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*"The Mighty Eighth Reunion Group"*

**385TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP REUNION ASSOCIATION**

GREAT ASHFIELD - SUFFOLK, ENGLAND

STATION 155

# NEWSLETTER

Volume VII, No. 3

15 October 1977

Editor: John C. Ford

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**& REGISTERED ADDRESS**

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Charles C. Smith  
Arkey M. Huber

**1979 HOST**

Larry R. Russell

## ENGLAND IN THE SPRINGTIME - 1978

The pricing has been received for the trip to England. The air fare is \$287.00 roundtrip, in a Pan American World Airways, Inc., Boeing 707 departing from John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York. Departure will be on the evening of 17 May 1978, arriving at Heathrow London Airport at approximately 1100 hour on 18 May. The return flight will depart Heathrow on the morning of 5 June 1978, arriving at JFK International Airport in the late afternoon of the same day. The flight outbound to London will serve a snack, breakfast, and an open bar. The return flight will not have an open bar but a snack and dinner will be served. The basic land package of 12 nights in England at first class hotels will cost \$326.00. In addition, there are three Optional Tours commencing Thursday, 25 May 1978 to Wednesday, 31 May 1978. Those not wishing an optional tour are free to rent cars, buy BritRail Passes, or visit with friends during this same period. Some of our members have expressed a desire to travel around and do a "bed and breakfast" in many private homes in England, Scotland and Wales, or take a private trip to Ireland or the continent. All breakfasts on the basic tour will be continental style. The pricing of the land tours has been based on an exchange rate of \$1.72 to the English pound, which is the prevailing rate. The basic tour with airfare is \$613.00 per person for this outstanding tour opportunity. The increase in cost over our last tour are attributable to increased fuel prices, a 10 cent increase in the value of the pound, cost of living increases in our host country, plus costs of meals and dinner dance that were not included in the last trip. And those previously mentioned fuel cost increases affect our motor coaches and ships for the optional tours. Listed below are the costs for the optional tours. Full particulars are available in a printed brochure which is available by mailing a stamped, self-addressed envelope to John C. Ford, Travel Coordinator, 385th BGRA, 7204 Easy Street, Camp Springs, Maryland, 20031.

**OPTIONAL TOUR "A"** - Amsterdam, Brussels and Paris. \$252.00 per person based on sharing twin bedded room with private bath and continental breakfast for six nights, to include services and taxes, hotel baggage charges, the Canal Cruise of Amsterdam, the visit to the clog-makers and the sight-seeing tour of Paris, boat passage Felixstowe-Zeebrugge (or Europort) and Calais-Dover, the Belgian Entry Tax, the French Road Tax, the Motor Coach with an experienced driver and a Lunatic Courier who will accompany the tour throughout. Single room supplement in Europe is \$15.00 per night. (Total of \$90.00). Pair up or marry and save money.

### \$252

**OPTIONAL TOUR "B"** - Germany and Denmark. \$282.00 per person based on sharing twin bedded room with private bath and continental breakfast. Five (5) nights in first class hotel and one night in twin berthed cabin on Esjberg-Harwich sailing. Price includes all service and taxes, hotel baggage handling charges, a guided sight-seeing tour of Copenhagen, the visit to the Hans Christian Andersen Museum in Odense, ferry passage Felixstowe-Zeebrugge, Puttgarden-Rødbyhavn, Halskov-Knudshoved, and the Esjberg-Harwich overnight sailing on the evening of 30 May 1978. It also includes motor coaches, experienced drivers and luvable Couriers who will accompany your entire tour. Single room supplement is \$15.00 per night in hotels and \$25.00 for single cabin supplement. (\$100 total)

### \$282

**OPTIONAL TOUR "C"** - England and Scotland Tour. \$186.00 per person based on sharing twin bedded room with private bath for six nights in first class hotels. This includes full English style breakfast, service and taxes (V.A.T.), all hotel baggage fees, the guided sightseeing tours of Edinburgh and Stratford, entrance fees to Shakesperian properties and the Wedgewood Pottery, the visit to the Woollen Mill in Moffat, Motor Coach with experienced driver and a top-notch (but what in the ????) Courier. England single room supplement is \$8.00 per night. (Cont'd page 2)

### \$186

## England..... (Continued from Page 1)

This return visit has a novel idea as its main theme. The re-creation of a 100 Mission Party has never been attempted before by any Group, but the people of Great Ashfield and Suffolk County have volunteered to help make this venture a united effort. Mr. Rowley Miles, who owns about seventy-five (75) percent of the old Station 155, has offered his help despite the fact he is the Director of the Suffolk Agricultural Show which opens 31 May 1978. His appointment as Director entails all the responsibility of organizational details for the County Show and I am sure that many of us will be at the opening of that show to cheer him on. Rowley and his wife, Angela, are remembered by all of us who had the good fortune to make the last trip in 1976. They held a reception for us on the last remaining bit of runway at Great Ashfield and everyone had a grand time. This time, Mrs. Miles and other ladies of the area have volunteered to help set up a buffet luncheon in a large marquee tent, which will be erected on the same bit of runway. We will have power generators and a public address system. Music will be by Glenn Miller, Harry James, Tommy Dorsey, Artie Shaw, Charley Barnet, Count Basie, Bunnie Berigan, Duke Ellington, Ziggy Elman, Lionel Hampton, Erskine Hawkins, Earl "Fatha" Hines and Bennie Moten (all recordings), plus the songs of lovely Vera Lynn and Ann Shelton. Vera Lynn was "The Forces Sweetheart", not only of the English forces, but the American Forces as well! Who can forget her "Yours", "When the lights come on again, all over the world", "And so to sleep again", "Auf Wiederseh'n, sweetheart", and "Sincerely Yours". Her lilting tunes were a link with home and hearth, and together with Ann Shelton's "Three o'clock in the morning" and "Kiss of Fire", "Body and Soul", and "The Angels sing", these two English songbirds brought joy to many an 8th Army Air Force base. And the English orchestras will not be forgotten. Your Editor still has recordings of Victor Sylvester and Ambrose. What with the various booths that will be operated for the benefit of All Saints Church and the showing of the 385th BGRA Documentary film "Wings From The Past", it promises to be a day to remember. Our coaches and WW II vehicles will be making the rounds of the pubs in the surrounding villages during the afternoon and the villagers and members of THE FRIENDS OF THE EIGHTH (FOTE), will be our guests. Negotiations are also going on to have a wonderful guest of honor present with us that day. The date is Saturday, 20 May 1978. A Memorial Service will open the day at 1000 hours in All Saints Church. Our land tour operator for this trip is DAVID WADE LTD. David is once more giving up pressing business problems to be with us as a Courier and Confessor, while Keith Harris, Hugh Downie and Albert Coleman will also be with us to make every day livable. Two of our old drivers, Trevor and Vernon, also want to be with us. DON'T FORGET, THE BROCHURE AND APPLICATION IS YOURS FOR THE ASKING. DON'T WAIT, MAKE A DATE! RESERVE A SEAT AND ENJOY A TREAT. REMEMBER THOSE TRUE AND HAPPY WORDS - "OH, TO BE IN ENGLAND, NOW THAT SPRING IS HERE"!

## Remembrance Sunday

In England, 11 November is known as Remembrance Day, but services in connection with this day is deferred until the first Sunday following the 11th. This year services will be held on Remembrance Sunday, 13 November 1977. It is the practice at this service to read the names of the Parish's War Dead. This year, through the kind actions of the Pastor, The Reverend Christopher Leffler, and the Parish Board, Mr. Ian McLachlan, our Liaison with the FRIENDS OF THE EIGHTH (FOTE), will read a number of names from the 385th Bombardment Group Book of Remembrance which normally is centered on our Memorial Altar. This gesture by the people of All Saints Parish is a touching reminder of the closeness we have with that tiny village of Great Ashfield in Suffolk, England. As your President and Editor, may I urge that each and everyone of you attend the church of your choice on Sunday, November 13, 1977, and offer up a prayer for the repose of the souls of those gallant Suffolk servicemen and our own Buddies who paid the Supreme Sacrifice that we might live in peace. Their efforts were not in vain.

## BING - The Melody Man

by John Ford

Washington, D.C. 14 October 1977

The phone rang just a few minutes ago. It was my daughter Mary, who told me that Bing Crosby had dropped dead on a golf course in Spain. Despite the fact that it was the happiest place he could have chosen for the last curtain call, and despite the fact that we must all meet our Maker sometime, I feel that a little flame died out in me as well. My mind flashed back to a happy childhood in our lovely old buff brick home in Sheraden, a suburb of Pittsburgh, Pa. We were one of the few houses on our street with a Superhetrodyne radio and one of the few cities in the USA with a powerful radio station like KDKA. The Pirates had won the World Series from Washington and Graham McNamee had broadcast the games. That was 1925. That winter, I built my own cats whisker crystal set, but it was springtime before I perfected it. It was a family custom, that after dinner, we would gather in the wood paneled hallway to listen to the big horn that sat atop the Superhet radio. It was in the hall because in those days, one had to run an antenna all across the roof and the lead into the house entered into the hallway. Until 1927, the biggest enchantment was with "Amos and Andy" and a crooner named Russ Columbo, whose theme song was "I Surrender, Dear"! Then our listening pattern was changed. At 6:30 PM it was Russ Columbo, at 6:45 PM, a new voice came on the air singing, "When the Blue of the Night". This guy hit a chord with me immediately. At 7:00 PM came "Amos and Andy" and when this rib-tickler was over, I remember Mother saying, "Shut it off and get to your homework". No one argued with her decision, so off to my room I would go, get my crystal set out from under the mattress, make an antenna tap from my bedroom window and try searching out for that man with the "Bubba-Ba-Boo". In my own mind I thought I could sing like Bing and it was only many years later that I found out most American men had the same idea. How many dance partners suffered through my crooning in the ear, I'll never know, but suffer they did! As for imitating his whistle, my friends were spared from that malpractice by a missing front tooth that had been caressed by a well aimed knuckle. But all my life, Bing Crosby was my singer. His style, personality and lilting voice, made me a believer. In the early 1930's, I was to meet a young singer at Conneaut Lake Park, in Pennsylvania, whose voice and style were similar to Bing's. Many an hour was spent sitting near the band stand listening to this ex-barber from Canonsburg, Pa., Perry Como, a vocalist with Freddie Carolones orchestra. To this day, with what current still flows within me, they remain the two singers that "turn me on". It was not until early 1940 that I saw Bing Crosby in person. A chance to shake his hand and listen to him singing not fifteen feet away, sealed my life pact with this man of musical note. Even when he spoke, he seemed to be "crooning a tune". His singing and talking voice were musical and lilting. Above all politics, Bing really belonged to the world. It is fitting that he should die on the green grass of Spain. After all, it was by the generous pocketbook of Queen Isabella, that Christopher Columbus discovered this land we love; this land that gave the world Bing Crosby. It was also fitting that Bing should die with the echo of plaudits from a tremendous English audience still ringing in his ear, and a golf course on which to lay down. Somehow I know that Bing was in Heaven before the Devil knew he was dead, and in that Promised Land we dream of inheriting, tonight the Angels and the Saints are crooning and whistling a welcome to "Der Bingle". I wonder if Barry Fitzgerald is in the chorus? And I wonder if Saint Peter has his eyes on the Pearly Gates or his ears tuned in for Bing! Many servicemen had a special place in their hearts for this man who sang both verse and chorus with a diction easily understood. In this day and age when anything not worth saying is sung, Bing looms out as a giant among singing artists. Thanks to records and tapes, his sound will live on, but the money-changers will be out to exploit his songs for personal gain. I hope I don't get sick over the exploitation!

# Mini - Reunion.....

On the following page you will notice the new names to be added to our Roster. The vast majority of the names are there due to the outstanding effort of Don and Dallas Hale. Don took on the job of Chairman of the Mini-Reunion that was held in St. Louis, Missouri, from 7 to 9 October past, in conjunction with the 8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion. The job involved about six months of advertising, answering mail and rounding up "lost souls" of the 385th Bombardment Group. In addition, Don and Dallas hosted the 385th BGRA attendees, plus several visitors - among them Roger Freeman - in a 385th Hospitality Suite. The suite number was 155 and it was not by design. It was promptly dubbed Station 155 and the 385th was back in business. This Association and its members owe a debt of gratitude to Don and Dallas, not only for their gracious manners and hospitable treatment to visitors, but for their personal contribution of the suite, but also a personal check for the balance of contributions from the bar. Don rented a 16mm projector and our film, "Wings From The Past", seemed to be running all the time for members and many others in the 8th AFHS. Duane Gunderson, from Newsfoto Yearbooks, in San Angelo, Texas; publishers of our 385th BG History, was also among our guests and he thought the film was outstanding. The guest speaker for the 8th AFHS Reunion was our friend, Roger Freeman. This is the fourth occasion on which your Editor has had the opportunity to hear Roger speak, but with approximately 1100 guests in the huge Missouri Room of the Stouffer's Riverfront Towers Hotel in St. Louis, he was tremendous. His subject covered his boyhood days and escapades around American airfields in England, from the magnificent outbound aircraft to the sometimes tattered, badly shot up returning aircraft and badly wounded combat members. He spanned the era of dried up pubs (courtesy of the Yanks) to the much later researched tragedies of some 40,000-odd members of the 8th Air Force who were victims of the greatest air assault known to man. He spoke in terms of eloquent simplicity comparing those men with the passivists of today, who want peace "at any price" as long as they don't have to fight for it! It was my pleasure to be on my feet and cheering this hard working and dedicated man, joining with the others in that room as he was given a resounding ovation. I would venture to guess that Roger must have autographed at least 1000 books over the weekend - not just with a signature, but with a message to each individual. We rode to the airport together on Sunday afternoon and believe it or not, there were 8th Air Force members queuing up at the insurance counter and he again was signing books. All he asked in return was that we would autograph his son's book which contained a list of items each person was to answer. Among the 385th BGRA personnel attending the Reunion were Mr and Mrs David Framer, George Young, Mr and Mrs Robert W. Wilson, Mr and Mrs Floyd Reinken, Mr and Mrs Albert Detert, Mrs and Mrs James Hess, Mr and Mrs Henry Elliott, Rose Mary Bishard and Helen Creegan (Sisters of Frank Creegan, former 550th aerial photographer who died in the air crash with Captain John Hutchinson's crew), your Editor and the Host with the Most and the Hostess with even more - Don and Dallas Hale. The film was loaned to the 94th Bombardment Wing Memorial Association, to show at their bi-annual reunion in Kansas City the following week. It was greatly enjoyed by them.



Dallas and Don Hale with Rose and Dave Framer.



L to R: Coralie Wilson, Peggy and Jim Hess, Rear: Joe and Mrs. Swartwood and son Christopher, and Duane Gunderson.



Roger Freeman introduced as Guest Speaker



Roger cracks up at Awards presentation.



Dallas and Don Hale on return flight from England in September 1976.

# Roster Changes

The following new member addresses, changed or address corrections, are reproduced in alphabetical order to enable you to paste them into your present roster. A new roster is now in preparation.

## NEW MEMBERS:

Ailes, Curtis A.  
523 W. 11th St.  
Connersville, IN, 47331

Reinken, Floyd  
4368 Farrington Avenue  
Indianapolis, IN, 46201

Allison, Billy H.  
Rt 9, Box 236  
Valdosta, GA, 31601

Robinson, Charlie P.  
Route 1, Box 58  
Pattison, MS, 39144

Barham, Billy N  
P.O. Box 1082  
Tahoka, TX, 79373

Rosky, Otto V.  
P.O. Box 158  
Chrismen, TX, 77838

Bailey, Robert L.  
Gerrish Island  
Kittery Point, ME, 03905

Serva, Robert F.  
Sunset Drive  
Osage Beach, MO, 65065

Blake, Ross M.  
115 Virginia Ave  
O'Fallon, IL, 62269

Swartwood, Joseph  
927 S. Franklin Street  
Wilkes-Barre, PA, 18702

Bovier, Roger  
197 Washington St  
Haverhill, MA, 01830

Watzke, Jim Sr.  
8415 Edgewater Dr. SW  
Tacoma, WA, 98499

Brocker, Joseph D.  
27 Franklin Ave  
Sea Cliff, NY, 11579

Young, George W.  
2203 Westover Drive  
Panama City, FL, 23405

Brundage, Frank T. Jr.  
31 West Avenue  
Norwalk, CT, 06856

CHANGED ADDRESSES

Capp, John P.  
40 Citadel Road  
Morgantown, WV, 26505

Anderson, Totten J.  
3234-C, San Amadeo  
Laguna Hills, CA, 92653

Cohea, Howard  
1107 San Pedro, NE  
Albuquerque, NM, 87110

Bexfield, Frank W.  
Cochiti Lake, Box 171  
Pena Blanca, NM, 84071

Detert, Albert M  
1475 Bay Meadows Drive  
Florissant, MO, 63033

Bloomberg, Arthur H.  
P.O. Box 87  
Fryeburg, ME, 04037

Elliot, Henry P.  
901 Ireland Ave.  
Muskegon, MI, 49441

Coggiola, Lawrence L.  
P.O. Box 5151  
Bossier City, LA, 71111

Harter, Emmett A.  
108 Pralle Lane  
St. Charles, MO, 63301

Doron, Chester Jr.  
c/o 620 S. Birchleaf Dr.  
Anaheim, CA, 92804

Hill, John P.  
93 Bryan Avenue  
Amityville, LI, NY,  
11701

Heneghan, John  
300 Field Street  
Rochester, NY, 14620

Lough, Wayne L.  
24 Royal Crest  
New Braunfels, TX, 78130

Hill, Charles H. Jr.  
3-A Oxford Place  
Whiting, NJ, 08759

Martin, Earl Dean  
1016 S. 26th  
Fort Smith, AR, 72901

Johnson, A.R.  
c/o Paul A. Hudon  
P.O. Box 7470  
Est Hartford, CT, 06106

Oliver, Laurence E.  
2821 Shandon  
Midland, TX, 79701

Jones, Joe Frank Jr.  
610 Summit Drive  
Albany, GA, 31707

Price, Marvin H.  
8938 Swinton Avenue  
Sepulveda, CA, 91343

McKay, M/Sgt John J. Jr.  
Jer-Mar Manor, Apt 3F  
Route 9  
Barrington, NH, 03825

Rinkenberger, James  
P.O. Box 271  
Washington, IL, 61571

Shankle, Willard  
1619 Stone Meadow Rd.  
Milledgeville, GA, 31061

Cole, Samuel M.  
P.O. Box 206  
Barbourville, KY, 40906

Solometo, William F.  
3504 Vermont Avenue  
Elmira Hgts, NY, 14903

Flynn, George F.  
301 Main Street  
Frankfort, MI, 49635

## Obituaries

DR. J. ALLEN HOWELL  
1005 South Washington  
Wellington, KS, 67152

Dr. Howell joined the 385th in April 1944 and was assigned to activate the Dispensary at Eye, England. Following his recent death, Mrs. Howell donated his copy of the 385th Bombardment Group History to our Association with the stipulation it be given to a member not possessing a copy. The recipient of the book was Mr. George W. Young, 2203 Westover Drive, Panama City, Florida, 23405. The presentation was made to George by Don Hale, Chairman of the 385th BG Mini-Reunion recently held in conjunction with the 8th AFHS Reunion in St. Louis, MO.

MRS. RONNIE M. PETTENDER  
121 Home Park Road  
Venice, FL, 33595

Wife of John F. Pettenger, our Treasurer, Ronnie passed away early this summer. Long active with John in the Association's activities, she will be sorely missed by all who had the opportunity to know her.

REV. RICHARD M. BEAVANS  
1619 E. Street  
Bakersfield, CA, 93301

Dick passed away as the result of a heart attack suffered on 1 March 1977. He had been the Pastor of the Bakersfield Unity Church. His church associates state that he was a popular and well loved individual and his absence in Bakersfield creates a void in the parish activities.

MRS. MADELINE M. MESSENGER  
3405 Valley Brook Drive  
La Porte, TX, 77571

Beloved wife of Darl J. Messenger, pilot in 548th Bombardment Squadron, Madeline died recently after a lingering illness. It is strange that we understand death for the first time when he puts his hand upon one we love.

*One may live as a Conqueror, King, or Queen; but he or she must die a human being. The bed of death brings each human being to his or her individuality, to the intense contemplation of that deepest and most solemn of all relations - the relation between the Creature and his or her Creator. - Daniel Webster.*

## Autobiography Booklet

385th BGRA member Robert G. Harvey, 2027 Canal Drive, Kennewick, WA, 99336, began assembling a book of member autobiographies when we were flying back from England in September 1976. Each person on the plane wrote a short (one page) autobiography of himself and mailed Bob a picture made in the 1940 era, along with a recent photograph. When members saw the results of Bob's work at the Las Vegas Reunion, he was asked to compile the book with every members autobiography and pictures. Why not send your story and photographs to Bob at the above address? It will be a tremendous souvenir and a chance to see where we were and where we are - not as world-beaters, but as individuals. Do it now!

**REMEMBER - LESS THAN A TYPED PAGE, WITH ROOM FOR FOTO'S.**

## The McLachlan's in USA.....

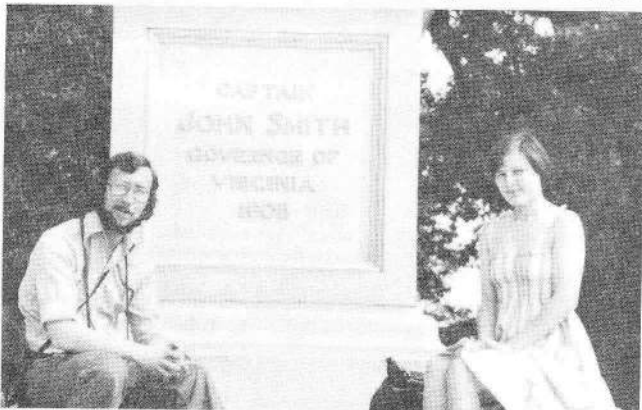
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Ian and Julie McLachlan arrived in Washington, DC, at 2045 hour on 17 September 1977. Not only are they our liaison with the "Friends of the Eighth (FOTE)", but they also are "adopted" members of the Ford family. The next morning they went to Andrews AFB where they saw Air Force One and Two on the flightline, as well as one of the AWAC aircraft stationed there. It was strange that with all the new and sleek aircraft, Ian was actually more happy checking around prop type aircraft. On Sunday, a visit was made to the Smithsonian Aircraft and Missile Rebuild Center in Silver Hill, Maryland, which is only a few miles from our home. There we saw an F-80, F-86, and many other aircraft - among them Paul Mantz's famous P-51 "Excalibur". There also, ready for rebuilding, is my old favorite, the "Sacred Cow". During that early morning visit, Ian met Larry Elman, an aviation history consultant from Panorama City, California, who is also the California Representative of the Bradley Air Museum, Bradley Field, CT. In his company, Ian and Julie took off for the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum - a place they would revisit. The next few days, Ian and Julie spent in the Air Archives in Suitland, where research was started on the Hamm mission of 22 April 1944. When I used the term "started" in the preceding sentence, I actually was trying to say "continued their research", since more than four years of research has already gone into this book project. Wednesday morning very early, we went on a Congressional visit to the White House.

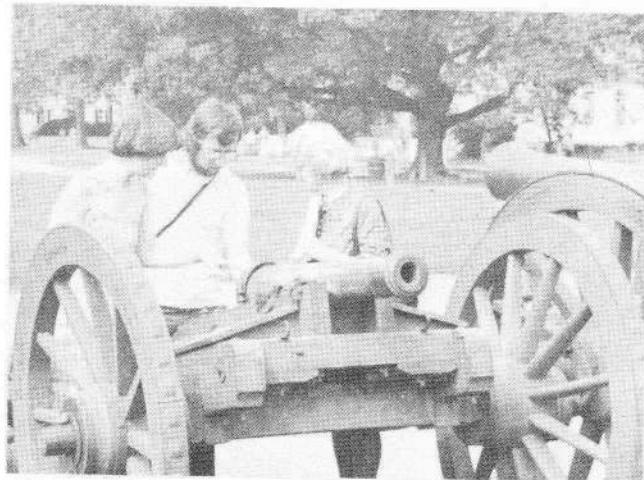


Julie and Ian outside White House entrance.

Thursday, 22 September, we travelled to Fredricksburg, Virginia, to meet my daughter and son-in-law, John and Dee Lavelle, where they took time out to examine a few large supermarkets. In the afternoon, we drove on to Hampton (which now includes Old Point Comfort, Fort Monroe and Newport News). We stayed overnight here after a fine dinner at Eli's Restaurant. The following morning, we took off for Williamsburg and the place where it all began - Jamestown.



A few times at Jamestown, I had the impression that Ian was about to begin excavating, but believe it or not, he suddenly was intrigued by a hawk, cricket and other insects that he had not seen before. In Williamsburg they probed every accesable area and enjoyed themselves thoroughly - except the Bubble Gum ice cream!!! Since my wife Betty is London born, I cannot help but add the caption below the photo. It was taken at the site of the old Powder Magazine on the Green west of the old Colonial Capitol.



They did it with stuff like this???????

On Sunday, we returned to Fredricksburg, Va., where Ian and Julie explored the Confederate Battlefields with Dee and John, remaining with them as overnight guests. At 0600 hour the next morning, they were awakened and returned to Washington, DC, with John and Dee - getting some idea of what early morning traffic is like in an Eastern city, and also how it feels to commute to work 120 miles daily. At 0900 hour, Ian and I went to the Air Force Photo Archives in Alexandria, near the Pentagon, while Julie went off with my daughters on a shopping spree at one of the largest shopping malls in the Washington area. From Tuesday to Friday morning, Mary join Ian and Julie in their research effort. In the afternoon, we left for Dayton, Ohio, to visit the Air Force Museum. Here we were joined by Ruel and Mary Weikert, who had driven in from Indianapolis, IN, and Ruel's brother Bob and his wife Gladys. Our Association Secretary, Earl L. Cole and his lovely wife Ruth took the long distance honors by driving about 450 miles from Barbourville, KY. After enjoying the usual conviviality of Ruel's portable bar, we had dinner at Wright-Patterson's fine "O" Club.



From center L to R: Mary and Ruel Weikert, Ruth and Earl Cole, Julie and Ian McLachlan, Gladys and Bob Weikert, and "me storm and strife", Betty Ford. The vacant seat belongs to the photographer.

Saturday, 1 October, was spent at the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson AFB, where many items donated by English clubs and by Ian are on display. The following photographs help describe the visit.



Ian and Julie look over an early model



The nylon chute on display was recovered from the aircraft of Captain John Hutchinson after 30 years in Reedham Marsh in England. One of the first of the nylon chutes, it remained intact, while all of the silk chutes had rotted. Ian was the project leader and donated the chute to the museum.

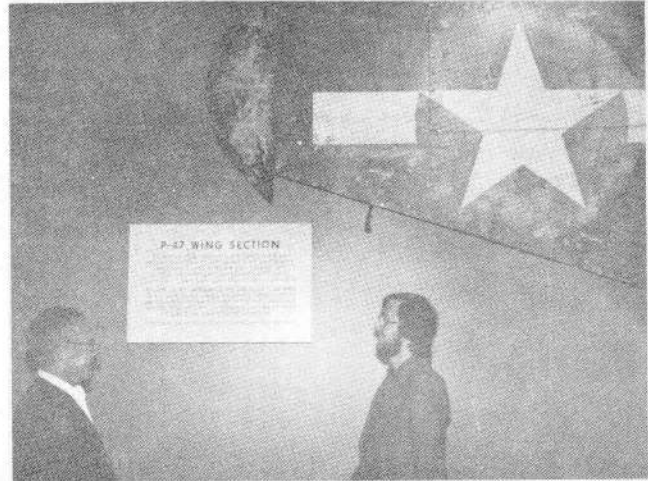


Ruth and Earl Cole read inscription

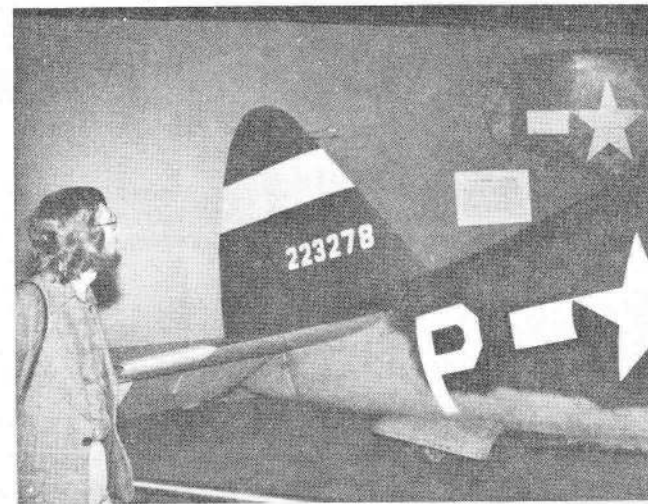
There are many fine visual and audio displays at the Museum, but none seem to have the spellbinding effect produced by the display of the Japanese Kami-kaze pilots in the Pacific during World War II, as seen in the following photograph of our group:



WOW!



Ian tells Earl Cole about hacksawing this P-47 wing panel from a submerged crashed aircraft. It took 4 hours a-sawing in cold water to salvage panel



Another view of same display looking over tail of assembled P-47. Donated to Museum by Sub Acqua Club, Cottishall RAF Station, England.

This Museum is filled with every bit of air memorabilia one could hope to find. Ruel Weikert found a Ryan PT 22 monoplane on display and he was enthusiastic as he explained some finer points as the following photograph depicts. There are excellent films, a great research library, good cafeteria, an outside display of missiles, B-70, B-50, etc. At the Museum Annex, there are many more World War II aircraft and other propeller driven aircraft which were developed after that war. It's worth the visit!

(Cont'd on page 7)



"and there I was..", says Ruel to Ian McLachlan

On Monday morning, 3 October, Ian and Julie flew to Chicago from Dayton and returned to Washington on Tuesday. Ian resumed his research efforts at the USAF Historical Office in the Forrestal Building and the Archives in Suitland, MD. My daughter Mary again joined in the effort. By Friday, the two travellers were about ready for a return. Watching them pack was something else. Our daughters, their husbands and our grandchildren joined us for an early Thanksgiving turkey dinner and it was really a family bon voyage party. They departed for home about 0100 hour on 8 October. They had to get a rest. They were moving into a new home on October 14th in Windsor - and nothing had been packed when they left Slough three weeks before.

**AFTER-THOUGHTS:**

It does one good to look at his own country through the eyes of a stranger to this land. Small things we take for granted, loom large in the eyes of the strangers. The size of America amazes them, and we are sometimes wont to say, "Everything is bigger and better, to which they promptly reply, "Perhaps bigger would suffice". The house is very quiet again and I do not go out as much, but the mail box holds a bundle of incoming letters, and it's time to go back to work for the 385th BGRA. -0-

**Tee Shirts....**

It has been brought to our attention many times since the reunion at Las Vegas, Nevada, that persons who ordered Tee shirts with the Squadron and Group insignia imprinted thereon, have never received them and have not had a reply to queries. Since this writer has also been one of those who paid for four Tee shirts and not received them, it is requested that you write to Mr. Arkey Huber, P.O. Box 3842, No. Las Vegas, NV, 89030, and request information on why delivery has not been made. Send a copy of you inquiry to John C. Ford, 7204 Easy Street, Camp Springs, MD, 20031. The money for these shirts did not accrue to the Association Treasury, but since they were sold at our Reception Counter, the Board of Directors has a sense of responsibility to make sure the contracts are honored.

**HELP!**

One of our members was injured on a cement-mixing detail in August 1943 and is looking for other persons who may have been on the work detail with him. Their statements mean a great deal to this member, who is trying to establish his claim with the Veterans Administration. His records were destroyed in the fire at the St. Louis Records Center, and any help, information, or affidavit that you can supply will be deeply appreciated. Send replies direct to Anthony (Tony) Kosierowski, 26 Skidmore Street, Hudson, Pa., 18705. Tony was an aerial photographer-gunner with the 385th BG.

(DON'T FORGET REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 1977)

**Fading of the Green....**

Every year about this time in the Washington area, Mother Nature unleashes one of her wonders and all the deciduous trees overnight seem to lose their green and are robed in a plethora of colors not reproducible by man. It comes in a remarkable patchwork and quilting, and runs the gamut of the color spectrum from the flaming reds to the gorgeous rusts and deep purples. Through this magic, we know that Mother Nature is telling us that soon the grass will be an off green and the trees will be bare. It tells us that when winter is here that spring is not far behind. The above magic change also befalls our Treasury. Here at the end of a calendar year, the treasure chest is getting bare. With that in mind, I'll spare you further malarkey and remind you that your annual dues of \$5.00 are now due and payable for 1978. We have donated our 1977 gift of \$500.00 to All Saints Church in Great Ashfield, Suffolk, England, and the printing and mailing of the Newsletter, plus the equipment rental and maintenance service agreements will soon be coming due. We have enjoyed a high number of paying members and we assume there are some unable to pay. Once we get a members name, we do not drop him from the mailing list. It is only through the outstanding generosity of some of our members that we are able to carry out this policy. Your dues and/or contributions are tax deductible, and are, we hope, worthwhile. Our latest gift to the All Saints Church was made possible by the generous action of four couples who donated \$100 each, specifically earmarked for the church. Your President is looking for some more couples willing to refill the Church Fund for our 1978 gift which will be hand carried in May 1978. Anyone of you that wants to put a spring in my step and a tingle in my heart, place some GREEN STUFF in an envelope and mail it to our Treasurer, John F. Pettenger, 121 Home Park Road, Venice, FL, 33595. Make out your check now before you blame your delinquency on Christmas. KEEP US OPERATING. CREDIT CARDS JUST WON'T HACK IT!

**ENGLAND ADDENDA...**

Some additional words on the England trip. Dave Wade did his best to get back to the Piccadilly Hotel, but the Stuttgart Ballet Company had taken over the entire hotel at the time we wanted it. He took every ethical step possible (bribery, corruption - all the usual stuff) but to no avail. Keith Harris suggested dressing us in tights, teaching us a few words of German (Lowenbrau, Holsten, Kronenbourg, etc.,) and signing us in as Frau and Herr Ford, but I suspect it would not work. We will be staying at the Cunard International in Hammersmith. While it is out of the city center, all means of transportation is available, and it is a top rated hotel.

A few changes are also to be noted in the brochure of our itinerary. On page 2, in the pricing paragraph, on line 7, substitute a dinner dance at the Orwell House, Felixstowe, in place of a dinner at Cambridge. and, although it is not mentioned in the brochure, there will be chances for making a brass rubbing. Some members wish that notice be made that the dinner dance will be informal. Women may wear the dress of their choice and all men are expected to wear a shirt and necktie, with suit or appropriate slacks and sports jacket.

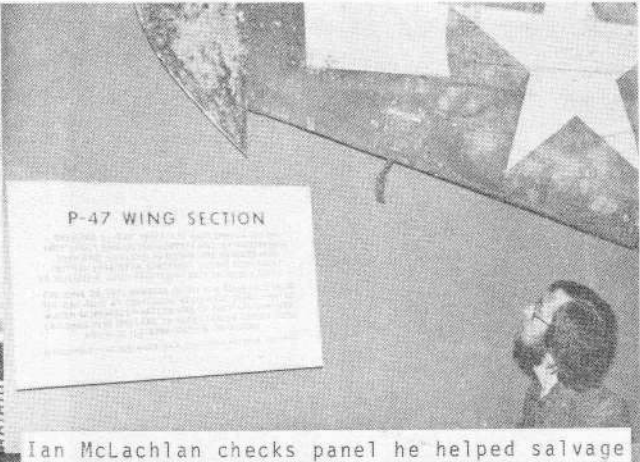
If you wish tickets for the theatre in Stratford-Upon-Avon, it is requested that you order such tickets as far in advance as possible, with a minimum ticket deposit of \$10.00 per person. This is applicable to those taking the England - Scotland Tour ("C"). If you have further queries, drop a post card to your Travel Coordinator, John Ford.

**Film for Loan....**

The President of the 385th BGRA has authorized the expenditure of \$175.00 for an Association copy of the Film "Wings From The Past". This film is record of the 385th BGRA Memorial Trip to England in September 1976. If you desire to show this film to a local club or clubs, write to John F. Pettenger, Treasurer, 121 Home Park Road, Venice, FL, 33595, who will verify your active membership and schedule your request. He will advise you of mailing cost, to include insurance, when he schedules your request. Allow time!!



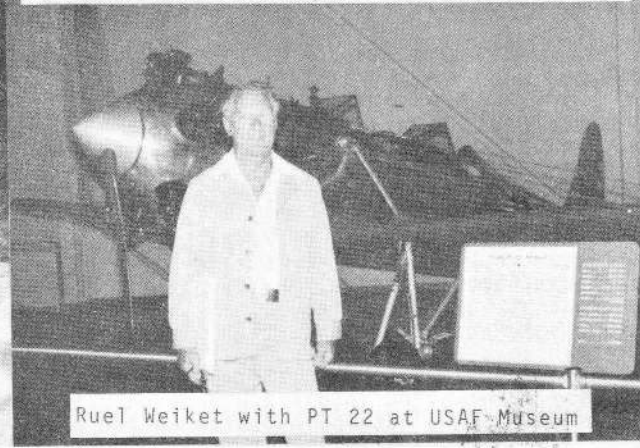
Betty Ford at USAF Museum



Ian McLachlan checks panel he helped salvage



Freeman Autograph Seekers



Ruel Weiket with PT 22 at USAF Museum

**385<sup>TH</sup> B GRA**

JOHN C. FORD, President  
7204 Easy Street  
Camp Springs, MD, 20031



Surrender at Saratoga 1777 by Trumbull  
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