private Ryan? Imagine your dad, or granddad, or great-granddad doing that! Many did it. Many more did it or something like it, only some place other than Normandy. How can the valor be calculated? Most who volunteered had no idea how bad it was going to be. The tide of patriotism was soon overwhelmed by the reality of war. This horror has been poignantly described by many who experienced it first hand, and by others who have made the effort to understand what really went on. This story cannot be over told.

The "Thousand Yard Stare" is a term used to coin the expression of GIs who had been exposed to the horror of combat for too long. I believe my father used to go into something like the Thousand Yard Stare quite frequently when I was a child. I remember him sitting in a chair with his elbows on a table, his hands on his chin, and a cigarette in his hand. He seemed to be daydreaming. I would ask him, "What are you doing, Daddy?" Sometimes he would just sit with a vacant expression as if I wasn't there. Other times he would respond dismissively with something like, "Oh, nothing."

My personal hatred for the Japs and Krauts of that day is an acquired condition developed from learning of their self-motivated atrocities as they inflicted them on the world population in WWII. On another level I might have inherited this hatred as a congenital trait from my father. I know his life was permanently unsettled from his experience, and that unsettling had an effect on my mother, my sister, my brother and me.

The bottom line lesson I've learned of my father's service and his entire Greatest Generation's service is that evil must be confronted and beaten. Evil doesn't have a capacity to reason. Evil requires destruction and that takes enormous sacrifice...especially when evil is allowed to fester and grow unbridled before the confronting starts.

Every day I think of my dad and his buddies, and all the great folks who paid such a high cost to enable the American Way to continue, and I am so grateful. I also grieve for the terrible erosion of the American Way that has occurred in the past few years as a result of our lack of confronting evil in the many forms it has been attacking us. I pray that the sacrifice of all those who have paid such a high price for our way of life isn't allowed to fade into oblivion.



WENDY, CHARLIE & JOHN ORR

Ed: There you have it: First, a heartfelt relation of his father's life and then a "tell it like it is" rendition of his own thoughts and reactions to events of WWII and into the present.

Of course, we're referring here to our 2007 ABQ Reunion Coordinator, CHARLIE ORR, son of William "Bob" Orr, 396th Bomb Squadron.

As you have noted, Charlie has formed and verbalized strong opinions, in particular regarding our WWII adversaries.

Do you agree or differ with Charlie? Either way, when you come to our ABQ Reunion, be sure to have a cordial chat with Charlie and discuss how you have reacted post-war to your experiences.

Most Tucson attendees were privileged to meet Charlie and John. Now, we all will have the opportunity to also meet Wendy, who Charlie describes as, "My beautiful, wonderful wife and 'rock' of the Orr family."

ABQ REUNION UPDATES:

TOURS: Inadvertently omitted from TCF #39 were the dates of our tours. They are: Friday, 28 September for the Santa Fe and Saturday, 29 September for the ABQ City Tour. You will find tour departure and return times as well as other event details in the "Schedule of Events" page in this newsletter. Note that Sunday, 30 September, is our "Quiet Day," with only Group & Sq. meetings scheduled so that we will be fresh for the Happy Hour and Banquet.

AIRPORT / HOTEL TRANSPORTATION: Free shuttle serviced is provided by the Vagabond Inn. After arrival at ABQ Airport call the local hotel number: 247-0512, and request "Airport Shuttle service." You may want to store that number in your cell phone. Also, a courtesy phone is available in the airport baggage claim area. Proceed outside to the 2nd set of parking curbs (for shuttles) for pick-up

REGISTRATION PROGRESS REPORT:

As of this date (5 Aug) we have money in the bank from 25 Good Guys and Gals. They are: **Jack & Garnet Audiss - Marjorie & daughter Mary Bleicher - Paul & Hedy Brooks - H.P. "Moose" & Jeanette Moody - Rick & Marilyn Rondinelli - Skip & Rene Thrune - Morgan & Clare Molloy - Elmer & Polly Littrell - Urb Gutting & Carolyn - Tom McGuire - Louie & Corinne Beisser - Craig & Betty Anne Norton - Geo Tolbert & Bev.** Note that 17 of the 25 registrations are from the 820th

Listen Up, 47th, 48th & 396th warriors...it's time to make muster!

DON'T MEAN TO SOUND ALARMIST, BUT WE DO HAVE TO MAKE TOUR AND HOTEL CONTRACT COMMITMENTS BY AUGUST 31. FOR THOSE WHO HAVE INTENTION OF ATTENDING BUT HAVEN'T ACTED AS YET, PLEASE MAKE YOUR VAGABOND INN RESERVATIONS AND MAIL IN YOUR SQUADRON REGISTRATION FORM ASAP.

From **Emery Tuttle:** There two things I have done in ABQ that haven't been mentioned. It was the year the 820th had their reunion arranged by Dorothy Prako in Colorado Springs. Afterward, JoAnne and I drove to ABQ and early one morning, had a lovely, exciting flight in a hot air balloon. Then we drove 30 miles east to Moriarty, NM and flew a glider. We were towed for takeoff, and then the pilot found a thermal and let me have it. I was able to climb to 12,000. Airport elevation is 6,000 ft. Urb, you might want to mention this in the next TCF. Something for the young at heart and who are driving. I will have my car.

Admittedly, there are legitimate excuses for not attending; here is one: Sorry to report, we will not be able to attend this year's reunion. It is my son's 60th birthday & he has plans for the whole family to meet in Las Vegas for a four day celebration on that weekend. He has six kids & 18 grandchildren so there will be a mob. With regrets Baggy

My reply: Sorry you and Marjean won't be with us at ABQ, but you have a good excuse, so we'll grant a leave of absence for this one. Too bad your son didn't pick Albuquerque for the get-together. What a grand celebration that would be!



THE CROW FLIGHT is a publication of the 47TH, 48TH, 396TH & 820TH B-25 Billy Mitchell Bombardment Squadrons, 41st Bomb. Group, (M) 7th AF, WWII

Currently, the targeted publication schedule is Feb. – May – Aug. – Nov.

READERS MUST PROVIDE news material for publication. Send it & requests for your "Bio" form to your Sq. Rep. or to Urban Gutting, postal, tel. & e-mail addresses below.

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Contact Your Sq. Representative or "The Crow Flight" Editor & Publisher, Urban A. Gutting, addresses above.

DUES NEWS: 2007 CALENDAR YEAR DUES FOR THE 47TH & 48TH IS \$5, INCLUDING A ROSTER; 396TH DUES IS \$15 + \$3 FOR A ROSTER AND THE 820TH DUES IS \$10.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE & SEND TO: EMERY TUTTLE 820TH, WARREN EYER 396TH, JOHN HELMER 48TH & URBAN A. GUTTING 47TH. ADDRESSES ABOVE.

\$ \$ FINANCIAL REPORTS \$ \$

47TH BOMB. SQ. Good Guys and Gals dues and gift Contributors SLR (since last report) are: Marion Treakle (Memory of Charlie) – Dorothy Grobe (Memory of Ben) – Ray Kuttenkuler – Bob & Nancy Worsnop – James & Elenor Bains - The 47th bank balance as of 7-31-07 was \$2965.94. (Cost of TCF #39 not yet calculated – for all Sqns.)

48TH BOMB. SQ. – John Helmer reports dues and gifts received SLR from Arthur & Eva Annice Rochlin. Our bank balance is \$2171.12.

396TH BOMB. SQ. - "Doc" Eyer reports a bank accounts balance of \$1239.37 as of 7-31-07. The following were heard from SLR with dues: Albert Hettig – Paul & Constance Bull – Fred & Roberta Higginbotham – Dick & Margaret Gigger.

820th BOMB. SQ. - 2007 dues payers are: Jerome Cassell Robert Bleicher - Richard Giachino - Leroy Myers – Warren Eyers -Richard Rarey -Philip Carrieri - Elmer Littrell - Emery Tuttle.

EMERY ASKED THIS BE POSTED: There are some in the 820th who are financially strapped who would like to come to Albuquerque. So if anyone wants to send money and designate it for the Friendship Fund, it will be kept separately and if not used will be returned to the donor.



HOW THIS, THE CROW FLIGHT NEWSLETTER, IS PREPARED FOR MAILING: L is Carolyn & R is son Steve's wife, Patty. Center is Sheba, the "Bossy Supervisor." Usually have 2-3 more Sheba assistants.

After licking 400+ envelopes, we all go to a local pub for larynx ungluing libations and a bit of sustenance.

Dear Urb - Just wanted to let you know that Thom and I will not be coming to the reunion. I'm very sad about this but I just don't see us making it. Thom has been having a lot of problems lately and is not up to making the trip. Say hello to everyone and have a wonderful reunion. Love, Mary

Ed: It won't be quite the same without you, Thom & Mary. We'll miss you. Am I correct that this will be only the second reunion, of all that the 47th has participated in, that you & Thom have missed?

From the desk of Dale Storms, 47th: 7-7-07 Enclosed is my "Annual"...Sorry to be a little late. Appreciate the "news" and the inclusion of info in re other sqdns in the group. Have appreciated the info furnished by Matt Holly and have enjoyed e-mail contact with him. Sincerely, Dale

ANOTHER WOUNDED WARRIOR: In a telephone conversation on 8-1-07, learned that JOHN HELMER, 48th cracked four ribs in a recent fall on his garage steps. John is a tough old bird (used to run marathon races) so hopefully will heal enough and in time to make the ABQ Reunion.

Norm Geril asked that air travelers be reminded that ABQ is serviced by Southwest Airlines and that they offer competitively priced fully refundable senior fares.

Art Rochlin, 48th Bomb Sq. wrote: Many thanks for The Crow Flight. The Thompson diary brings back memories.

7-10-07 Just received the last Crow Flight and enjoyed it, you do a fantastic job!! Guess you cut way back on the emails as haven't seen one for some time, you had some great ones. Again, I can't make the ABQ Reunion as I have a time share that same week. As ever JIM [BAIN, 47th]