



# "Jungle" Air Force Newsletter

News and Information for Members of the 13th Air Force Veterans Association  
**JANUARY 2008**

## 2007 Reunion – In Beautiful Tulsa, OK

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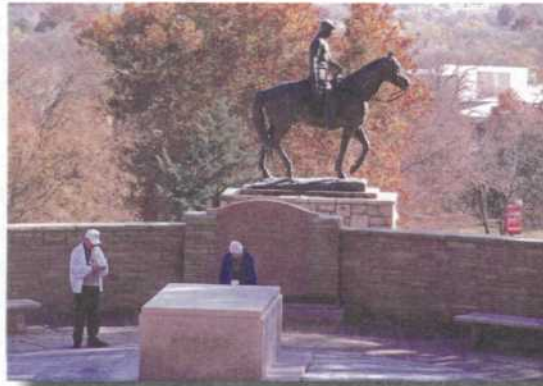
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Outside at the Will Rogers  
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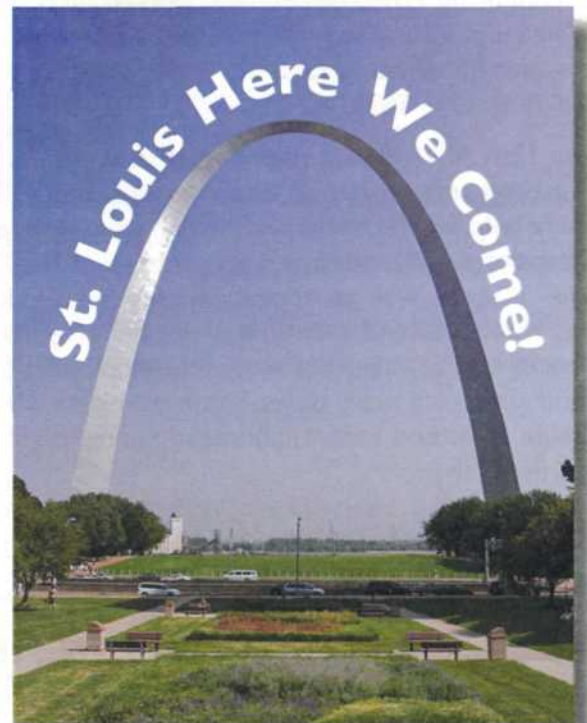
Enjoying ice cream at the  
Riverwalk in Tulsa

## And The Winner Is... St. Louis, Missouri

After careful thought and consideration, a decision has been made on the location for our 2008 reunion. St. Louis, Missouri, an exciting city, we will have some new fun-filled events and also freebies, so be sure to sign up. Our next newsletter will include more information on this wonderful location.

As you are reading through this newsletter please take note that the centerfold page (pgs. 9-12), can be easily removed so as to decorate your refrigerator with some friendly faces. It could be YOUR photo in the centerfold of the next issue... who knows!

A Reunion registration form will also be included in our next issue, so you will want to keep up on your membership dues... because dues keep the news!



**!! No Dues - No News !!**



## From the Past President, Cliff Johnson

Thanks to the incredible work and efforts of so many including Ray Perkins, Bob O'Brien, Sully Sullivan, BC Pipes, Len Daniels, Eric Russ, Lucien Doyle plus many, many others, the 2007 13th AFVA Reunion was an unqualified super success. Furthermore, the experience at The Freedom Elementary School in Sapulpa, OK, was wonderfully magnificent. That remarkable program recognized veterans of all ages and armed services. Tears of remembrance and appreciation were often evident.

Ray did yoemen's work in caring for the myriads of details involved which resulted in such a successful reunion. Arrangements at the Holiday Inn Select Hotel accommodation were suitable and comfortable. The bus tour of Tulsa and the bus service in general was just as it should be. The Commemorative Air Force fly-overs, the World War II plane exhibits, and the Saturday Evening Banquet and Dance were fitting and encouraging tributes. The Ladie's Luncheon and the News Channel Eight television personality speaker, Carol Lambert, were well received. Ray helped so much in containing costs helping the organization maintain its financial future. Pam Johnson helped so much in the preparation of name tags, the registrants list, and the program summaries.

The 13th AFVA Board members also were so helpful in making certain that all would go well. Bob O'Brien's ready help when checks and advice were needed was exceptional. Lucien Doyle's preparation of the "Thank You" plaques was as appropriate as ever. Eric Russ was able to attend even in view of his busy schedule. And, of course, many spouses and friends offered their good assistance many times. Some members who were unable to attend even encouraged family members to represent them.

We do recognize that reunion attendance has decreased, but we were encouraged that the overall official attendance in Tulsa was 70. Further encouragement occurred when we asked at the Friday Evening Banquet if any present were over 90 years of age. Three veterans stood, one being 92. The rumor was that there was one more, but that he didn't stand. Apparently we still attend these reunions even if we are, shall we say, a bit older.

The Friday Evening Banquet which featured Major General Loren Reno from Tinker Air Force Base was one of those good times when a good speaker followed by a group of slightly older folks, the Kitchen Katz Band, made the evening great. General Reno surprised us by touring the banquet tables, introducing himself and becoming better acquainted with us. It was also good to meet his wife, Karen, who we honored for her faithfulness as an Air Force wife as well as considering how many times Air Force families move. General Reno also presented a letter he received from Lieutenant General Lloyd S. "Chip" Utterback, Commander of the Thirteenth Air Force now at Hickam Field, Hawaii.

We now look forward to future reunions, the next one is under President Sully's care. Several suitable locations have been discussed including St. Louis and others which tend to be located in the North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee quadrant. BC Pipes, President-Elect 2009, has indicated he is thinking about a location in Texas. The dates of the next reunions are also under study. But thinking seems to be September or October. In Tulsa we did find some advantage in being near Veteran's Day, but there are concerns about weather.

Once again, thanks to all – Cliff

### HELP SOUGHT IN FINDING PLAQUE TO WWII HERO

The Oregon State Police are asking for the public's help in recovering a bronze plaque that honors World War II pilot Rex T. Barber, credited with shooting down the commander of the Japanese navy. The plaque, valued at \$1,800, was at the Peter Skene Ogden State Scenic viewpoint, where US-97 crosses the Crooked River. It measures about 3 feet by 3 feet and was mortared and glued to the site. Metal recyclers especially are asked to be on the lookout. Barber was born in Culver and died in 2001 at 84. His war record includes credit for shooting down Adm. Isoroku Yamamoto, architect of the Pearl Harbor attack.

## From Your President

### Christmas 2007

We have just celebrated the most wonderful blessing that has ever been the lot of mankind to receive. We have also in this year come together to celebrate with old and new friends in Tulsa.

There, we shared memories and paid tribute to those who were so much a part of our lives some sixty-four years ago in places that to most of us were unknown and only by HIS Grace are we able to come together at special times to enjoy our blessings. Let us take a moment to give HIM thanks.

Now, at this time we look forward to 2008 and what will be our lot. First we should acknowledge those who helped to make our Reunion in Tulsa the success that it was.

Ray Perkins gets the raves for his outstanding work in bringing to fulfillment the events that we enjoyed. Who can ever forget the feeling when we filed off the bus at the CAF hangar to pass under the arch of swords that were raised in our honor by that exceptional group of young cadets. WOW!

We salute our president, Cliff Johnson, for his leadership and certainly acknowledge the able assistance of his wife, Pam, and to all others that played a part. Thank you all for being there to help, and yes you did help, just by being there.

We want to extend to those who were unable to be with us regrets, we did miss you.

At this time many of you are aware that St. Louis, MO has been chosen for our 2008 Reunion and while the exact date has not been determined rest assured that this and other events are being carefully considered by three very dedicated members. Dave Yates has undertaken this task along with Charles Kemp and Phil Dyer to assist.

I believe you will find that we have made a good choice and with your support, how can we fail.

Wishing each of you and yours a great New Year.

Sincerely,

Sully (H. Thomas Sullivan)

## From Your Editor

Well folks... let me say thank you for all the prayers, cards, phone calls and letters sent to me while I was in the hospital (many hospitals). Thank you also for helping Betty through some mighty rough times. I am still fighting to walk without a wheelchair or walker, will do it someday!

Members ok'd me for the task of editing newsletter. Let me say this folks, it sure is a lot harder now than it used to be! Cliff and Pam sure did a great job of getting the newsletter out. They were in charge of the Oklahoma reunion, and it was great, they are full of vim and vigor.

Sully, our leader for 2008, will show us the way so don't be afraid, don't forget to volunteer to help and send him some of your ideas and suggestions. Many new events and things to do in St. Louis this year. I will give

you one tip and that's all. To our riverboat cruise down the Mississippi, complete with music and full course banquet meal.

The date of the reunion, cost of room, where we are staying and hot news will be in the next newsletter don't miss it – pay your dues!

Thank you – Phil & Betty

P.S. We sure could use new jokes, articles and so forth, remember this is your newsletter not mine!

*Thank all you members once again!*

**Pay your dues, or else the mafia will get you. —**



## **13th AFVA Business Meeting Summary**

A summary of the actions taken at the 13th AFVA Association business meeting November 9, 2007.

**Officers elected for 2008 were:**

President .....	“Sully” Sullivan
President Elect 2009 .....	BC Pipes
President Elect 2010 .....	Robert O’Brien
Past President .....	Cliff Johnson
Treasurer .....	Robert O’Brien
Secretary .....	Len Daniels
Newsletter Editor.....	Phil Dyer
Reunion Chairman .....	Vacant
Membership and Chaplain .....	Eric Russ
Awards Chairman.....	Lucian Doyle

■ Action was taken to reimburse the 13th AFVA Accountant, Eileen Luck, at the rate of \$400 per quarter for a total of \$1600 annually. She had not received any increase for years.

■ In regards to the site for the 2008 reunion, Sully indicated that he was open to suggestions and had been studying locations in the North Carolina and Tennessee areas. BC mentioned that Galveston, Texas had possibilities for the 2009 reunion.

■ Treasurer Bob O’Brien summarized the income and expenses for the Tulsa Reunion and indicated that the general fund balance would be at least \$13,000 when all reunion bills were paid.

■ Dave Yates indicated that a website was being developed, termed the “Snooper Project.”

■ Comments about the reunion and hotel facilities were requested.

■ Appreciations and thanks to the many who helped make the reunion a success were presented.

### ***And then their was laughter....***

“The only time you have too much fuel is when you’re on fire.”

Blue water Navy truism: “There are more planes in the ocean than submarines in the sky.”  
From an old carrier sailor

“If the wings are traveling faster than the fuselage, it’s probably a helicopter and therefore, unsafe.”

“When one engine fails on a twin-engine airplane you always have enough power left to get you to the scene of the crash.”

“Without ammunition... The USAF would be just another expensive flying club.”



## 13th "Jungle" Air Force Heritage Squadron "The Guardians"

The 13th Jungle Air Force Heritage Squadron, "The Guardians", is a not for profit organization organized under their parent organization, the 13th Air Force Veterans Association. They were established at the 2007 Reunion of the 13th Air Force Veterans in Tulsa, OK, 7-11 November 2007. The first Commander is Eric L. Russ, who is the current Chaplain and membership manager of the 13th AFVA and is the proud son of the late ASA McDonald Russ, Jr. of HQ Squadron, XIII Fighter Command. The Executive officer (XO) is Ms. Lenore Daniels, the proud daughter of Len Daniels, who is the current Recording Secretary of the 13th AFVA and was with HQ Squadron, 13th AF Service Command. There will be other positions filled as we work out the particulars of those positions.

Eric Russ has the idea of starting an organization that was similar to what The Heritage League of the 2nd Air Division of the 8th AAF was doing. To start an organization made up of the descendants and family members of the veterans of the 13th "Jungle" Air Force so that we can help the veterans in their goals and to perpetuate their memories for future generations. Like squadrons in the Air Force, we chose a nickname for ourselves. We call ourselves "The Guardians". We are guardians of the veterans and their history. In the 13th Air Force Veterans Association, we have all ways considered the family members as guardians of their respective veteran. We have always been there to see to the veterans needs, such as assisting them onto and off of the tour buses, bringing them food and drink, and making sure that they are comfortable and having a good time at the reunions. They have done so much for us, so it is the least we could do is to honor them in this way.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the Heritage Squadron is to physically assist the veterans and to perpetuate the memory of the 13th "Jungle" Air Force and to honor its history, efforts and sacrifices of its members from WWII to the present time. We promote this through listening and recording their stories, education, memorabilia displays, and commemorative activities at reunions, air shows, schools, and veterans organizations.

Eventually, the WWII veterans of the 13th Air Force will no longer be able to meet and it is our goal to keep the organization strong and viable for future generations to know of the sacrifices of these great men and women who wore the 13th Air Force patch. They truly are the "Greatest Generation".

### GOALS

We embrace the following goals:

1. Support the goals of the 13th Air Force Veterans Association.
2. Physically support the Veterans at their reunions by being there for them and seeing to their needs and comfort.
3. To preserve the history of the 13th Air Force and to correct the errors in the Official Air Force History record pertaining to the 13th Air Force.
4. To seek Medal of Honor recognition for 13th Air Force Members that are deserving and were overlooked by the area commanders.
5. To collect and preserve the artifacts and stories of 13th Air Force Veterans.

### MEMBERSHIP

The membership will be made up of descendants, family members, and friends of the 13th Air Force Veterans Association. Only the descendants and family members that are in good standing as an associate member of the 13th Air Force Veterans Association will have voting rights. The dues are \$25 a year and are paid to the current treasurer of the 13th AFVA. We will have our annual meetings with the Veterans at their reunion.

## Remembering Paul Tibbets... A Man With A Mission

Paul Tibbets, pilot of the B-29 Bomber "Enola Gay" died at his Columbus home after suffering from a variety of health problems in recent months. He was 92 and maintained until his death that he had no regrets about the mission. Col. Tibbets flew that mission on August 6, 1945 that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan that is reported to have killed from 70,000 to 100,000 people and injured countless others. He is quoted as saying that it was his "patriotic duty" and the "right thing to do". In a 1975 interview he said "I'm not proud that I killed 80,000 people, but I am proud that I was able to start with nothing, plan it and have it work as perfectly as it did". "I knew when I got the assignment it was going to be an emotional thing," Tibbets told The Columbus Dispatch for a story on August 6, 2005, the 60th anniversary of the bomb.

"We had feelings, but we had to put them in the background. We knew it was going to kill people right and left. But my one driving interest was to do the best job I could so that we could end the killing as quickly as possible."

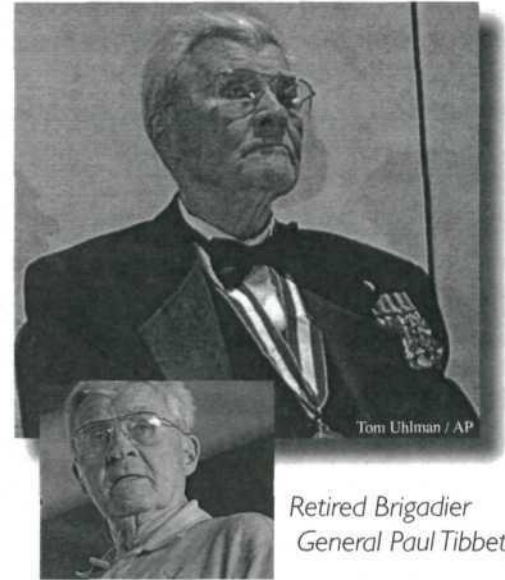
Tibbets retired from the Air Force as Brigadier General in 1966 and later moved to Columbus, where he ran an air taxi service until he retired in 1985. He requested no funeral and no headstone at his gravesite, fearing it would provide his detractors with a place to protest.

### Enola Gay's Flight Log Auctioned

The flight log kept by navigator Dutch Van Kirk onboard the Enola Gay during its fateful August 1945 flight to drop the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, recently sold for **\$358,500** in a public auction conducted by Heritage Auction Galleries of Dallas.

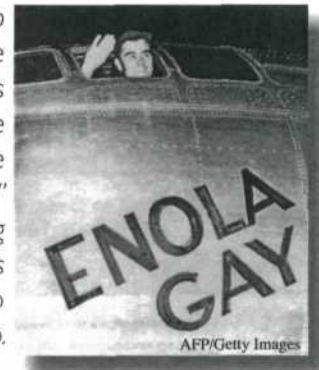


Tibbets describes the flight during a news conference at Strategic Air Force headquarters on Guam, August 7, 1945, one day after his mission.



Retired Brigadier General Paul Tibbets

At right a photo from US Air Force of Col. Tibbets waving from the cockpit of the "Enola Gay" before taking off on his mission to drop the bomb.



Ground crew of the Enola Gay B29 Bomber which bombed Hiroshima, Japan on August 6, 1945 with the "Little boy" atomic bomb, stand with pilot Col. Paul W. Tibbets, center, in the Marianas Islands.

## Back In The Day...

I was a flight cadet during World War II, learning to be a pilot. In the second phase of training we flew the Vultee BT-13. Each instructor had five cadets. One day, my instructor was up with another cadet and had his part of the canopy open. He hadn't noticed that the cord on his ear-phones had unhooked his safety belt. He instructed the cadet to do a slow-roll. Naturally, when the plane got up-side down, the instructor fell out. The cadet had not soloed in that type of plane before. He called the tower in a panic saying "I've lost my instructor. What should I do?" They had to talk him down and he made it OK. My instructor was grounded for two weeks and was made lighting officer of the field as a result.



I was a pilot with the 42nd Bomb Group, 75th Squadron, part of the 13th "Jungle Air Force". One time in April 1945 we were on Palawan Island in the Philippines, we flew all of our missions at tree-top level, sometimes skimming the tops of the trees. After a while the Japs started putting land mines in the trees. I never learned how they set them off...but on one mission, we were coming off a target when the tail-gunner called me on the intercom to tell me three of those land mines went off right behind us. He said the last one almost got us. We were a little more careful after that.

**David S. Lee**  
13th AF 42nd Bomb Group



### LLOYD FRANK LOUDERBACK 1924 - 2007

Lloyd Frank Louderback passed away from cancer at the age of 83 Tuesday, August 7, 2007 in Vail, Arizona. Those at his side were his loving wife, Betty, granddaughter Shelly McGriff and husband Hershel. Lloyd was born in Oak Creek, Colorado on June 19, 1924. In his early life Lloyd did farm work, in 1943 he entered the Army Air Corps. He became a member of the 13th Jungle Air Force in the south pacific.

He worked for the State of Colorado and Oregon Department of Transportation as an engineer until he retired in December, 1986 in Portland, Oregon. After retirement his first wife Mildred passed away. He then married Betty Street and they traveled to carry out their dreams to see the United States. In 1993 they moved their residence to Florence Gardens in Florence, Arizona. Lloyd was active in the Cribbage Club and leaves behind many good friends.

Lloyd was a World War II Veteran and member of

Newberg, Oregon Veterans Lodge and Florence, Arizona American Legion. Lloyd was a Past Exalted Ruler of Coolidge/Florence, Arizona Elks Lodge #2350, and a member of Keizer, Oregon Elks Lodge #2472. He was Past Master Lifetime Member of Palestine Masonic Lodge #141 in Portland, Oregon and also a member of Florence, Arizona, Gila Valley #9 Masonic Lodge.

Preceding him in death were his first wife Mildred, his step-grandson Michael Lloyd Linson, step-son Jerrald (Red) Linson, sister Alice and brother William. Survivors include his wife of 15 years, Betty, 2 brothers from Aztec, New Mexico, 1 step-daughter, 2 step-sons and their wives, 5 step-granddaughters, 4 step-grandsons, 2 great step granddaughters and a step great-grandson.

No services were held per his request. In lieu of flowers donations can be made to the American Cancer Society of behalf of Lloyd Louderback to help find a cure for Prostate Cancer.

### REAL NEWSPAPER CLASSIFIEDS

FREE YORKSHIRE TERRIER  
8 years old,  
hateful little dog. Bites

FREE PUPPIES  
1/2 Cocker Spaniel,  
1/2 sneaky neighbor's dog.

FREE PUPPIES  
Mother, AKC German Shepherd  
Father, Super Dog -able to leap  
tall fences in a single bound.

NORDIC TRACK  
\$300 - Hardly used  
Call Chubby.

GEORGIA PEACHES  
California grown - 89 cents lb.

JOINING NUDIST COLONY!  
Must sell washer and dryer \$300

WEDDING DRESS FOR SALE  
Worn once by mistake  
Call Stephanie

FOUND: DIRTY WHITE DOG  
Looks like a rat...  
been out a while -  
Better be a reward!



## Memories of a Night Spent with the 321st Service Squadron

On the 26th of October, 1944 we took off on a mission of searching for Japanese shipping from Noemfoor at approximately 6 am. Upon arriving at a rendezvous point of upper Mindanao Island we formed searching formation of squadrons in trail with six planes in each squadron. We soon saw at 9 o'clock low many ship trails in the water of the Sulu Sea. We were searching at an altitude of 9500 and as we turned to the attack dropped off 500 ft. to bomb the Japanese Naval Ships which consisted of the Yamamoto and two other Kongo Class Battleships along with three heavy cruisers and six destroyers. A group like that can really put up a massive amount of flac and the sky was really black in front of the planes but the dropping off of 500 ft. on approach helped as the first flac was well above our altitude. Our squadron was leading sqdn on that mission and we managed to get by the flac without too much damage. The 424th Sqdn who were 4th in line to bomb did lose their last three planes to enemy fire. As to my particular plane, we were hit and had the #2 fuel cell rupture which left gasoline streaming back in the slip stream and also running down into the bomb bay.

I did have the copilot fly the plane and walked back through the bomb bay to the rear to see if there was much damage there and also went down into the nose to look out at the engine and found one crew member had lighted a cigarette which was immediately extinguished.

Since we had flown out of Noemfoor and Morotai was nearer and we did not know how much of our fuel had been lost we set course for Morotai and flew all of the way there with the bomb bay doors open. When we parked the aircraft the fuel was still running out of the #2 fuel cell in a small but steady stream.

We were billeted that night with the 321st service sqdn and furnished with blankets and an army cot.



**Richard Paul Crew, 370th Bombardment Squadron (H)**

Back Row L to R: William Albro Nose Gunner, Richard Paul 1st Pilot, Spencer Co-pilot, Alfred Smith Navigator, John Brooks Bombardier, Leroy Straub Tail Gunner. Front row L to R: John Foley Radio, Popovics Top Turret, Sabu Dastigir Ball Turret, Leroy Kanada En

During the night Washing Machine Charlie made his appearance and was attempting to bomb the planes that were parked on the parking ramp near the air strip. One of the Japanese pilots attempted to distract the anti-aircraft gunners by turning on his landing lights and flying a patter of landing. Every gun was silent until he started to move over where he could bomb the B25 aircraft that were parked there and at that moment there was a cone of fire from every gun on the island and his engines stopped immediately and his Betty came crashing down on to the B25's. He did manage to wipe out four or five of the B25's.

The next morning we had to find transportation to get my crew back to Noemfoor and when we went to the operations office we saw the dead Japanese pilots on the ground near there. We were successful in obtaining a flight in an empty Gooney Bird that was going to Biak and I asked the pilot if he would take us onboard and just shoot a landing. Our total flight time on the mission was 16:45.

**FOR SALE BY OWNER:** complete set of Encyclopedia Britannica, 45 volumes, excellent condition. \$1000 or best offer, no longer needed, got married last month... Wife knows everything.



## Reunion 2007 – Tulsa

The Tulsa 2007 Reunion is now history but let me say this, our friends Ray Perkins and Cliff had all the bases covered and everything moved like clockwork-“Smooth”. If anybody would like a tape of the student

program please let Ray know, they are available for purchase from him. I understand it brought tears to many eyes. Our younger generation is gifted. Once again Ray and Cliff, thanks for a super job!



Group picture of 13th AFVA participants at the Annual Friday Evening Banquet.



American Flag at Freedom Elementary School, Sapulpa, OK



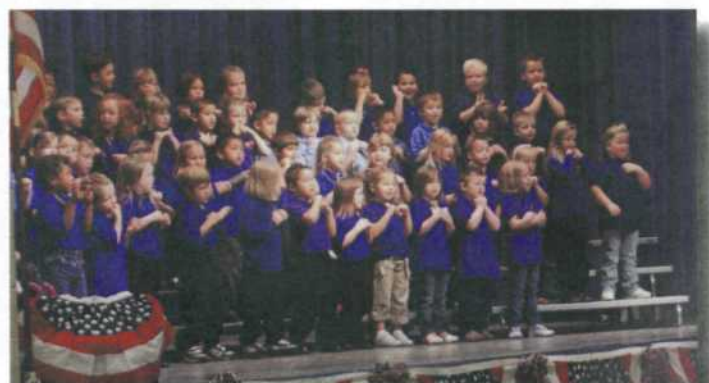
2nd Grader proudly wearing her 13th AF patch.



2nd Grade singing group.



1st Graders from Freedom Elementary School perform.



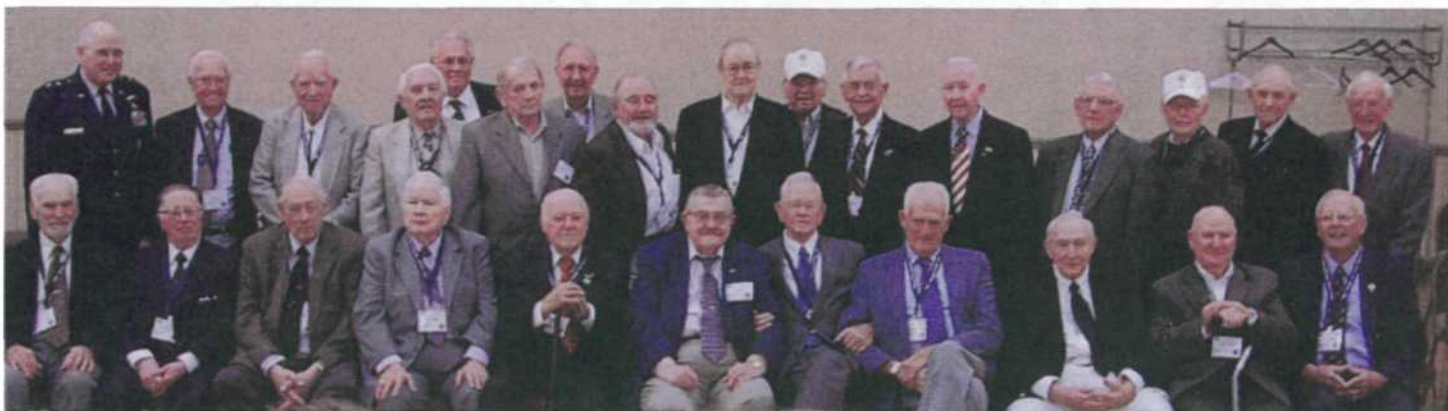
Kindergarten Class from Freedom Elementary School



Memorial Program Participants: Pres. Cliff Johnson, Pastor John M. Nelsen, Ray Perkins, and Eric Russ.



Three of our Over Ninety Veterans, Skipper McClendon, Jim Brazzil, and Walter Kloc



13th Jungle Air Force Veterans and Major General Loren Reno



Cliff Johnson, now Past President



General Loren Reno, Cliff Johnson and "Skipper" McClendon



Bill Warner, Tom Bonney, Mark Brazzil, our future leaders.



Pres. Cliff and one of the Freedom Elementary Teachers



Arlene and Art Russo



Vets need their rest - even at museums.



Learning to lasso at the Will Rogers Museum



Gen. Reno greeting the veterans and guests.



Sapulpa High School Quartet, special guests at the program.



Cliff enjoying the Will Rogers statue.



13th AFVA Secretary Len Daniels and others enjoying the fellowship of the dancers at the Thursday Evening Program



Lunch at the Freedom Elementary School



Veterans enjoying breakfast at the Holiday Inn Select.



Friends at the Riverwalk.



13th AFVA Veterans and guests enjoying the program



Dance group performing Thursday night.



Lunch at Freedom Elementary.

Part of the "Tour of Tulsa" was Veterans Park.



**2007 13th AFVA Reunion Attendees**

**Anderson, Keith & Shirley**

2772 Shanley Rd.  
Auburn, CA 95603  
75 BS, 42 BG

**Bailey Waylen**

P.O. Box 1017  
Greenwood, AR 72936

**Barnes Jr., Sam**

3709 Panorama Dr. SE  
Huntsville, AL 35801  
70th FS

**Brazzil, Jim**

214 N. 12th  
Highlands, TX 77562  
HQ     Guests: Bonita Tankursley  
          Ronnie & Susan Adcox  
          Janette Walker

**Cook, James (Jimmy)**

1403 Westgate Lane  
Pine Bluff, AR 71601  
          Guest: Darla Cook

**Daniels, Leonard (Len)**

14559 Chatham  
Detroit MI 48223-1812  
XIII AFSC HQS  
          Guests: Lela "Lee" Moody  
          Lenore Daniels

**Hillman, Harold & Elizabeth**

1101 San Angelo Dr.  
Salinas, CA 93901  
42nd BG  
          Guest: Sarah Meisenholder

**Huntoo, Don**

2710 41st Place  
DesMoines, IA  
419 NFS

**Johnson Clifford & Pamela**

1770 Wilmington Road  
Cedarville, OH 45314  
419 NFS

**Kloc, Walter & Virginia**

334 Brauncroft Lane  
Snyder, NY 14226-4946  
42nd BG 390 SC

**Lee, David & JoAnn (Dave & Jo)**

616 Ginseng Rd.  
Newcastle, CO 81647  
42 BG     Guest: Linda Lee

**Lindsey, Donald & Louise**

3551 S. Toledo Ave  
Tulsa OK 74135-1728  
15 ADM

**Lynch, Robert (Bob)**

839 Halifax Dr.  
Warwick, RI 02886  
44th FS

**McClendon, William M.  
(Skipper)**

209 Dover Rd.  
Muskogee, OK 74403  
2nd ERS

**McGuire, Earl**

717 S. Dettman Rd.  
Jackson, MI 49203  
370 BS

**Norwood, Glenn & Linda**

218 Woodlawn Dr.  
Oxford, MS 38655  
370 BS

**O'Brien, Robert (Bob)**

16 Maplewood Dr.  
Swannonoa, NC 28778  
419 NFS

**Olson, Max & Juanita**

P.O. Box 126  
Cambridge, IA 50046  
5th BG 23 BS

**Pelle, Tom & Betty**

3733 Cove St.  
Jacksonville, FL 32277  
371 BS

**Perkins, Ray**

1514 Melissa Circle  
Sapulpa, OK 74066  
72 HBS     Guest: Betty Thompson

**Pipes, Billie and Sheri (B.C.)**

P.O. Box 14  
Concord, TX 77850  
403 TC

**Radzieta, John**

4615 Spring Valley Court  
College Park, GA 30349  
419th NFS     Guest: Ron Radzieta

**Reubin, Alice**

1111 W. 11th  
Sulphur, OK 73086  
419th NFS     Guest: Eric Reubin

**Russ, Eric & Jessica**

109 Daughtridge Farm Rd.  
Rocky Mount, NC 27801

**Russo, Artr & Arlene**

407 Prescott Rd.  
Union, NJ 07083  
868 BS

**Sheehan, George L.**

835 S. Harrison St.  
Shelbyville, IN 46176-2612  
307 BG, 424th Sq.  
          Guests: Carol Pogoni,  
          Maureen Sheehan

**Strawman, Gene & Lucille**

6018 Terrace Dr.  
Johnston, IA 50131  
3894th 5th BG

**Sullivan, H.T. (Sully)**

P.O. Box 937  
Blairesville, GA 30514  
868 BSH

**Warner, Bill**

PN8005 975th Street  
River Falls, WI 54022

**Westerland, Mark & Linda**

26671 Cortina Dr.  
Mission Viejo, CA 92691  
868 BS     Guest: Judy Smith

**Wilson, Robert & Wanda**

1005 S. Russell  
Skiatook, OK 74070  
394 BS

**Wilma Yates**

108 Evesham E.  
Lake St. Louis, MO 63367  
868 BS

**Wilson Davis Yates (Dave)**

108 Evesham E.  
Lake St. Louis, MO 63367  
868 BS

**Mary Young**

1243 Bayview Trail  
Suttons Bay, MI 49682  
419th NFS     Guest: Carl Moyer

**Additional Registrants**

Tom Bonney, Jr.  
Mark Brazzil



## A Letter from 419th Night Fighter Squadron

The 2007 Christmas Season is upon us so Mildred and I take this occasion to wish all of you a Very Merry Christmas in 2007 and a healthy and prosperous New Year in 2008.

The 419th Night Fighter Squadron's 2007 reunion was a part of the 13th "Jungle" Air Force Veterans Association reunion which was held in Tulsa.

The 419th spirit was high but physical attendance was low. Bob O'Brien and John Radzieta were the only original 419th members to make it and Mary Young, Alice Reubin and Waylen Bailey represented their original member husbands who have passed on. I was unable to attend because of low physical stamina and I was and still am in the process of having my teeth replaced by dentures (a very unhappy process).

Cliff Johnson, Mary Young, and Jon Radzieta have given me some information about the reunion from which I have put together the following brief description of reunion activities. The first day of the reunion was outstanding and included a visit to the Freedom Elementary School. Mary Young described it as follows:

"As we walked in there were the youngest - probably the first graders and kindergarten sitting in a line down the middle of the hall. They had the walls covered with Patriotic hand made cards about Freedom. Many pictures of military personnel. They were all dressed alike with red, white & blue ties or stripes on shirts - just being patriotic. As the program started the Pre-Kindergarten sang something about waving the flag and they all had a flag that they waved. Then some adult - one, two or three of them - sang in front of the curtains while the next grade filed on the stage. Each grade did an excellent job. There was one girl about 10-12 that had a beautiful voice and sang the Star Spangled Banner. Each grade pre-Kindergarten to fifth grade sang. There was a couple of kids in wheelchairs - one boy was 4th grade and very badly disabled, but they had him dressed up to match his classmates and had the wheelchair all decorated also. The other child was on the other side of the room so I did not see that much of him/her. It was so touching that I think everyone at one time or another had tears in their eyes. There was one man next to me that really had tears running. Then to finish off the celebration the teachers had brought in food for everyone to have a pot-luck lunch. Not only were just the 13th welcome to attend but it was open to anyone that wanted to attend. Several talked to grandparents or aunts/uncles. That was the highlight of the whole weekend I think. That night there were 10

- 12 of us that walked to the nearby Outback." At my request Cliff Johnson sent me some information about reunion activities which included the following:

"Ray Perkins, Program Chairman, made so many incredible arrangements which made the Tulsa Reunion a terrific success. The experience at the Freedom Elementary School in Sapulpa, OK, was full of remembrances recognizing veterans of all ages and armed services. Many wept as they recalled the patriotism of the students as well as that of their comrades.

The Holiday Inn Select Hotel turned out to be an excellent locale for the banquets, lunches and meetings as well as a great place to enjoy the included breakfasts. Participants really enjoyed the bus tour of Tulsa, the Commemorative Air Force fly-overs and the WWII plane exhibits. The Saturday Evening Banquet and Dance were great. The Ladies Luncheon and the television personality speaker, Carole Lambert, was a real treat for the women.

The 13th AFVA Board members were so helpful. For instance, Bob O'Brien's ready help taking care of important financial matters was vital. We thanked Lucien Doyle for getting thank you plaques for the presentation. And, of course, many spouses and friends provided needed assistance. It was noted that Phil Dyer is recovering well. He was selected as the newsletter editor.

While attendance didn't match the numbers present at Dayton, the 70 attending at Tulsa were well rewarded for their presence. At the Friday Evening Banquet those over 90 years of age were asked to stand, one of the three standing was 92. There were rumors that there was another ninety year old there, but he didn't stand. With this kind of support the 13th AFVA should be able to have reunions at least for awhile.

The Friday Evening Banquet speaker Major General Loren Reno from Tinker AFB was a hit in that he not only spoke but before the banquet went from table to table to meet the folks. The Kitchen Katz Band, a lively group of seniors, presented an enthusiastic program."

John Radzieta also sent me information about the reunion which included the following:

"The highlights of the air show were the A-26, P-51, AT-6 and ST-13 from the US Air Corp. The Navy had a few planes. The Will Rogers Museum is a beautiful tribute to a man loved by all who remembered him. For gun lovers, the Savis Gun Collection is a must. They claim that there are 18,000 guns on display.

*continued on next page*

"Cliff Johnson, a late replacement pilot in the 419th, presided over the last two 13th Air Force reunions. He and his wife (Pam) are outstanding in that role. He, like Roosevelt, should serve more than two terms. The organization will be in good hands - a radar operator named Sullivan from the "Snoopers" will relieve him."

On the somber side I recently received a letter from

Robin LaCroix that his father, Robert LaCroix, a P-61 pilot with the 419th, passed away in California. His illness (cancer) was short and Robin was there when he passed away.

Ralph Dunavant  
419th Squadron Representative

The following letter was submitted by:

John T. Godwin, Bombardier Navigator 53  
Missions: Northern Solomons, New Guinea, Netherlands,  
East Indies, Liberation of Philippine Islands, Member of 42 Bomb  
Group (M) 70th Squadron - 13th Air Force

General Orders  
Number 2217

## **42nd Bombardment Group (m) Unit Citations**

Headquarters  
Far East Air Forces  
APO 925  
29 November 1945

### **UNIT CITATIONS**

By direction of the President under the provision of Executive Order no. 9396 (Section I, Bulletin 22, WD, 1943) superseding Executive Order No. 9075 (Section III, Bulletin 2, WD 1942) and of Section IV, Circular No. 333, WD, 1943, the following units are cited by the Commanding General, Far East Air Forces:

### **42ND BOMBARDMENT GROUP (M)**

The 42nd Bombardment Group (M) is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action from 23 June 1945 to 30 June 1945. During that week, the 42nd Bombardment Group (M), operating in support of the Australian invasion of the Japanese oil refinery center at Balikpapan, Borneo, Netherlands East Indies, carried out bombing and strafing strikes against enemy shore defenses and other installations. Because each of these round trips, among the longest-range combat missions ever flown by mass formations of medium bombers, involved a flight of more than 1,700 miles over open sea, it was necessary to use radio compartment fuel tanks and to make pre-mission experiments to determine the feasibility of loading the aircraft to such an extent. Taking off from a damaged runway, and encountering tropical weather fronts on four of the flights, the B-25 aircraft of the Group braved intense and accurate anti-aircraft fire to reach heavily defended Balikpapan. Without the loss of a single crew member or airplane, making minimum altitude attacks, the Group dropped over 460,000 pounds of napalm and demolition bombs, 91 percent which fell within the target area, and expended 415,000 rounds of ammunition in strafing. Crews of the 42nd Bombardment Group (M) destroyed gun positions, warehouses, road blocks, fuel and ammunition dumps, a radar station, numerous vehicles, and 73 military buildings, as well as huge stores of gasoline and oil which the enemy had strategically placed so as to be released into shallow pits on the beach and ignited when the Australian ground troops should make their assaults. Flying down the invasion beach under intense enemy fire, the B-25 aircraft of the Group achieved such perfect timing and coordination in giving support to underwater naval demolition teams that not one man of the teams was lost. So effectively did the Group smash Japanese defenses at Balikpapan that the enemy was totally unable to contest any of the landings, and the Australian Seventh Division came ashore on an undefended beach. Credit for the success of the achievements of the Group in this week of intense and dangerous operations is due not only to the bomber crews but also to operations, intelligence, and maintenance personnel who spent long hours planning the missions and preparing and servicing the aircraft, despite inadequate facilities which to work. In making such a significant contribution to the success of the Allied invasion and seizure of Borneo, one of the most strategically important islands in the enemy-held Netherlands East Indies, the 42nd Bombardment Group (M) brought new honor to the United States Army Air Force.

BY COMMAND OF GENERAL KENNEY:  
D.R. Hutchinson, Brigadier General, US Army  
Chief of Air Staff



13<sup>TH</sup> "JUNGLE" AIR FORCE VETERANS ASSOCIATION

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

(Please PRINT clearly)

New: ( ) Renewal (Year originally joined: ) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse (Name if living): \_\_\_\_\_  
(If deceased, divorced, or none so state)

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ APT/SUITE: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP+FOUR: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (10 digit): \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

UNITS SERVED WITH (E.g., Command & Group & Squadron, Avn Battalion, etc): \_\_\_\_\_

DATES WITH 13<sup>TH</sup>: from \_\_\_\_\_ 19 \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ 19 \_\_\_\_\_

WHERE (e.g., base, island, etc): \_\_\_\_\_

BIRTH DATE (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Other Information, comments, etc: \_\_\_\_\_

*Membership dues are payable each January, or earlier, for the calendar year from 1 January through 31 December. Per vote at the October 2002 reunion, membership dues are \$25 per year for everyone - regular or associate. Dues cover printing and mailing newsletters and bi-annual directory, other general administrative expenses, as well as pre-reunion expenses and memorials.*

*Your membership expiration date will show on mailing labels for periodical newsletters, the bi-annual directory, reunion announcements, and similar correspondence.*

**Make checks payable to 13<sup>th</sup> Air Force Veterans Association.**  
*Mail application/renewal form with check, money order, or cash to the Treasurer at his new address: Robert O'Brien, 16 Maplewood Drive, Swannanoa, NC 28778*



## A Different Christmas Poem

The embers glowed softly, and in their dim light,  
I gazed round the room and I cherished the sight.  
My wife was asleep, her head on my chest,  
My daughter beside me, angelic in rest.

Outside the snow fell, a blanket of white,  
Transforming the yard to a winter delight.  
The sparkling lights in the tree I believe,  
Completed the magic that was Christmas Eve.

My eyelids were heavy, my breathing was deep,  
Secure and surrounded by love I would sleep  
In perfect contentment, or so it would seem.  
So I slumbered, perhaps I started to dream.

The sound wasn't loud, and it wasn't too near,  
But I opened my eyes when it tickled my ear.  
Perhaps just a cough, I didn't quite know,  
Then the sure sound of footsteps outside in the snow.

My soul gave a tremble, I struggled to hear,  
And I crept to the door just to see who was near.  
Standing out in the cold and the dark of the night,  
A lone figure stood, his face weary and tight.

A soldier, I puzzled, some twenty years old,  
Perhaps a Marine, huddled here in the cold.  
Alone in the dark, he looked up and smiled,  
Standing watch over me, and my wife and my child.

"What are you doing?", I asked without fear,  
"Come in this moment, it's freezing out here.  
Put down your pack, brush the snow from your sleeve,  
You should be at home on a cold Christmas Eve.

For barely a moment I saw his eyes shift,  
Away from the cold and the snow blown in drifts,  
To the window that danced with a warm fire's light.  
Then he sighed and he said "It's really all right,

I'm out here by choice, I'm here every night."  
"It's my duty to stand at the front of the line,  
That separates you from the darkest of times.  
No one had to ask or beg or implore me."

"I'm proud to stand here like my fathers before me.  
My Gramps died at 'Pearl on a day in December,'  
Then he sighed, "That's a Christmas 'Gram always  
remembers."

"My dad stood his watch in the jungles of 'Nam',  
And now it is my turn and so, here I am.  
I've not seen my own son in more than a while,  
But my wife sends me pictures, he's sure got  
her smile."

Then he bent and he carefully pulled from his bag,  
The red, white, and blue...an American flag.  
"I can live through the cold and the being alone,  
Away from my family, my house and my home."

"I can stand at my post through the rain and the sleet,  
I can sleep in a foxhole with little to eat.  
I can carry the weight of killing another,  
Or lay down my life with my sister and brother."

Who stand at the front against any and all,  
To ensure for all time that this flag will not fall."  
"So go back inside," he said, "harbor no fright,  
Your family is waiting and I'll be all right."

"But isn't there something I can do, at the least,  
"Give you money," I asked, "or prepare you a feast?  
It seems all too little for all that you've done,  
For being away from your wife and your son."

Then his eye welled a tear that held no regret,  
"Just tell us you love us, and never forget.  
To fight for our rights back at home while we're gone,  
To stand your own watch, no matter how long."

"For when we come home, either standing or dead,  
To know you remember we fought and we bled.  
Is payment enough, and with that we will trust,  
That we mattered to you as you mattered to us."





## The Story of the 13th Jungle Air Force

As we all know there is no real written history of the 13th Air Force. Through our newsletter we have tried to give our veterans stories of our Air Force and how it performed during WWII. We would like to continue this but since we are getting older as time goes by and many of our buddies are no longer with us, we need to expedite our collecting of stories while we are still here to do it. I think our children and grandchildren would like to know what the war meant to us and what we did to help win it.

Most of us were not heroes but we were there and we did what we were asked to do and helped win it. We may not have flown a fighter or a bomber, but we were the mechanics that kept it flying, the radio repairmen that kept them in communication, the armament crew who put on the bombs and loaded the machineguns so they could protect themselves. Or maybe you were a cook who saw to it that they stayed in good condition. We all have a story to tell and there are many people besides our families that would like to hear about it.

At our 2008 reunion we hope to collect a story from each of you to help bring out the 13th Jungle Air Force to life.

There are many people in America, particularly the young that have little idea of what life was like overseas during the war and what we went through to help win the war.

Our squadron, the 419th Night Fighter Squadron has had a book written about our experiences during the war. It was written by a professor at the Citadel who is the stepson of one of our pilots. He did it by coming to about six of our reunions and interviewing

all of us about our experiences overseas. It included the combat stories of our air crews but also how we had to improvise to set up camps and move places and how we obtained extra food and supplies to keep us going. It also had funny stories about our daily life. Maintenance personnel talked about the problems they had at maintaining the planes and the equipment. Silly things happened that were funny then and are funny now. For example: on one island we were being bombed at night and had dived into our bomb shelters, one bomb dropped close enough to worry us and one of the men yelled "gas!" and we all put on our gas masks. After a few minutes someone got the courage to open the side of his mask and take a whiff. He burst out laughing and yelled at us that it was all clear. The reason he was laughing was that he had found out the so called gas was the smell of a very large fart that one of us had let out when the bomb went off. We never found out which one had done it.

We ask that each of you write a 2 or 3 page story about any incident that sticks in your mind from the war and bring it to the reunion, or, if you cannot attend, mail it to the editor of our newsletter, his address in on the back page of this newsletter.

We hope each of you will send a story or two. The stories many of you tell at the reunions in the Hospitality Room are the kinds we want to hear. You don't have to wait until the reunion, send in your stories as soon as you have written them and we can start putting them in the newsletters to share with everyone. See you at the reunion God willing and if the creek don't rise.

Bob O'Brien

## U.S.S. New York... "Never Forget"

The U.S.S. New York was built with 24 tons of scrap steel from the remains of the World Trade Center. It is the fifth in a new class of warship designed for missions that include special operations against terrorists. It will carry a crew of 360 sailors and 700 combat-ready Marines to be delivered ashore by helicopters and assault craft. Steel from the World Trade Center was melted down at a foundry in Amite, Louisiana to cast the ship's bow section. When it was poured into the molds on Sept 9, 2003, "Those big rough steelworkers treated it with total reverence", recalled Navy Captain Kevin Weinsing, who was there. It was a spiritual moment for everybody there.

Junior Chavers, foundry operations manager, said that when the Trade Center steel first arrived, he touched it with his hand and "the hair on my neck stood up".

"It had a big meaning for all of us" he said. They knocked us down. They can't keep us down. We're going to be back. The ship's motto? "Never Forget".



Dear Phil

It was interesting to see the article on Kits Tadger in the newsletter. I remember it well. I flew in it once from Wakde Island to Palau and flew with it on several missions. The crew that flew it most of the time were good friends of our crew.

We flew together at Tonopah, Nevada and flew overseas together, but what I'm writing about is their fate. They were flying a lone plane sea search foot of Morotai down the east coast of Borneo and were shot down near the coast. Seven of them died in the water landing and three of them swam ashore. The reason that I know this is that our tail gunner, Dave Greer, was in contact with the radio operator's father. He did what Nelson Rockefeller did. After the war he flew over there and was in contact with the Dutch, who were back in control over there. Through two Jap prisoners he discovered that the three that swam ashore, (We don't know which three), were captured by the Japs. The Jap officer gave three head hunters their swords and they cut their heads off. We were buddies of the

crew. We used to tie the flaps of two tents together and make one tent.

I did not make it to Morotai. I was on the second mission to Balikpapan. We put twenty-three B24s over the target. They shot down seven and shot up the rest. One plane made it back to Numfoor. The rest landed or crash landed on Morotai and Cape Sansapor. We landed at Cape Sansapor with 420 holes in the plane. We probably could have made it back to Numfoor, but I would not have, we had seven wounded.

I had my right leg shot off and part of my left leg. Two plasma transfusions between Balikpapan and Cape Sansapor and two whole bloods and eight more plasma transfusions kept me alive to write this letter.

I didn't intend to write so much but memories keep coming back.

As Ever,  
Thomas W. Pelle  
371st Squadron  
307th Bomb Group



Back row: Engineer Forrest Cockeran, Top Gunner Dave Green, Right Wing Tony Borelli,  
Left Wing Tom Pelle, Nose Gunner Tom Doyle  
Front row: Co-Pilot Clarence Jensen, Bombardier Gerald Wigginton, Navigator Gene Pierce,  
Ball Turret Lawson Sheof. Missing from photo - Pilot George Lutrell



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
 THIRTEENTH AIR FORCE  
 HICKAM AFB, HI



Lieutenant General Loyd S. "Chip" Utterback  
 650 Hangar Avenue, Suite A-127  
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 Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma 73145-5000

To Our Fellow Jungle Air Force Warriors,

First, let me thank you for your service to our nation and thanks, too, for the tremendous legacy of courage, innovation and professionalism that you leave the nearly 8,000 men and women of today's Thirteenth Air Force. We know your history well and we are walking in the footprints you left across Asia. Our area of responsibility ranges across Asia: from Alaska to the South Pole; and from India to Chile, exclusive of Korea.

Today, your Thirteenth Air Force is building the template for employing joint air, space, and cyber power for our Nation's joint forces. In the last year since the Jungle Air Force stood-up at Hickam Air Force Base as a Component-Numbered Air Force, the Thirteenth Air Force commander has been designated the Pacific Command's theater Joint Forces Air Component Commander responsible for the planning, command and control, and execution of Air Force, Navy, Army, and Marine, as well as allied air and space forces, across the full spectrum of operations; from full-scale conflict to humanitarian relief and disaster assistance.

We do this through the power of the "Major Richard Bong" Air and Space Operations Center (AOC) located here in Hawaii. That AOC has the capability to generate 2,000 joint sorties per day, taking the Joint Forces Commander's strategy and working it through execution. On a day-to-day basis, Thirteenth Air Force is responsible for all air-breathing Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance in the Pacific; serves as the Joint Task Force Commander for Support Forces Antarctica; is the Space Coordinating Authority for the Combatant Commander; is the Joint Personnel Recovery Executive Agent for the Pacific; has Air Defense Commander responsibilities for the Pacific, which includes command and control of Aegis cruisers, Patriot Battalions, and the Theater High Altitude Air Defense missiles; and exercises operational control of all USAF aircraft assigned within the Pacific with the exception of Korea...and I can go on.

As you see, we are a new kind of beast. Still, we are Airmen first, and we appreciate the tangible legacy of excellence that you left us. Again, thank you for your service. We are proud to be part of your great heritage.

Very Respectfully,

*Loren M. Reno*  
 CHIP UTTERBACK  
 Lieutenant General, USAF  
 Commander



**The 13th Air Force Veterans Association**

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Cedarville, OH 45314

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(252) 442-4339

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215 Outer Loop, Louisville, KY 40214

**The 13th AF Website is Up-To-Date and Running!**

*It includes photos, recent newsletters, histories, and the registration form for the 2008 St. Louis Reunion. Take a look at*

**[www.13afvets.org](http://www.13afvets.org)**

*and tell us what you think, suggestions are welcome too!*

Each officer's duties and responsibilities are specifically described in the By-Laws, printed in the Summer 2002 Edition of the Newsletter.  
**Questions or information may be sent to any of the above.**

