

“Late Pass!”



THE CALL SIGN FOR GROTTAGLIE TOWER



449TH “FLYING HORSEMEN”

SPRING 2008 ISSUE

449TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

17TH REUNION PREVIEW

GREETINGS FROM THE ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Hi everyone! As we rapidly approach our 17th 449th BGA Reunion (Sept 28-Oct 1), I am excited about the possibility that we will have a large turnout of our original 449ers as well as a significant representation of the 2ND Generation. As you can see from the articles in this issue by Lee Kenney, Reunion Chairman and Lisa Storms of the Rapid City Convention and Visitors Bureau, we have all the makings for a great Rapid City Reunion.

Hopefully, thanks to the 2ND Generation, and particularly Mary Crowley, who has been working very hard on getting our Member Data Base up to date, this *Late Pass* mailout will get to all of our members or their designees. Our recent mailouts have had a high rate of return for incorrect address or member deceased notifications but we believe we are almost there with an improved data base. Our hope is to get all of our members located, and to get any we haven't previously found in the fold. We need your help in working this task so write to us if you know someone who is no longer with us or there is a former 449er that has not been receiving our mail. We look forward to hearing from you.

We receive many letters, emails and phone calls from sons and daughters, relatives, and friends inquiring about former members of the 449th who were lost in battle without the full story of their fate being known or who had died without telling their families about their experiences in World War II. Many of us have not accounted to our wives and children for that part of our life. As time goes on, our children increasingly will be interested in our stories and many of us will have the opportunity to tell them at our 17th Reunion. Our stories get better with age so they should be good by now. Please be prepared to participate.

Before I close, I call your attention to the accompanying note from Jim Miller, our President Emeritus. Dee, his wife, has truly been one of God's Angels in caring for Jim. Keep both of them in your prayers and drop them a note. They would appreciate hearing from you.

PS. We suggested that the Travel Agency plan a three-day post Reunion Tour from Rapid City to Yellowstone National Park and Jackson Hole. If you are interested, call the Gray Line Travel Agency at 1-800-456-4461. They will need a minimum of 26 persons for it to go.

-- Floyd Trogdon, President 449th BGA

NOTES FROM LEE KENNEY, VICE PRESIDENT/REUNION CHAIRMAN

The 17th 449th BGA Reunion promises to be a great one. Our Reunion Hotel, the Grand Gateway, has first rate facilities and spacious accommodations for all our activities. The Hotel Staff has been extremely cooperative and is looking forward to serving the 449th Members and guests. The hotel is situated at the gateway to nearly one million acres of breathtaking National Parks, abundant wild life and historic and fascinating monuments. So hurry and get your reservation called in to the Grand Gateway Hotel. Call 1-866-742-1300 and mention that you are a 449er to get the special \$75.00 rate.

We have also made arrangements with Gray Line of the Black Hills (Travel Agency) to offer a number of tours that will allow you to visit and see some of the wonders of the area. Rapid City offers accessibility to many beautiful and interesting attractions including the breathtaking Black Hills Scenery, abundant wild life, Mt. Rushmore National Memorial, Crazy Horse Memorial and much more. Call Sandra Sawyer at Gray Line (1-800-456-4461) to reserve your tours from the list of tours shown on the bottom of the enclosed Registration Form.

Also, note that the enclosed Registration Form details the programmed events for the reunion. Please register by filling out the Form and sending it with your check to Al Allen, 449th Treasurer at the address shown.

- Lee Kenney, Vice-President/Reunion Chairman

NOTE FROM JIM MILLER, PRESIDENT EMERITUS

Long time no see! I haven't been able to attend the last two reunions and surely miss seeing you faithful 449th members.

I am confined to a wheel chair full time and on dialysis three days a week. These things alone, make travel pretty tough. I have my doubts that we can make South Dakota in October. Our son was stationed at Ellsworth AFB; so we are aware of the many scenic and historic landmarks in that area.

I am pleased to know that the “2ND Generation” is busy with the 449th paper work. That's good news for us folks that are 80 years plus. Here is hoping you have a great reunion in Rapid City and would love to hear from you.

Sincerely,
Jim & Dee Miller

**“Real America, Up close!”
Rapid City, South Dakota**

Centrally located in the United States, Rapid City offers accessibility to a combination of some of the most beautiful and interesting attractions in America. Rapid City and the Black Hills is host to nearly three million visitors each year who come to celebrate the awe-inspiring sight of Mt. Rushmore National Memorial, discover the abundant wildlife in the Black Hills National Forest and Custer State Park, experience the colorful, historic mining town of Deadwood and view the world’s largest carving in progress -- Crazy Horse Memorial.

Mt. Rushmore National Memorial is spectacular and only thirty minutes from Rapid City. The granite portraits of Washington, Jefferson, Roosevelt and Lincoln represent the birth, growth, development and preservation of the country. This is a wonderful place to hold a military reunion reception or banquet and then enjoy the lighting ceremony, conducted nightly.

Only twenty minutes from Mt. Rushmore National Memorial is the world’s largest carving in progress -- Crazy Horse Memorial. Drilling and blasting on this colossal mountain began in 1948. When completed, Crazy Horse will stand 563 feet high, 641 feet long.

Rapid City and the Black Hills are known for full-time fun. Spring, summer, fall or winter, you’ll find a playground just waiting for you to enjoy.

-- Lisa Storms, Rapid City Convention and Visitors Bureau

2ND GENERATION SWINGS INTO ACTION

We know about the “Greatest Generation,” but what about the phenomenon that they also gave birth to a group of lively offspring called the “2ND Generation.” With that in mind, we are here to keep their legacy alive. It is our mission to help our veteran kinsmen -- Dads, Uncles, and all others -- organize, plan, and execute what we feel will be one of the best reunions ever. We are approximately 36 members strong, and our coordinated efforts are underway. Just like a well-loaded B-24 mission our members are volunteering, joining the crew, and are taking off.

If anyone wishes to become a “helping hand” or has ideas to help make this reunion special, please do not hesitate to contact Peggy Hill at plhillny@verizon.net.

Thanks to all “2ND Generation” volunteers. What a crew! It must be in the blood!

-- Peggy Hill, 2ND Generation

449th Bomb Group Association Officers

President, Floyd H. Trogdon
President Emeritus, Jim B. Miller
Vice-President, Lee Kenney
Secretary, Ray Logies
Treasurer, Al Allen

2ND Generation
Mary Crowley

Visit the 449th Bomb Group Website at:
<http://norfield-publishing.com/449th/449site.html>

THE CHAPLAIN’S CORNER

Harry Snyder, Chaplain

“TO KNOW GOD”

The way to really understand and know other persons is to live with them and to work with them. You and I found this to be true in our B-24 Liberator bomber crews. We learned to respect and to depend upon one another to accomplish our assigned mission.

Likewise, in order to understand and know God we need to live and work with him. Hear the testimony of the author of the 23rd Psalm: “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want: he makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me besides still waters: He restores my soul.” The Lord is compared to the good shepherd who lives in the midst of his people to provide for, to protect, and to guide his people.

Not only does God take the initiative through His Spirit to live in us, he leads us to work with him. Hear the psalmist again, “He leads me in the path of righteousness for his name’s sake.”

God works in us by His Spirit to see people who hurt and who need His comfort and help. By his Spirit he nudges us to provide needed care to others. In business dealings he leads us to do right by others. He leads us to right wrongs where others are victims of injustice.

When we unite our will with God’s will to practice his steadfast love, justice, and righteousness then we shall understand and know God.

**A BUMPER STICKER
IN THE PARKING LOT!**

There I was just puttering around my home in Huntington Beach, CA, when the phone rang. The voice on the other end of the line was so excited, barely audible, yelling, “M A R Y, did your dad fly with some Horsemen . . . aaaa . . . B.G something . . . 449th WWII?”

I was a bit taken aback at first, because I recognized the voice of my girlfriend. I couldn’t quite image how she could have retained anything about my dad’s military service, let alone the number 449th!

“Why yes,” I replied, “but what in the world would have impelled you to call me about that?” “Where are you anyway?”

“M A R Y, I’m standing in the supermarket parking lot down the street from your house, and as I was walking out of the store, I happened to glance at the license plate of the car parked next to me.” “It has a bumper sticker on it, and an image of a plane with a funny twin tail.”

I don’t even remember hanging up the phone, because I was in my car so quickly, that everything was like a blur. In a few moments, I too was standing in the parking lot next to the car. I could not believe my eyes. It was indeed at 449th BG WWII bumper sticker.

Needless to say, we waited and then waited some more, but no one ever came. Finally, I decided to write a note requesting whoever owned the car to please contact me. Hours went by and no phone calls so I went back, found the car again, and wrote another note.

(Cont’d on page 4 -- Bumper Sticker)

SEEING “Witchcraft” ENCOURAGES MEMORIES

Seeing a B-24 in really good shape was a powerful experience, especially for veterans who flew and fought in those planes during WWII. Many veterans literally knew what it was to “come in on a wing and a prayer” after a harrowing mission. Others, perhaps descendants or aircraft enthusiasts, seeing the plane were visibly amazed at the tight spaces where men manned their respective positions during heavy air attacks. All viewers were humbled, and many were moved to tears, as they walked the same six-inch catwalk young U. S. Air Corps soldiers had walked over 60 years before.

A younger generation might question how it felt to fly in a Liberator. According to Charles Nuzam (Pilot -716), “The plane was always cold. We stopped counting holes from flak in the plane after missions; there were just too many.” He also compared the sound of flak hitting a plane

(Cont'd on page 4 -- “Witchcraft”)

The 449th Bomb Group: A Brief Historical Overview

The 449th Bombardment Group (Heavy) was initially formed in May 1943. The 449th consisted of four squadrons: 716th, 717th, 718th and 719th. From May 1943 until December 1943, the 449th was located stateside as the Group was organized, equipped and trained. In October 1943, the 449th -- having completed its training at Bruning, Nebraska -- was declared ready for combat. The air echelon departed in late November 1943 enroute to the 449th's wartime operating base in Grottaglie, Italy. The ground echelon, consisting of the maintenance and service personnel, moved by rail to Hampton, Virginia and then traveled overseas in merchant ship convoys. The air echelon's movement overseas took place by the southern route which gave the crews real experience in long range, over water, flight. Three B-24s crashed enroute to Grottaglie with a significant loss of life including the 719th Squadron Commander. Upon arrival at Grottaglie, the 449th was assigned to the 47th Wing of the Fifteenth Air Force.

The 449th flew its first combat mission on 8 January 1944. Between January 1944 and its last mission on April 26, 1945, the 449th flew a total of 254 combat missions against axis targets in central and eastern Europe. Many of the 449th missions were to the most heavily defended targets in Europe: e.g., Bucharest, Vienna and Ploesti. (The 449th bombed Ploesti eleven times between April 5 and August 18, 1944). As planes and crews were lost, they were replaced by new crews and new aircraft sent directly from the States or by transfer from other Bomb Groups. From the time they arrived in Grottaglie until they departed at the end of the war, the 449th lost a total of 118 aircraft. Of those, 103 were lost in combat and 15 were non-combat related losses. Personnel losses of the 449th included 388 crew members killed in action, 363 shot down and captured (POW) and 159 who were shot down but evaded capture until they reached friendly territory. The 449th was credited with shooting down 199 enemy fighters. The

Group received two Presidential Unit Citations (Bucharest and Ploesti) and 449th members were awarded hundreds of medals including the Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, Bronze Star and others. Unquestionably, the 449th was one of the most distinguished and decorated combat units of World War II. The 449th Bomb Group was disestablished as an organization shortly after the end of the war.

We must emphasize here the fantastic contribution made by the 449th ground crews and support personnel. Quietly, behind the scene, they -- administrators, armament specialists, cooks, engineers, intelligence and photo specialists, weathermen and more -- kept the Group support systems running and the airplanes flying. Without the advanced diagnostic and repair facilities that exist today, the aircraft ground-support personnel performed miracles in making ready for the next mission airplanes, which the day before had suffered major combat damage or mechanical failure. These were truly capable and dedicated men who, just as much as the aircrews, were responsible for the successes of the 449th. They can never be thanked sufficiently for the great work they did.

The 449th Bomb Group Association was formed by veterans of the 449th Bomb Group in 1983. Lt. Col. (Ret) Richard Downey, 719th Squadron (Bombardier), spearheaded the search for former 449th Members and more than anyone else deserves credit for the Association's beginnings. The first Reunion of the Association, with a few hundred members and guests attending, was held at Tucson, Arizona. Since then fifteen more Reunions have been held, alternating between locations “East and West of the Mississippi”. The 16th Reunion was held at Jacksonville, Florida in January 2007 with about 150 members (including families). Hopefully, the 17th Reunion will have a good turn-out of members as this may be the last for many. We can only be aware of the stark statistic that more than 1,500 World War II veterans die daily. Our youngest veteran is probably 81.

Until recently, maintaining, planning and implementation of activities of the 449th BGA were performed by 449th Veterans. Now, the sons and daughters of the members, the 2ND Generation, have organized and are taking on some of the heavy duties under the watchful eyes of the 449 Seniors. Thanks to these young people, the 449th organization lives on!

-- Floyd H. Trogdon, President 449th BGA

“WANTED – MILITARY ITEMS

Buying WWI & WWII military memorabilia. I am an avid military collector. I will pay top dollar for US, German or Japanese uniforms, leather jackets, medals, photo albums, swords, daggers, patches, guns, etc. If you have military items, please give me a call. Bryan at 513-309-1347 or 513-398-0848; Or e-mail me at BTURNER@cinci.RR.com” **DISCLAIMER:** Mr. Turner is unknown to the 449th BGA. He contacted us and paid a fee to place this ad in “Late Pass.”

**“LATE PASS!”, a publication of
The 449th Bomb Group Association**

Ray Logies, Secretary

Mary Crowley

2nd Generation

16292 Content Circle

Huntington Beach, CA 92649

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email: TCrow16@aol.com

FIRST CLASS MAIL



**APRIL '08 NEWSLETTER
449th Bomb Group Association
716-717-718-719 Bomb Squadrons**

“LATE PASS!” - THE 449TH BGA NEWSLETTER

Ray Logies, Secretary

Mary Crowley, 2nd Generation

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Please send your stories, photos, letters to the editor, poems, cartoons, jokes, etc. for “LATE PASS!” or call her

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(“*Witchcraft*” -- Cont’d from page 3)

to “hail hitting a tin roof.” As was the experience of many other soldiers, he knew, too, that being hit personally by flak “felt like being cut with a white, hot knife.”

Walking and winding through the plane brought more solemn thoughts, too, and a profound quietness in remembrance for all the young men who never came back from their missions. Although these boys from both small town and large across the country took on the job of giants (Frank Shoaf related that “we were all mostly just a bunch of kids.”), the soldiers of the 449th contributed greatly to victory for our country and its allies, but most of these men have been reluctant to talk about their contribution over the years. Most WWII veterans underplay their heroism. As Charlie Nuzam said of his counterparts, “We just went forward and did what we had to do.”

-- Shirley Priest, 2ND Generation

(Bumper Sticker -- Cont’d from page 2)

It wasn’t until the evening when the phone rang and the caller was asking for me. Yes, indeed I had found a 449th member. It was the daughter of Rodger Meek, 718th Sq. navigator. He had passed away in May 2005 and had given his car to his daughter, Deborah Hill.

After meeting with Deborah, she shared her book that she had compiled about her father, various other memorabilia and 449th aerial bombing photographs. She has graciously allowed me to bring her father’s items to the Rapid City reunion for all to reflect and enjoy.

-- Mary Crowley, 2ND Generation

Be sure to visit the BGA PX during the Reunion to purchase 449th mementos and books.



449th Bomb Group Association 17th Reunion

Rapid City, South Dakota September 28-October 1 (Sun -Wed)

REGISTRATION

NAME: _____ **SQDN** _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____ **City:** _____

STATE: _____ **ZIP CODE:** _____ **PHONE:** () _____ - _____

EMAIL: _____ @ _____ **If "2nd Generation" state relationship:** _____

Circle if appropriate: Is this a (New Address) (New Phone Number)

NAME (S) as it will appear on the Name Tag (s): _____

I will have a **total of () persons attending**. This is my **1st Reunion (Yes) / (No)**. This is my _____ **th Reunion** of the (17) 449th Reunions

Will help with: Hospitality Room () Control Tower () Sales Table ()

REGISTRATION Payment ONLY: Make checks or Money Order to: 449th BGA
 Mail to: **Al Allen, Treasurer, 3415 N. Sheridan Road #302, Peoria, IL 61604 Tel#(309) 679-0062**

		Cost	# of Tickets	Line Total	
REGISTRATION	Member and/or Member & Spouse	\$ 20.00	1	\$ 20.00	Do not write in this space
	Each Guest	\$ 10.00			
Sunday, Sept. 28	9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Registration				
	7:00 p.m. Get Acquainted Party – Hors d-oeuvres/Cash Bar	\$ 17.00			
Monday, Sept. 29	7:30 p.m. SQUADRONS DINNER NIGHT (Cash bar 6:30p.m.)	\$ 24.00			
Tuesday, Sept. 30	SEE TOURS BELOW				
Wednesday, Oct. 1	8:30 a.m. MEMORIAL BREAKFAST	\$ 13.00			
	11:00 a.m. Men's Business Meeting				
	7:30 p.m. Reunion Banquet (Cash bar 6:30 p.m.)	\$ 27.00			
	TOTAL				

*Complete this form and send Original with your remittance made out to the 449th Bomb Group Association to Al Allen at above address. Retain a copy for your records. Sorry – unable to accept credit cards.

*REFUND POLICY: If a crisis forces a cancellation of your reunion visit, refunds will be available for items listed above up to August 28 (Except registration fee)

449th REUNION and HOTEL RESERVATION must be made by August 28. Date of refund deadline is August 28, 2008.

**Make your room reservations directly with
 ~ GRAND GATEWAY HOTEL ~**

Phone: (605) 342-8853 or Toll Free: (866) 742-1300 Rate \$75.00 single or double
 Continental Breakfast, drink coupon for each guest, per night at Cheers Lounge. Free shuttle to and from the airport.

AIRLINE TRAVEL

Airline Arrival Date: _____ Airline _____ Time: _____
 Airline Departing Hotel Date: _____ Airline: _____ Time: _____

Airlines serving Rapid City: Northwest, United, Delta, Frontier, Allegiant
 Need help call, Black Hills Central Reservations at 1-800-529-01105, no charge

TOURS must be purchased from **GRAY LINE of the BLACK HILLS**, Sandra Sawyer at **1-800-456-4461**. Tours are described in the Newsletter and summarized below. All prices are per person. Credit cards can be used for all tours. Call GRAY LINE at the telephone number above to order tickets and obtain additional information. Your tickets can be picked up at the 449th Registration Desk when you arrive at the hotel.

Sunday, Sept. 28:	1880 Train & Hill City real, live steam engine train ride (5 hrs)	\$39.00
Monday, Sept. 29:	Mt. Rushmore & Crazy Horse	\$30.00
	Deadwood & Spearfish Canyon	\$30.00
Tuesday, Sept. 30:	Badlands & Wall Drug	\$38.00
	Flying T Chuck Wagon Dinner & Show	\$30.00
Wednesday, Oct. 1:	Ellsworth Air Force Base	\$18.00