



**90th Bomb Group (H) (WWII)**  
*The Best Damn Heavy Bomb Group in the World*

**“JOLLY ROGERS”**

**90TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION**



Robert J. Tupa, Treasurer  
October, 2008

273 Wellington Cutoff, Wellington, NV 89444

E-Mail [ritupa@yahoo.com](mailto:ritupa@yahoo.com)

Phone 775-465-2930  
Volume 121

## A GREAT REUNION!!

**2008 National Reunion, Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites,  
Alexandria Virginia October 15 through October 18.**

The size of the turnout was quite unexpected immediately after the May, 2008 was published. The Eastern and Western minis had little response and those who did attend the Eastern mini seemed exhausted by the experience despite a fine program. Bob Ford withdrew his offer to host the 2009 reunion in San Antonio thinking that the minis were forecasting similar results for both the 2008 and 2009 reunions. He is seldom wrong in his assessments. But similar things did not happen at the 2008 national reunion. He was not the only one taken by surprise.

One hundred thirty-seven persons attended the banquet. Thirty-seven of the veteran members of the 90<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group showed up. This means that one hundred of the attendees were guests, widows, and younger family members. The hotel had to double the number of room reservations and prepare for increased seating at the banquet and the general membership meeting. Our host and president, “Queen” Filomena Berry, had to call a hasty telephone session of the Trustees to approve added funding to rent busses for the overflow of persons registering for tours.

Thursday, we went on the White House tour instead of Friday because of a scheduling change made by the White House Tour staff. The tour itself was somewhat truncated, but it was well worth the effort according to those who attended. The night bus tour of Washington, D. C., came off as originally scheduled. It was described as “beautiful” by those who went.

The Friday tours were especially enriching and eventful. The World War II Memorial is still breathtaking. We went to the Korean War Memorial first. There we were greeted by young folks who recognized

that we were WWII veterans. They thanked us for our service and all that we did. And they did nice things for us, too. A couple of incidents bear acknowledgment.

We were let off the busses at the Korean War Memorial and instructed to go through it and past the Vietnam Wall to reload the busses, a distance of some quarter of a mile or more. Jim Case started the walk, but soon realized that he would be unable to finish the trip, so he decided to go back to the bus. But the bus had left. A young man saw Jim’s plight and obtained a wheel chair and pushed Jim in it to where the bus was parked.

When it came time for us to board the busses again, our tour guide announced that a group of grammar school children had come to greet us but, of course, we were not in the bus. So they left notes thanking us for our service and wishing us well. They also told us to get plenty of rest and to eat right. OK. We’ll take a bath every Saturday and was our neck and ears while we’re at it.

Our lunch at Phillips Restaurant was wonderful. Most of us over ate in spite of the grammar schoolers. Afterwards Bob Simmons and Lowell Bashor were sitting on a bench outside the restaurant discussing the tour. We broke into the conversation to tell them about the Jim Case incident. We had hardly begun before Lowell interrupted to mention that the unidentified young man was his son, Neal Bashor. Neal and his sister, Diane Chambers both made application for membership in the Association.

From lunch we went to the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts. We were escorted into the Hall of Nations with its impressive flags of the nations with which the United States has diplomatic relations. Then we went outside to view the Potomac River as we stood by a large circular fountain for perhaps ten minutes. Back inside in the Hall of States, the first question the docent was asked was “Where’s the restroom?”

Mercifully, she knew the answer to that.

Saturday, we visited Arlington Cemetery for a very impressive ceremony in which Filomena Berry placed a wreath at Col. Arthur H. Rogers' grave. The final tour was at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum. We saw more than a few aircraft that we didn't know still existed anywhere. We didn't see any Liberators, but there was an oldie that appeared to be sort of a B-24 in reverse. It had two engines and four tail fins. There was Langley's Airdrome. And as we stared in wonder at the RB71 a docent told us that it had set a speed record by flying across the United States in one hour and six minutes. Then the pilot had to wait for an hour and forty-five minutes for the skin of the airplane to cool enough for him leave the cockpit.

The banquet showed us just how badly we have misjudged the interest that our descendents have in our reunions. We original 90<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group veterans were outnumbered by more than two-to one. The dance floor was as crowded as a department store half-price sale. *(Bob Ford)*

### **BUSINESS MEETING**

#### Trustees elected

President:	Col. Jeffrey J. Smith
Vice-President:	James Verrocchio
Treasurer:	Robert J. Tupa
Secretary:	Dale Bates
3 year Trustee, 3 years to serve:	Filomena Berry
3 year Trustee, 2 years to serve:	Ervin Hartman
3 year Trustee, 1 year to serve:	Jason Dilworth
One Year Trustee:	Audrey Fralick
One year Trustee:	Brent Harraman

#### Future reunions announced

Jerry Rosenbaum is sponsoring the **Eastern Mini** Reunion again. It will be held at Bedford, VA during the month of April 2009. They will be visiting the National D Day Memorial again but Jerry advises there have been substantial improvements since the previous visit.

Bob Hanley advises that the **Western Mini** will be sponsored by his son Timothy J. Hanley (who helped out at the Western Mini this year). Dates will be May 13-16 at Riverside, California.

The **2009 National Reunion** will be held in Dayton, Ohio, the birthplace of aviation, during the last week of October. Registration will start Wednesday night the 28th. We will be seeing the National Museum of the United States Air Force and Wright Brothers sites, with the banquet the evening of the 31st in the museum. Full details will be available in the next newsletter.

### **A Message from the New President: the Future of the Association**

In keeping with the precedent set in this issue last year, I'd like to briefly discuss the future of the 90<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Association. Last year Colonel Ford noted in this same space that the consensus of the organization was to try to "attempt to get younger associate members to carry on." I'm pleased to tell you that to some extent that is happening. There are a handful of younger members who met during the Alexandria reunion and agreed that we wanted to help out in any way we could, but that we need a solid plan that recognizes three major trends:

1. The membership is aging, and sometime in the next 5-10 years, attendance will drop due to many being unable to travel to reunions
2. The budget will be depleted in 4 years at the currently proposed rate of subsidization (~\$5000/yr)
3. The members (veterans and widows) ability to plan and host events will decline over that period

In a perfect world, my retirement fund would be depleted the day before the Lord called me home. In the real world, I'm not sure when that will be, so I need to plan to have a margin. The Association needs to plan in the same way. That argues for spending money on reunions at a rate that will let the resources last as long as we can realistically expect to continue to meet.

At the Alexandria reunion, I got one message loud and clear...many members are passionate about wanting the reunions to continue. We are looking at ways to continue to offer the opportunity for the members to gather, to offer interesting venues that recognize our financial and physical limitations, and to relieve, as much as we can, the burden of planning and hosting the reunions.

We have a relatively ambitious plan for the next year. We will:

1. Verify addresses and continued interest of the membership, in order to reduce cost of continuing the newsletter
2. Offer an e-mail newsletter to those members who want it
3. Emphasize engagement with prospective associate members... sons, daughters, grandchildren, and those of us who are just encouraged and inspired by your example

4. Develop a list of options for the future of the Association
5. Conduct a mail-in referendum on the options so we know what the members want
6. Develop a two-year cycle for reunion site selection
7. Develop a process for selecting sites/hosts with emphasis on the younger members assisting the more mature members...try to get sons, daughters, grandchildren, and associates to do the hosting

You will see in future issues an address verification form, information about the options open to us, and a ballot for voting on those options. We will try to make the options and the forms as self-explanatory as possible. Please take the time to read and return these...only by making your voice heard can you ensure your wishes are reflected in the group decision.

We will, to some extent, be bringing modern management and communication techniques to bear in this effort. But you have my pledge that the intent is to best serve the interests of the members who really matter...the veterans and widows. To do that, we need to know what you want. I can be reached at:

Colonel Jeff Smith  
412 Brett Drive  
Wright-Patterson AFB OH 45433

My e-mail is [tintinkerouac@earthlink.net](mailto:tintinkerouac@earthlink.net). Please feel free to share you thoughts with me at any time. I look forward to hearing from you as we continue to keep alive the memory of the Best Damn Heavy Bombardment Group in the world!

#### NOTICE TO WIDOWS

Widows of veterans who served with the 90<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group must notify the Treasurer, Robert Tupa, of their wish to continue to receive the *Jolly Rogers* before January 1, 2009, or be dropped from the mailing list. Mr Tupa's telephone number, mail and e-mail addresses appear on the letterhead of this letter.

#### In Memory of Colonel Harry J. (Jack) Bullis

The 90<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group was activated in 1942 and the fourth squadron was the 10<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Squadron (H). The 10<sup>th</sup> was redesignated the 400<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron (H) and commanded by Captain Harry J. Bullis. Following training and deployment to Hawaii enroute to Australia, Captain Bullis was the only squadron commander to survive the command shakeup that replaced all the other squadron commanders with officers from the 7<sup>th</sup> Air Force. Upon arrival in Australia in November of 1942, Major Bullis participated in the Group's first bombing mission of shipping in the Buin-

Farsi anchorage of Bouganville accompanied by the Group Commander, Colonel Arthur W. Meehan.

Major Bullis also participated in the terrible November 16, 1942 mission to Rabaul joining Lt. John R. Wilson and his crew on Tear Ass (the Bull). The plane that followed them crashed on takeoff killing the crew and destroying several aircraft. Capt. Robert Holt was miraculously ejected and survived. Meanwhile Lt. Wilson and Major Bullis could not find Rabaul in the dark so they lingered until daybreak scoring hits on a



On 17 September 1943 at a ceremony in New Guinea, the Air Medal, the Silver Star and the Oak Leaf Cluster to the Silver Star were presented to Maj. Harry J. Bullis of Portland, Michigan, by Brig. General Roger Ramey. Major Bullis is Executive Officer of a Consolidated B-24 Liberator Unit known as the "Jolly Roger" Unit because of the large skull and crossed booms insignia painted on the tails of their planes.

large warship that also scored many hits on Tear Ass (the Bull). Colonel Meehan, 90<sup>th</sup> Commanding Officer, flew this mission with 1stLt. Wallace S. Sorensen and his crew accompanied by the 320<sup>th</sup> Squadron Commanding Officer Major Raymond S. Morse. They were lost and never located.

Major Bullis and several crews from the 400<sup>th</sup> Squadron were the first from the 90<sup>th</sup> on detached service at Fenton. On January 21, 1943, while flying from Fenton with Lt. Hatfield's crew, they located a Japanese cruiser at Ambon. While under attack by numerous Zeros they attacked and sank the cruiser for which Major Bullis and the rest of the crew were awarded the Silver Star.

On July 11, 1943, Art Rogers relieved Ralph Koons as Group Commander and Harry Bullis became the Deputy Group Commander. As Deputy Group Commander, Lt Col. Bullis led the October 25, 1943 raid on Rabaul. The 25 B-24s of the 90<sup>th</sup> were escorted by eight P-38s when they were attacked by 60 Japanese fighters. They succeeded in hitting the target, the Lakunai airdrome,

with Capt. Thomas Fetter as the lead bombardier. 25 of the 60 attacking fighters were destroyed.

In December 1943, Harry Bullis relieved Art Rogers as commanding officer and on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December moved the Group to Dobodura. Harry Bullis led the 90<sup>th</sup> until March 18, 1944. Frank Fosket described the 90<sup>th</sup> after the departure of Harry Bullis thus, "By the time Col. Bullis left the 90<sup>th</sup>, command of the Jolly Rogers had become a 'plum' much coveted by those who either sought promotion to full colonel or who wanted their records to reflect command of a first class combat outfit." Harry Bullis played a large part in making the 90<sup>th</sup> the first class combat unit that it was.

Harry Bullis was awarded the Silver Star three times along with the Distinguished Flying Cross in a career with the Army Air Corps and the Air Force which spanned 26 years. Harry J. (Jack) Bullis was born in Cape Town, South Africa and attended Michigan State University before joining the Air Corps in 1938. Harry Bullis passed away at his home on June 17, 2008. Contributed by Bob Tupa.

### Reconnaissance Mission and Squadron Chess Championship

On February 25, 1944, M-810 was flown on a reconnaissance mission to the Woleai Islands, 500 miles NW of Truk. The mission was piloted by 320<sup>th</sup> Squadron Commander Major Paul W. Gottke. The crew



on this flight was that of Lt. Carl H. Vineyard, Jr. who flew this mission as Gottke's copilot. S/Sgt Carl D. Camp recalled the flight in his memoirs noting that M-810 struggled off from Nadzab at 0400 hours loaded with 3700 gallons

of gasoline. They arrived over the Woleais at 1130 hours having traveled 1100 miles from Nadzab. Three runs were made over the islands allowing the

photographer to take photos that identified previously unknown installations. The mission covered over 2200 miles over fourteen and a half hours. On the return trip the squadron commander wrested the 320<sup>th</sup> Officers Chess Championship from Lt. Harrington Harlow in what was described as one masterful game according to the official mission report. Lt. Harlow was one of two navigators on board for the lengthy mission who reportedly used Russian naval charts dated 1828. Carl Camp notes that M-810 was never named however; Mitsu Butcher II has also been attributed to this plane. (Louis M. Nevola photo)

### OPPORTUNITIES

George Norton reports of an organization called Honor Flight which recognizes American veterans for their sacrifices and achievements by flying them to Washington, DC to see the World War II Memorial. George was recently selected. For further information, Honor Flight can be contacted at (937) 521-2400 or [www.honorflight.org](http://www.honorflight.org).

### BOOK

Mick Musumeci has finished his book on Iron Range titled "Iron Range Airbase - Carved in the Cape York Jungle" The book is an extensive and exhaustive historical book about the military history of Iron Range, Cape York Far North Queensland. The book contains over 40 veterans compelling stories, as well as 300 photos, many that have never been released. The book is one of the most in-depth, compelling Iron Range collections ever achieved. Collection includes extensive research, historical facts, recorded plane crashes, events and also a now and then section. A must for any military buff, or anyone interested in the military history of Far North Queensland. Mick now has a website for the book. [www.ironrangeairbase.com](http://www.ironrangeairbase.com) I got my copy of the book on ebay where he offers it regularly and can be found by searching 'iron range.'

### TAPS

*These buddies, wives, friends and comrades-in-arms  
forever remain heroes.*

**Harry J. Bullis**, passed away at his home on June 17, 2008. Bob Hanley, one of our trustees, was able to attend the funeral

T/SGT Andrew Acampora e-mailed us that his wife, **Dorothea Acampora**, passed away on July 21, 2008, after suffering from Parkinson's for the last few years. Dorothea may be remembered for gracing several reunions with her beautiful singing.

\***Wendell C. Fullerton**, 321<sup>st</sup> Squadron, died June 12, 2007.

\***Richard A. Murphy**, of Funk's crew, 319<sup>th</sup> Squadron, died June 7, 2007.

\***Robert L. Wehrell**, 319<sup>th</sup> Squadron, died February 16, 2007.

\***Tom E. Bryan**, 320<sup>th</sup> Squadron, Sas crew, died August 11, 1997.

\***William C. Hathaway**, 319<sup>th</sup> Squadron, Dickert crew, died July 14, 1997.

**Charles Hickey, Sr.**, tail gunner on Bowers' crew 320<sup>th</sup> Squadron, died May 19, 2008.

Marilyn Adams sent us an e-mail telling of the death of **Mary Fox**, widow of Bob Fox, co-pilot on the 320<sup>th</sup> Squadron, on April 2, 2008.

\***Charles P. Urbanec**, 320<sup>th</sup> Squadron armament, died February 28, 2008.

Col. Jack Thacker sent an obituary for **Fred L. "Lee" Wahl**, bombardier and navigator on the Del Fatti crew, 321<sup>st</sup> Squadron, who died May 3, 2008.

\***William A. Rothwell**, 90<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, died February 5, 2008.

\***Lansing Michaelis**, 319<sup>th</sup> Squadron on the Merrill crew, died October 29, 1996.

\***William Holifield Carter**, 319<sup>th</sup> Squadron, Hevener crew, died October 27, 1996.

\***George Lewis Marshall**, pilot in the 320<sup>th</sup> Squadron, died October 11, 2006, in San Antonio.

\***Clyde Leonidy Brown** died January 28, 2006. We have no further details.

Bob Handley called to tell us that **Richard G. Hoffman**, pilot in the 321<sup>st</sup> Squadron, died July 20, 2008.

Jan Conway Reeves sent us a note that her father, **Charles Cotter Conway**, died May 8, 2007. Charles was a pilot in the 319<sup>th</sup> Squadron.

**Howard O Bodine, Jr.**, pilot in the 400<sup>th</sup> Squadron, died December 31, 2007, according to an obituary sent to us by attorneys of his estate.

Mrs Violet Zwolanek sent us a note that her husband, **Theodore J. Zwolanek**, died February 29, 2008. He was in Headquarters.

\***John E. "Jack" Shepard**, Headquarters, died September 24, 2006.

\***Bruce E Reuteler**, navigator in the 319<sup>th</sup> Squadron, died February 25, 2007.

\***Jack A Walker**, Headquarters, died May 2, 2004.

\***Socrates C Roussos**, T/Sgt in the 400<sup>th</sup> Squadron, died October 5, 2004.

\***John B Hahn, Jr.**, 321<sup>st</sup> Squadron, died October 31, 2004. He was on the Hurst crew.

\***Leroy H Post**, 320<sup>th</sup> Squadron, Andrews crew, died August 8, 2004.

\***Edward Davis Rogers**, 400<sup>th</sup> Squadron,

Shaffer crew, died December 20, 2004.

\***Arland Reichard** of the 320<sup>th</sup> Squadron died November 29, 2004.

\***Olton Hoyt Harris**, S/Sgt in the 320<sup>th</sup> Squadron, died September 14, 2004.

\***Murry Pearl**, navigator on the Measells crew in the 319<sup>th</sup> Squadron, died October 30, 2004.

\***Edwin G Mills, Sr.**, who served on the Dingee crew in the 320<sup>th</sup> Squadron, died November 15, 2004.

\***Douglas W Wilson** died July 21, 2005. He was in the 321<sup>st</sup> Squadron.

**Hyman Ossoff**, in the 320<sup>th</sup> Squadron bombardier on Sheriff's crew, died March 2, 2008. Bob Simmons forwarded us a letter from Hyman's son, Richard

**Roy Brown**, in the 320<sup>th</sup> Squadron radio operator on Sheriff's crew, died January 24, 2008. Bob Simmons forwarded us a letter from Roy's wife, Judy.

Bob Simmons forwarded us a note from Ray Henderson that Ray's wife **Margy Henderson**, died June 25, 2008.

**Joseph M. Vorgang, Jr**, died on September 26, 2008. Joe was a crew chief in the 320<sup>th</sup> Squadron. His death was reported by John Sumner.

**W. Glen Coleman**, a pilot in the 321<sup>st</sup> Squadron, died on September 7, 2008.

Dave Sas notified us that his father, **Julius John Sas**, a pilot in the 321<sup>st</sup> Squadron, died on September 7, 2008.

Tom Carter, son of Lt. Col. **Raymond E Carter** reports that his father died 10/20/2008. Ray was a pilot in the 319<sup>th</sup> Squadron.

\* Contributed by Kenneth Sheats.

## NOTICES

**DUES: Year 2009 annual dues of \$10 are payable now.** The date shown on the line above your mailing address on this newsletter indicates when your membership expires. Make checks payable to 90<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Ass'n. Mail them to 90<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Ass'n., 273 Wellington Cutoff, Wellington, NV 89444.

**If the letter W, H, or L is in the line above your address you need not pay dues**, but we would appreciate your notifying us from time to time if you wish to continue receiving the newsletter.

**Those whose dues expired on 12/31/06 will not be receiving a copy of the newsletter after 12/31/08 unless they pay their arrears, \$30, before the end of this year.** However, the letter will be carried on John Barrett's web site at <http://jollyrogersweb.com>

If you receive the letter by Email, it will be followed by a paper copy later.

**DEADLINES:** Items for publication must be here in Nevada by the 15<sup>th</sup> of February, May or October in order to be included in that month's issue.