

# 92nd Bombardment Group NEWS

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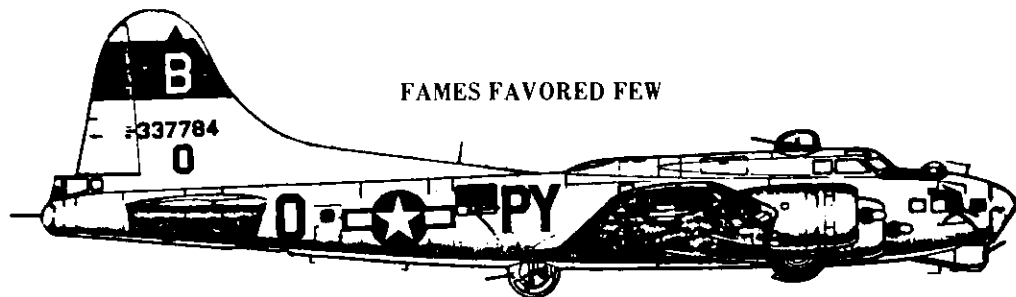
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FAMES FAVORED FEW

VOL. VII

LETTER 3

SEPTEMBER 1982

## GROUND POUNDER

by (S/Sgt.) Jim Jackson  
*Continued From June Issue*

Dutch Eden was a prize fighter before the war. He used to regale us with stories of the huge crowds he drew every time he fought. He was honest enough to admit that they hated him and everyone in the audience was hoping he would get his head knocked off. Lt. McGruder seemed to have a 6th sense about Dutch. Every time Dutch sat down, Mac would let out a roar from three offices away that would put him back on his feet again.

Eventually, Lt. McGruder made Major and took over command of the Gunnery Range near Snetisham, on the east coast of England. — To digress: along about 1954 I arrived at La Guardia Airport in New York about 5 p.m. on a Friday afternoon. La Guardia, at 5 p.m., is a real ant hill. As I rushed through the terminal, I ran smack dab into Dr. John McGruder of the Atomic Energy Commission. He was rushing to catch a plane to Washington so we could not talk, but it sure is a small world.

The chow at Bovingdon was "memorable". We ground pounders always had the suspicion that the officers had stolen our original cooks (who were pretty good) and had given us a bunch of motor pool mechanics. They would mix up about 5 gallons of powdered eggs, put it in an aluminum pan on the stove and scrape it loose as it set. The result was a yellow mass with green stripes through it that they called scrambled eggs. Of course, not all the problems could be blamed on the cooks. Here we are 40 years later and I still don't like mutton or brussel sprouts. These seemed to be the staples of the reverse-lend-lease food the British gave us. Thank God for Houses of Parliament Sauce! Another problem was the habit of the Reception Center of shipping a bunch of new students on the night before a holiday. The poor mess officer would have a lot more people than he planned the Turkey for. It was cold bologna again for the instructors.

The Chiltern Hills, in which Bovingdon was located, is a beautiful area. I seldom went into Hemel Hempstead. My stomping ground was Amersham, on the far side of Chesham, in the opposite direction. There was an obvious reason for this. About a month after I arrived in Bovingdon, I met a girl in a Pub in Chesham. I walked her home, not realizing she lived in Amersham and that Amersham is up hill — all the way. I later met her parents and they adopted me. When you are adopted by a family with three daughters and the mother is a barmaid in a local Pub, you don't ask why. You just enjoy! They were great to me and they treated me like one of the family. We used to go down to the Pub and keep Mom company. Every time the boss wasn't looking Mom would sneak a shot of whiskey into my

beer. The only thing that really used to get to me was Mom's late evening snack. She liked to cut up some cheese on a plate, pour some vinegar on it and melt it under the broiler. Have you ever smelled broiled vinegar after drinking all evening?

Chesham was a pretty little town in the valley of the river Chess. Remember that nice grandmotherly Ma White who ran the Pub on the Broadway? She would short change you every time, if you didn't watch her. There was another Pub down the street towards Amersham for which I can't recall the name. Several of us almost got into trouble there one night. We had had several rounds of Mild & Bitter and someone was going to buy another round. One of the fellows said that he had enough and turned his glass upside down to indicate no more. Well, it seems that, in England, turning the glass upside down means that you think the Pub owner serves lousy drinks! When the owner saw that glass, he was ready to fight. We finally placated him but he was still angry.

One Chesham resident who most of the Americans knew was Charlie Catlin, the owner of the local taxi service. The London Transport busses stopped running at about 9:30 p.m. and, if you missed it, it was about a 6 mile hike back to camp. Even if you made the bus, it was over a mile back to camp from the end of the line at the pub on the heath. Every night the GI's would go over to Charlie's garage and, when they got enough for a load, Charlie would run them out right to the living sites. It wasn't cheap but it sure beat walking.

One night there had been a freezing rain and it was hard to walk, let alone drive. You had to leave Chesham by turning up a hill just beyond the bakery on the high street. Charlie tried but it was just too slippery. One of the GI's, who was a bit "in his cups," told Charlie he was Chicken S. . . and only interested in cheating the Americans. Charlie got so mad that he not only didn't run that night, he didn't run the next night either! Luckily he relented and was back at his same old stand a couple of nights later.

The one ubiquitous mode of transportation in England was the reverse-lend-lease English bicycle. If you couldn't ride a bike when you got to England, you soon learned. The normal ground pounder peddled his GI issue charger about 200 miles a month. I know that, one Christmas season, I rode mine 250 miles in ten days just going to see my Irish girl friend. I still remember Col. Sutton riding his bike all over the base. He never seemed to use his staff car.

*continued on page 2*

## Ground Pounder *continued from page 1*

The GI issue bike was a docile steed most of the time, but it could become wickedly perverse after an evening in a Pub. There was a short cut which bypassed Chesham coming home from Amersham. The road left Amersham-on-the-Hill and went straight toward camp down a long hill. The trouble was that there was a sharp right angle turn at the bottom of the hill! Those who got their courage from too many pints of mild and bitter were always trying to make it down that hill with no brakes. Some claim they made it but, you couldn't prove it by me.

The first New Year's Eve, that I spent in England, I volunteered for Orderly Room duty. My English family had decided to celebrate on the weekend so it was no hardship for me. About 11 p.m., I heard a lot of noise outside of the Orderly Room. I looked out and there sat Sgt. Ignatz in the middle of a large muddy puddle in full Class A uniform, including his overcoat. He had safely maneuvered his "drunken" bike all the way home and then lost his balance as he dismounted. He was so mad, he just sat there slapping the puddle with both hands, and the mud was flying in all directions.

Not all accidents happened to drunks. Benny Hines was coming back from the heath one afternoon and met disaster. There was a narrow little valley between camp and the heath. It was common procedure to gain as much speed as possible going down hill so you did not have to walk the bike as far on the uphill side. Benny was really peddling away on the downhill when his front wheel folded up. He went over the handle bars and landed on his elbows and knees, going downhill on a gravel road! His friends had to feed him and go to the latrine with him for a couple of weeks.

Did any of you guys ever try to "draft" an English bus? One of our RAF friends told us how they used to go to the beach (60 miles) in peace time by getting behind an express bus and being pulled along by the vacuum. It works! As a matter of fact, you have to keep touching your brakes to keep from hitting him. The thrill(?) of doing 25 or 30 miles per hour, within 3 or 4 feet of the rear end of a London Transport bus, during a blackout is a white knuckle experience that I will never forget.

It never did get real cold in England but, it did get down into the teens and twenties for short periods. This always caused problems with the bikes because the ratchet mechanism in the rear wheel would freeze up. Everyone would park their bikes leaning against the wall of the barracks at night. I often wished that I had a camera on any cold morning when everyone, instead of heading for the latrine, would unload their reprocessed beer on the rear sprocket of their bikes to thaw them out.

In the summer of 1945, I finally managed to wrangle a transfer to a combat outfit. I was shipped to the 95th (an outfit that many of you must remember) as a replacement gunner but, that didn't last long and I finished the war, as I began, as a "Ground Pounder".

## PICTURE IDENTIFICATIONS

### Picture C, March 1982, Page 5

1) Jack Sarasqueta, 2) Nicholas Wik (Pilot), 3) Leroy Kirkpatrick, 4) Ralph Andler, 5) Wayne Troyer, 6) Robert Wright, 7) Robert Wangen, 8) C. Huff, 9) Beauford Hamilton and 10) Luther Dove.

### Picture F, March 1982, Page 5

1) Kozorra (Bombardier), 2) Mattows (Navigator), 3) Kirkbride (Pilot), 4) Mertes (Co-Pilot), 5) Lichty (Radio), 6) Bosworth (Waist Gunner), 7) Wilson (Ball Turret), 8) Morgan (Tail Gunner) and 9) Winters (Engineer).

**Note:** Wilson was killed by flak over Hanover, November 26, 1944, Kirkbride was killed in a jet flame out in the Reserves, and Morgan died of a heart attack.

### Middle Right Picture, March 1981, Page 4

3) George Jackson (Bombardier), 4) Bob Klein (Co Pilot) and 6) Howard Eaton (Navigator).

### Picture F, Lower Right, September 1981, Page 5

1) 2nd Lt. Russell J. Bundesen (Pilot), 2) 2nd Lt. William R. Lambert (Co Pilot), 3) 2nd Lt. Henry G. Vicars (Navigator), 4) F/O Howard E. Gollay (Bombardier), 5) M/Sgt. Kenneth Garver (Engineer), 6) Sgt. Arvo O. Wallila (Ball Turret), 7) Cpl. Edward R. Snapp (Tail Gunner), 8) S/Sgt. Leonard D. Kennedy (Radio) and 9) Sgt. Donald F. Nelling (Waist Gunner).

2ND LT. WILLIAM R. LAMBERT completed tour as first pilot. Current Address: Wm. R. Lambert  
5566 Beechnut  
Houston, TX 77035

2ND LT. HENRY G. VICARS was being checked out as a lead navigator on 1st Lt. Howard C. Donlon's plane. See page 178 "ROUTE AS BRIEFED".

F/O HOWARD E. GOLLAY finished tour with different crews as a Toggelier.

S/SGT. LEONARD D. KENNEDY - See page 178 "ROUTE AS BRIEFED".

2ND LT. RUSSELL J. BUNDESEN, M/SGT. KENNETH GARVER, SGT. ARVO O. WALLILA, CPL. EDWARD R. SNAPP, SGT. DONALD F. NELLING completed 35 missions on February 3, 1945. See page 254 "ROUTE AS BRIEFED".

We ferried B17 G #4337790 thru Bangor Maine, Labrador direct to an alternate field near Nuts Corners, Ireland on June 19, 1944. The next day we flew on to Nuts Corners. Our first Mission was July 11, 1944. Completed 35 missions on February 3, 1945.

Russell J. Bundesen

## NOTICES

This edition was put to bed early due to the reunion scheduled at our normal publication date. The reunion will be reported in full in the December issue.

Several members have written regarding non-receipt of tie-tacs and the "Route as Briefed". The complaints were registered six and eight months after the items should have been received. Any member who orders items from the secretary and who does not receive their order within three (3) weeks should inquire so that a replacement item can be furnished. We have lost a minimum in the mails.

Only one hundred (100) copies of "The Route as Briefed" are in stock. Our book is carried by the following bookshops: The Battery Press, Nashville, TN; The Beachcomber Bookshop, Tucson, AZ; East Anglia Books, Station Road, Elsenham, Bishops Stortford, Herts CM22 6LG.

We still are in need of narratives (war stories) and photos. Also if anyone has additional identifications on photos already published notify the secretary so the archives can be updated.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### FRANK BOOKE (NY)

The "Forgotten Diary" of Kenneth E. Booke is scheduled to be published sometime around the end of the year.

I am enclosing the information from the publisher, thinking that you might want to pass the information on to the readers of 92nd Bombardment Group Newsletter.

The diary of my father is supposed to be printed in full, and all the other diaries sound very interesting. It should be an interesting book.

### Comment:

The story of this diary was written up in our July 1980 and June 1981 newsletters. The book containing 24 WWII diaries