

Shel Beigel

P. O. BOX 321 • ENCINO, CALIFORNIA 91316

August 6 1982

Mr. Russell A. Strong  
Kalamazoo, Mi 49007

Sir:

I am a new member of the 8th AFHS Inc. and was amazed to discover that so many former 306 BG people were members. I did my 33 with the 369th Sqn and there fore am interested in the history of the units.

Please find my check for \$20 for a copy of your book, First over Germany .

Before I left Thurleigh, I secured some bomb strikes photos from the base photo lab, along with some of my own photos that while developed by the lab, had to have the base censor stamp approval. This was May 10th give or take a few days. A friend of mine took a beautiful shot from our right wing while the stick of bombs are just leaving the bay. I was the toggler, so I have the photos along with the usual others, flak filled sky and the 306th in formation over the continent.

While I hadn't joined any veteran organizations, I'm really impressed that so much detail is available such as your book and that there is actually an organized alumni of the 306th BG.

Looking foward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sheldon Beigel', written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Sheldon Beigel

9 August 1982

Mr. Shel Beigel  
PO Box 321  
Encino, CA 91316

Dear Shel:

Your book is on the way, and thanks for the order.

A 306th Association has existed for about eight years now, and will have its eighth reunion in Cincinnati this fall. You probably noted the information on the 8th AF reunion. We are going with them again this year, but will probably break away next year for our own do.

I note in the files that James Cation was your pilot. I flew until about the end of November so our tours overlapped slightly. The rest of your crew I have on microfilm so am unable to tell immediately who the men were. Do you know the whereabouts of any of them? We do not have Cation on the mailing list. If you know where they came from we will be happy to do some looking.

I'd like very much to see your pictures on the 306th with the intent of copying those I don't already have.

Glad to have you with us, and you are now on the mailing list.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong

Shel Beigel  
P. O. BOX 11 • ENCINO, CALIFORNIA 91316

November 5, 1982

Mr. William M. Collins, Jr.  
306th Bombardment Group Association  
2973 Heartherbrae Drive  
Poland, Ohio 44514

Dear Bill:

I have been meaning to write to you since we all got back from England, which as you probably know by now was some two weeks ago, and was from my point of view a very worthwhile trip.

I found Walt Rozett who was my pilot on one trip, and Jim Thwaite who was a gunner on several trips. My wife and I left Wednesday morning and we went to visit a friend of ours in Dublin, and then came back and spent a week more in the London area retracing old footsteps. In any event I came back a dedicated, once again, 306'er.

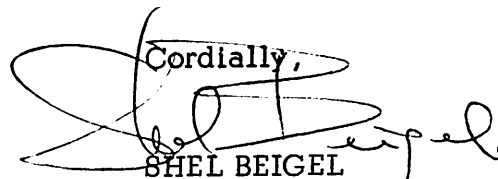
I got friendly with an RAF Flight Lt. named Jack Stewart who within a week after I returned home was my house guest. I took him to General Dynamics where they built the KC-10A for the 306th at Mildenhall, among others. I also arranged for him to see the Cruise, and the Atlas and other high flying birds being manufactured. He and his wife are very nice people, and of course he is based at Thurleigh, at the RAE.

I have just returned from a trip where I had dinner with Walt Rozett and his wife in Northern California, and the next day I stopped and had dinner with Hollis Baker at Lompoc. Hollis tells me that the 306 definitely is going to have their own reunion apart from the 8th Air Force H.A. We even spoke about having a very informal gathering once or twice a year of the 306's in California, and that just may develop with further conversation.

Hollis mentioned the probabilities of trying to get all the films that BBC, NBC and CBS took during the Reunion. As you know they showed only about 15 - 20 minutes worth on the CBS Kuralt program. To that end I asked my brother who used to work for CBS to call Andy Rooney and see if there is any hope, or even if the film is available. Hollis wanted to send the completed film to Gordie Richards and John Mills. If anything develops I will of course let you know.

Thank you for sending me all those past issues of the Echo.

Best regards.

Cordially,  
  
SHEL BEIGEL

SB:g

Shel Beigel  
P. O. Box 100 • ENCINO, CALIFORNIA 91316

Nov 19 1982

Bill M. Collins, Jr  
2973 Heathlane Dr.  
Poland, Oh 44514

Dear Bill,

1<sup>st</sup> The Echo arrived today in very poor condition - approximately 25% torn away - Hence, I'm enclosing \$1<sup>00</sup> for you to be induced to send another at 1<sup>st</sup> opportunity. Maybe you can insert it in an envelope to assure safe arrival -

2<sup>nd</sup> Re your note about Calif get together I had dinner with Col. Hollis Baker (ret) who lives in Longport, Ca and while he shows interest in such a gathering - your tapes of Zips will help - Please drop him a note of encouragement and support of lists to make it as easy to accomplish as you can think about. I will do what I can as well -

3<sup>rd</sup> I sent most of my photos, memorabilia of my time, on 369<sup>th</sup> area and on the missions to John Mills in Bedford for John Heddfield to copy and return. I gave it for safe transmittal (to John Mills) to Flt. Lt. Jack Stewart of RAE Bedford whom I met while there at Thurligh and who with his charming wife, were my house guests for 2 days on Oct 27 last.

I arranged an escorted tour of General Dynamics Convair in San Diego for the Stewarts - They saw KC-10A's, Tommynhawk, Cruise and

atlas - Centaur missiles being assembled. I said good bye to them in San Diego - They were going to Tucson to visit where Jack Stewart did his RAF training in the P2V Lockheed Neptune as Navigator - He is a career officer with 8 more years to go - They live in the village of Kesse alongside the air base.

<sup>4th</sup> Also, before I left England, I sent John Mills £ 8 for 2 photos which he hasn't as of this date, - sent - I'm trusting nothing is wrong with what I did. I'll give it a little more time before I start to worry. (Baker told me about your A2 jacket)

as of this moment, I'm positive about going to Omaha - But it is still 10 months to go - I think the 306<sup>th</sup> should have our own reunions - Hell, in 10 or 20 years - I won't make any difference to most of us, so go for the best we can now.

Have a happy and safe holiday and start the new year with vigor and spirit. sometime soon.

Looking forward to meeting ~~you~~ you,

All the best,

Shel Beigel

AUGUST 29 1983

BILL COLLINS  
2973 HEATHERBRAE DR.  
POLAND, OHIO 44514

DEAR BILL:

I WAS GOING THROUGH MY FILES, WONDERING WHY I STILL HAD THE MARCH 1977 ISSUE OF FLYING MAGAZINE IN THE BOTTOM OF THE 4 DRAWERS WHEN I NEED EVERY INCH OF SPACE... UNTIL I DISCOVERED WHY I PUT IT AWAY. THIS FROM DAYS WHEN I WAS ACTIVELY FLYING BEECH AIRCRAFT AS A GA PILOT FOR FUN AND PLEASURE.

IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO RUN THE ARTICLE, SINCE IT IS TIMELESS, IN THE ECHOS IF ZIFF DAVIS PUBLISHING RELEASES THE COPYRIGHTS. I JUST THOUGHT YOU MAY BE INTERESTED IN IT, PROVIDING YOU HAVN'T ALREADY SEEN IT. IT IS VERY TRUE, AND I HAVE ALWAYS FELT THE B-17 THAT I WAS FLYING IN, REALLY WAS NOT FLYING, BUT RATHER SUSPENDED IN SPACE, PARTICULARLY OVER THE TARGETS AND OR UNDER ATTACK BY FLAK OR FIGHTERS. MAYBE OTHERSHAD OTHER THOUGHTS, IT MIGHT BE INTERESTING TO FIND OUT WHAT OTHER 306 ERS FELT OR REMEMBER.

SEE YOU IN OMAHA SHORTLY.



SHEL BEIGEL

PS LOOKING FOWARD TO YOUR COMMENTS ON THE THEMWEAR COMPANY CLOTHING.



STAKEN  
CORPORATION

P.O. Box 321, Encino, California 91426-0321 ☐ (818) 981-4200

MAY 20, 1985

Mr. Russell A. Strong  
2041 Hillisdale  
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007

Dear Russ:

I would like you to know that on April 24th last, Connie and Gordon Richards volunteered me as a returning flyer of the 306th, to be a subject for CBS Morning News, V.E. Day - 40 years later program.

This program was aired on CBS on May 6th, at 7:00 A.M., and from what I am told it shows scenes of me at Thurleigh, and at the Air Base. I have not seen it as yet, and have requested a copy from CBS News, New York. If I get it I will bring it to the Reunion in September, Colorado Springs. I am told that CBS had a week of V.E. day related stories for the entire week, and I don't know what part the 8th Air Force played in the remainder of the segments.

I really was on my way to Rome and cities in Switzerland when I decided to stop off in Bedford. Connie and Gordon Richards did the rest.

The next day I found myself at the Falcon, and I promised the proprietor, Connie, the Mother, and Jenny Skingsley, the Daughter, that I had a photo showing a 306 B-17 dropping a string of 250 pounders, and they said they would like it for the 306th Bomb Group room, so I am sending a copy along to them, along with a photo of the Lt. Robert D. Stewart's original crew as it arrived at Thurleigh. The photo was taken at OTU before they departed for Thurleigh. It was a crew I was particularly friendly with, and it shows the pilot, Bob Stewart, Sgt. Roy Chancellor, who, along with Sgt. Bill McCue, disappeared on January 1, 1945. This picture is to hang, I am told, on the walls of the Jackel in Thurleigh.

I thought you would like to know the above, and one additional piece of information is that when I returned from the Ft. Worth Reunion last October, my family surprised me with a California vanity license plate, as it is called here, and now my car has "306th B G" for a license plate in California. It does seem strange that after thirty-eight years of not paying much attention, that since the event of "being found" has brought me back to Thurleigh twice, and meeting with people some of whom I haven't seen in more than forty years, not to mention my driving around with the 306th as a license plate. Talk about deja vu.

Best regards. See you in September.

Cordially,

SHELDON BEIGEL

SB:t

# CBS NEWS

A Division of CBS Inc  
524 West 57 Street  
New York, New York 10019  
(212) 975-4321

June 6th, 1985

Mr. Sheldon Beigel  
Staken Corporation  
P.O. Box 321  
Encino, California 91426

Dear Sheldon Beigel,

You were extremely kind to let us, and our viewers, share your private pilgrimage back to Thurleigh. Had we shown nothing else that week on the importance of remembering VE Day and "why we fought", your return to your old airbase would have brought that message home to us all. Thank you for letting us traipse along, and for talking to us about why you were there.

Nick Turner and Simon Jarvis, the crew who shot the piece send you their best as well to you and your wife (and thank you for returning the tripod).

The enclosed cassette is on three quarter inch. We don't have VHS capabilities (yet...we are slowly moving into the 1980s) and this was the best I could do. Hope your reunion is a success.

Warmest regards,



Deborah Thomson  
CBS Morning News

Encl.



Shel Beigel

P. O. BOX 321 • ENCINO, CALIFORNIA 91316

JUNE 11, 1985

Mr. Russell A. Strong  
2041 Hillsdale  
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007

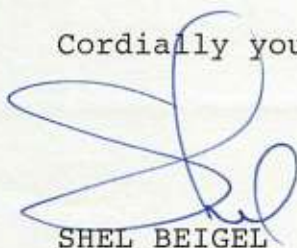
Dear Russ:

As an addendum to my letter of May 20th, I finally received the segment of the tape regarding my trip at Thurleigh. Enclosed also was a note from the CBS producer ( copy enclosed) indicating that it is on 3/4" tape. I will attempt to have it transferred to the standard VHS size as soon as I find out where to do it. Which tape do you think would be better to bring to the Reunion, assuming that you or others would like to see me walking around Thurleigh, a week before VE Day, 1985. I was told by CBS that this segment was the opening of their week long program on VE Day "40 Years Later" That was shown nation wide, starting May 6th through May 10th. They also told me that Andy Rooney closed the week on May 10th, with a segment on what VE Day meant to him.

The sad part is that I did not see any of this, including my own segment.

I look forward to your comments.

Cordially yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Shel Beigel', written over a printed name.

SHEL BEIGEL

SB:t  
Enc.

Shel Beigel

P. O. BOX 321 • ENCINO, CALIFORNIA 91316

March 6, 1986

Mr. Russell A. Strong  
2041 Hillsdale  
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007

Dear Russ:

I have been meaning to write to you for some time. Today I received the "Echoes", and after reading it from front to back, realized I had to send this note to you.

First, I would appreciate it if you return the Video tape taken of me at Thurleigh by the CBS people last April, along with the photos, or copies, of the flying and crashed positions of "Y" for Yankee. I recall your telling me that at your University you could duplicate the tapes without trouble. As with others in the 306, I also have my own little mini-Reunions with five or six other members of my Squadron, and I would like to have them see it this summer.

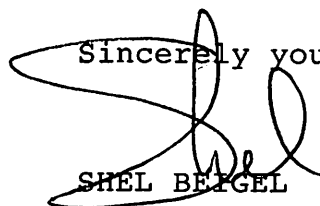
Further, in the course of my work, I encountered one Gene Stahl whose card is enclosed. He tells me he was originally trained and flew as a P-38 pilot and then was transferred to B-24 and B-17's as a pilot. In 1944 he flew with units in the first and second Air Division, he says. He transferred to regular Air Force and became a "lifer" and stated that in the period of 1951 through 1953 he flew with the 306th Strategic, and is considering, if he can, joining our 306 BGA. I said I thought he could but that you or Bill Collins would have to make the decision. I asked him to write down his serial number so that you can check the micro films for his record. If he is acceptable as a member, please so inform him. I am always looking for "lost" 306'ers.

If you have not been informed, Hollis Baker was seriously injured this past winter in a home accident. He is now out of Vandenberg Air Force Base Hospital and recuperating at home. I am not certain he is healing properly based on the latest information. He badly broke both legs in many places and I am informed that his bones are not knitting well. May I suggest that you consider wishing him well in the next edition of the Echoes.

Looking forward to hearing from you shortly.

With best wishes, I remain,

Sincerely yours,



SHEL BEIGEL

SB:g  
Enc.

I.D.  
A.C. FORM  
12E Modified  
25/9/43 8th AC APO557.

COMBAT BOMBING FLIGHT RECORD

BOMBARDIER \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PILOT \_\_\_\_\_ TAKE OFF \_\_\_\_\_

NAVIGATOR \_\_\_\_\_ LANDED \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_ AIRPLANE \_\_\_\_\_  
Squadron Group Type Number

OBJECTIVE \_\_\_\_\_

AIMING POINT (MPL) \_\_\_\_\_

INITIAL POINT \_\_\_\_\_

METHOD OF ATTACK \_\_\_\_\_  
Individual Flight Squadron Group Wing

NUMBER OF ATTACKING A/C IN GROUP \_\_\_\_\_ COMPOSITE GROUP \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF A/C DROPPING BOMBS BY OWN SIGHTING OPERATION: \_\_\_\_\_

DEFLECTION AND RANGE SIGHTING GROUP \_\_\_\_\_ COMPOSITE GROUP \_\_\_\_\_

RANGE SIGHTING ONLY GROUP \_\_\_\_\_ COMPOSITE GROUP \_\_\_\_\_

BOMBS, TYPES AND SIZES \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF BOMBS LOADED \_\_\_\_\_ RELEASED \_\_\_\_\_

MUZZLING, NOSE \_\_\_\_\_ TAIL \_\_\_\_\_

SYNCHRONIZATION \_\_\_\_\_  
ON Fast Slow

INFORMATION AT RELEASE POINT \_\_\_\_\_

Altitude of Target		Mag. Head, Order	Actual
True Altitude above target		True Heading	
Ind. Altitude		Drift, Est.	Actual
Pressure Altitude of target		True Track	
Altimeter setting		Actual Range	
I.I.A.S.		D.S. Type	
I.A.S.		Time of release	
I.S., Est.	Actual	Length of bombing run	
Wind Direction, Metro	Actual	Intervolometer setting	
Wind Velocity, Metro	Actual	C-1 Pilot	
Trail	ATF	A-5 Pilot	
Man. D.A. Est.	Actual	Manual Pilot	

*Sheldon Beigel*  
3694 SQN.



Shel Beigel  
P.O. BOX 321 • ENCINO, CALIFORNIA 91316

369TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON  
U.S.A.A.F.

September 10, 1986

Mr. Russell Strong  
306th 1986 Reunion  
c/o Holiday Inn - Dayton Mall  
7999 Prestige Plaza Drive  
Miamisburg, Oh. 45342

Dear Russ:

I am truly sorry my wife and I could not attend the 1986 Reunion, but we wish you and everyone else a very warm and happy Reunion.

I am sending you a photocopy of the June 15, 1945 Rushden Echo & Argus, I just today was able to get photocopies in normal size that the newspaper itself is as represented.

The paper as you well imagine being war time paper, has turned a golden rust color, and is not easily read, but as you can see we were able to bring it up. This should make some interesting reading, and was probably dictated or controlled by the 306th PRO at the time, and I am hopeful that it interests you as well. There are certainly names that I recognized.

I am happy to be able to add this little bit, and I look forward to seeing you in Alexandria next year.

I am sending this UPS 2nd day Air so that it should arrive in your hands on Friday, September 12th.

Warmest greeting to you and yours.

Cordially,

  
SHEL BEIGEL

SB:g  
Enc.

From the Desk of:  
Sheldon Beigel

May 7, 1987

Reuss

Thank you for the copies of  
the Echo's - I appreciate you  
taking the time to send them.

Tried to find the 1<sup>st</sup> \$25 I gave  
Hennigan in '82 - But couldn't -

It may have been a donation for the  
memorial Stone and the '85  
donation was probably for the 300<sup>th</sup>  
Museum - Hope this suffices  
any questions - See you in  
Sept. Stay well

Shel Beigel

April 3 1989  
9813 Bearpaw Ave  
Las Vegas, NV. 89117

Dear Russ;

Your letter requesting contributions arrived between my release from the hospital and our 1<sup>st</sup> move in 22 years - so, I'm a bit late - in responding.

However, please find enclosed my check for \$100 to help cover some of the 306<sup>th</sup> expenses.

Please note the change of address for me on the records so I can be assured of receiving the Echo's in the future.

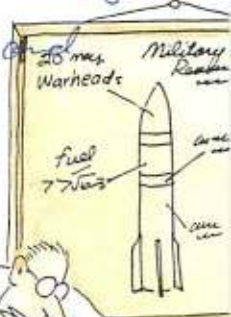
My wife and I had a pleasant dinner at El Hennessy's when Ray Drenner and his wife also were present. Casey Jones also visited with us last week - nice seeing being with them - I'm now officially retired and trying to enjoy it. Hope to see more 306<sup>th</sup>

people - I am intending to attend the K&K Reunion - Be good to see you again - Hope you are well and happy in your move.

Best Regards

Sheldon Beigel

Edison



SHELDON BEIGEL  
9813 Bearpaw Ave.  
Las Vegas, NV 89117

June 23, 1989

Dear Russ -

Just a note to enlist your aid in getting  
my copies of the Echo's -

I didn't receive Jan '89 or April 89 issues.

However Ed Hennessey had a spare copy of #14-1  
which I now have - But no April issue ever got

here either. Can you rectify this error -- ?  
Probably due to my move after 22 years to Las Vegas.

Please see to it that the corrected change of address  
appears in the directory as well if you can - if not,  
please let me know to whom I need to notify.

My wife and I anticipate being in Little Rock in Sept  
and hope to see you again - Thanks for your help -

Best Regards,

Sheldon Beigel

27 June 1989

Dear Sheldon:

Got your note of 23 June today.

I had earlier received a message from you with your new address, and I thought that at that time, late April, I had sent you a copy of the April issue.

Here is one, and your address is current in our mailing file now.

The July issue of Echoes will be going out about the 10th of July, and I am sure your name will be in that group.

Sometimes the updating of addresses seems to be a problem, but I checked the computer this morning and found your listing as it should be.

Look forward to seeing you in Vegas. And I hope you are enjoying retirement as much as I have.

All the best,



Tel. (401) 596-7791

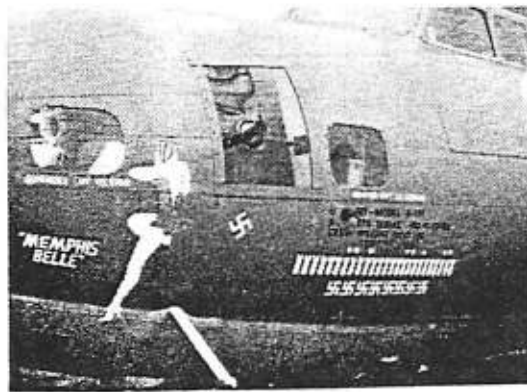
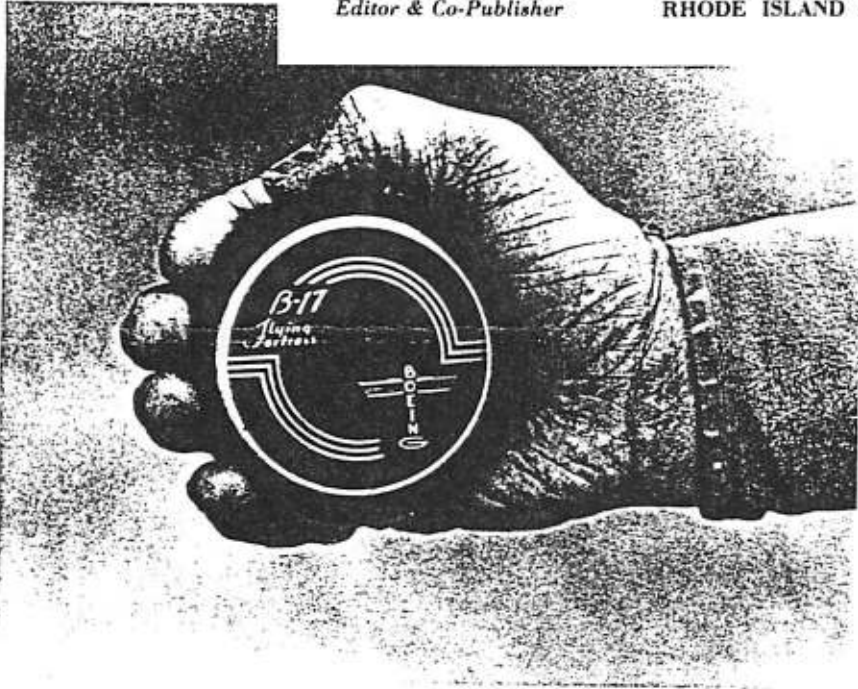
April 1951  
Charlie Utter  
a Lead Pilot, 401st BG  
WESTERLY  
8 AF

# THE SUN

PUBLISHED BY  
THE UTTER COMPANY *Printers*

CHARLES W. UTTER  
*Editor & Co-Publisher*

WESTERLY  
RHODE ISLAND 02891



OPINION, CWU

## For Lack of a Hubcap —

To many people, she may be recalled as the queen of all queens, the "Memphis Belle". Does the name kindle a bit of memory from almost a half-century ago?

The "Memphis Belle" was a B-17 Flying Fortress, built at the Boeing plant in Seattle -- and became the first heavy bomber in the 8th Air Force <sup>flying</sup> over occupied Europe to complete a combat tour with ~~her~~ her original crew of ten men intact. She was visited by the King and Queen of England and then flown back home to a heroes welcome. She flew around the United States letting people know it was possible to survive the rigors of air combat at high altitude against enemy fighters and enemy anti-aircraft fire.

Today the "Memphis Belle" is housed within its own protective pavillion on Mud Island adjacent to the Mississippi River at Memphis, Tenn.

Mud Island? Yes, this is where dredged silt from the river was stacked, creating a safe anchorage for river traffic, an island for a museum and a home for the "Memphis Belle". We visited this shrine to aviation history last Fall while steamboatin' down the Mississippi <sup>River</sup>.

More recently a letter in 8th AF News caught our wandering eyes, It was from a former combat crewman, who noted the the "Memphis Belle" was missing caps of <sup>n</sup> both control columns. He recalled having a cap at home, and gave it to the restoration committee.

He had visited on that one day of the week when visitors

are permitted to climb aboard <sup>the "Memphis Belle"</sup> On~~the~~ the flight deck, big enough to accomodate the two pilots and the top-turret gunner, h<sup>e</sup> noted the lack of hubs to cover the exposed nuts, bolts and cotter pins used to secure the pilots' control ~~columns~~ <sup>or pins</sup> columns.

A bell started to ring in the back of my mind. Somewhere at Happy Valley Road, probably on a shelf for safe-keeping was another B-17 hub for a control column. Once found, memories flooded back. My hub had been picked off a wrecked B-17 at a <sup>field</sup> ~~field~~ near Paris in September 1944. A Westerly boy, co-pilot Mike Spezzano from a shot-down B-24 Liberator crew saved the hub, and years later presented it to me. What would a B-24 pilot want with a piece of B-17 gear?

This past week a letter was received from Memphis as a reply to an offer <sup>from the writer</sup> to donate the control column hub to the "Memphis Belle". Yes, they had the first hub donated by a Sheldon Beiger, 306 Bomb Group, address unknown. No, it had not been mounted on a control column yet, because one in place and one still missing might look funny to visitors. Yes, the hub on the shelf at Happy Valley Road would complete that part of an historic display of the B-17 "Memphis Belle".

It's odd that memorabilia, gathering dust <sup>in</sup> some forsaken corner of a private home, can be of ultimate value to someone else in this great nation!

Is there anyone out there, who may have smuggled a B-17 .50-cal. machine gun back home, a Norden bombsight, an engine in running order, a ball-turret~~†~~ — or maybe some trivia such as a radio operator's command set, a pilot's VHF control selector, or a throat microphone? Someone, such as Bill Stoots, 27 S. Bingham St., Memphis, TN 38112, can probably put it to good use.

This writer has a standing invitation to "come aboard"

the "Memphis Belle" anytime we come steamboatin' down the Mississippi again, but we sorta figure we won't see either Memphis or the "Memphis Belle" again.

+++

Memories still come back:

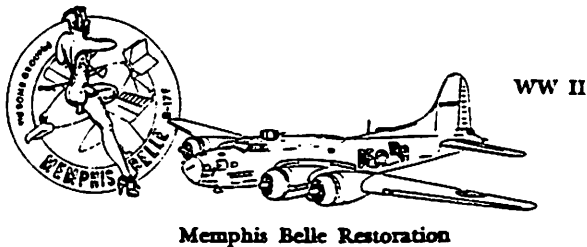
"Co-Pilot Ted, we're coming home again! Give me wheels and full flaps for a landing!"

"Aye, Skipper, you've got 'em -- and we're coming home again!"

--30--

IF THIS GUY THINKS THE WAY  
HE WRITES, I AM AT A LOSS  
TO UNDERSTAND HOW HE MADE IT  
THIS FAR-

Sho



7 November 1989

Sheldon Beigel  
9813 Bearpaw Ave.  
Las Vegas, NV 89117

Dear Shel,

Thanks for the donation of the B-17H steering wheel Hub cover. We all appreciate everyone's interest and desire to help restore the old Memphis Belle.

It gets to be quite a chore at times, since we are determined to restore it to its war time conditions and arrangements. It is a unique old plane since it is mostly an F and some E in the navigation and cockpit sections.

We will use the Hub if the Belle had them and they are the same as the H, however, there is a lot of difference, as you pointed out, between the Fs, Gs, and H models. Unlike most people restoring World War II planes, we are staying extremely close to originality.

If we cannot use it on the Belle, it will be used in our museum at a later date, and proper credit given, as you requested.

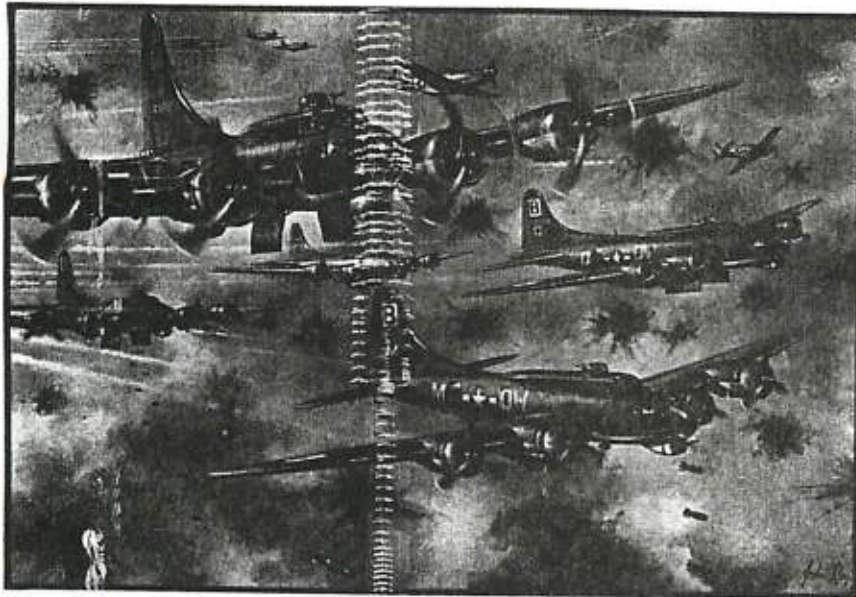
Sorry to have delayed my answer to you, but my wife and I just returned from a three week visit and camping trip with our youngest son and his family in Fairbanks, Alaska.

Thanks again,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Bill Stoots'.

Bill Stoots  
27 S. Eingham St.  
Memphis, TN 38112



**HORHAM LIVING MEMORIAL.** In memory of 611 men of the 95BG killed in operations and to all who served there, the 95BGA has taken on the project of restoring the bell tower of the Parish Church of St. Mary in Horham. This reconstructed tower will house the oldest "Ring of Eight" bells in the world, dating back to the period 1568 to 1673. The bells have been silent for 65 years now, due to

rotten support timbers.

The 95BGA is selling full color prints of the painting, "First Over Berlin" (see above) to help raise the money needed for this worthwhile memorial project. 20" x 24" and 11" x 14" prints are available at the same price, \$16.00 each. Send your checks to 95BGA, c/o David E. Dorsey, 125 Clark St., Clark Green, PA 18411.

**Ellis B. Scripture-95BG**

**MISSING AIRMAN.** On 6 June 1944 a B-24 crashed in my area of Belgium. Four deaths included a J. A. Caron. Two became POWs and three escaped. One of the escapers was K. Pratt, but we can find no record of him. It would help us a great deal, as well as the AAFEEs, if someone can help identify the unit and the crew, then we may be able to find Mr. Pratt.

**Armand Hardy,** 215 Chee de Waterloo, 1060 Brussels, Belgium

**HUB CAP DONATED.** After a visit to the "Memphis Belle" in Memphis, I noticed that they were missing two control column hubs. As I had one at home, I donated it to them. Others with B-17 things that may help them should contact Memphis Belle Restoration, c/o Bill Stoots, 27 S. Bingham St., Memphis, TN 38112.

**Sheldon Beiger-306BG**

**BOOK UNDERWAY.** I am doing a book on the use of heavy bombers during the period they were under General Eisenhower's control. It would help me a great deal if I could make contact with airmen who participated in the following raids: Troyes, 1st and 30th May 1944 (1st & 2nd Bomb Divisions); Brussels Schaerbeck, 25 May 1944 (3BD); and Saar-

brucken, 27 May 1944 (2BD).

**Lionel Lacey-Johnson,** 18 Gaudick Close, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN20 7QF, England.

**MASS ATTACK #2.** Re Rocket's reply to the Pipes' story (15-4/96). On 12 September 1944, the 351BG was attacked by a "company front," of FW-190s, eight or ten abreast.

**William H. Hoadley-351BG**

**HEART IN 8AF.** Of my sixty-eight combat missions during WWII as an armorer/gunner, only seven were flown with The Mighty Eighth (Kaplans crew). The other sixty-one missions were flown in B-25s with the 12AF. Yet my Arizona license plate reads "8AF B17." It is easy to see that my heart still belongs to the 8AF.

**Ed Conrow-385BG**

**LATE DFC.** Who may I contact to receive my DFC—never awarded?

**Joseph M. Jaeger,** 522 Roosevelt Ave., River Vale, NJ 07675

**B-24 POSTAL COVER.** We are pleased to announce that the San Diego Aerospace Museum has issued a special

postal cover in recognition of the B-24s first flight, 29 December 1939. The 4-color cachet depicts two bomber versions of the Liberator in Flight. Stamps affixed to the first 500 covers will include the 1942, 3 cent "Win the War" stamp (905) and a contemporary 22 cent flag stamp. The cover is available for \$2.00 each with a stamped, self-addressed #10 envelope. Send to SDAM, 2001 Pan American Plaza, Balboa Park, San Diego, CA 92101 or the Liberator Club, PO Box 15-2424, San Diego, CA 92115.

**Bob McGuire**

**FRANK ARMSTRONG QUESTION.** Your paper has certainly supported the view that the Bernie Lay book and movie, *Twelve O'Clock High*, is based on Armstrong's takeover of the 306BG. Paul Tibbets, in his book, *Flight of the Enola Gay* (page 79), intimates that the book and movie are based on Armstrong's takeover of the 97BG. Who is right?

**Lee Keesler-306BG,** 170 Saratoga Ave., NW, Canton, OH 44708

*(You should look at the account of the After The Battle magazine, (#10) article on the making of the film Twelve O'Clock High in 5-3/12. Doesn't it seem odd to you that 3 x 306 = 918? Bartlett and Lay identified the group as the 918BG. Try that with 97BG. Perhaps Russ Strong, your unit historian, can straighten out the question for you. Odd that this should come up AFTER Bernie Lay has left us. JHW)*

**MIDDLESEX STUDY.** I am embarking on a project to record 8AF activities in Middlesex (Uxbridge, Heston, Bushey Park and any other locations in the county). I also would like some info on a B-17, on one engine, which made a forced landing at 12:05 p.m. on 6 September 1943, some half mile west of the Heston airfield.

**G.J. Brinckley,** 9 Richards Close, Harlington, Hayes, London, Middlesex, UB3 5EA, England

**THURLEIGH MEMORIAL.** Your readers may be interested in knowing that in August 1989 the 306BGMA erected two flagpoles (one carries the British flag and the other the U.S. flag) at Thurleigh as a 306BG Memorial.

**Connie & Gordon Richards**

**BAD HERSFELD MEMORIAL.** Re the stories of the high losses suffered by the 445BG on 27 September 1944 that appeared in the January and April issues (15-1 & 15-2—, Walter Hassenpflug will



Memphis Belle Restoration

8 May 1990

Sheldon Beigel  
9813 Bearpaw Ave.  
Las Vegas, NV 89117

Dear Shel,

I thought you might like to know what has happened as a result of your gift of the B-17 steering wheel medallion.

In April I received a phone call from Charles W. Utter in Westerly, Rhode Island. He had read about your hub cap donation in the 8th AF Historical Society news letter. He was all excited because he thought he might have a mate to it. We talked quite at length on the phone. He said he would send along a picture of his cap. If they matched, he would be happy to donate his cap also, but if it was to be put into a museum, forget it. Well, they matched! So, now I have the pair installed in the Belle.

I have put a label inside each cap with name and credit to the donor, as well as recorded in our files. The caps do give the finishing touch and look real nice. I thought you might like to have pictures of them to see how your cap looks.

As you can see in the picture, I have reworked the instrument panel, made a new mag & switch panel, as well as rebuilt the automatic pilot control unit. Each addition seems to bring more life to the old plane.

I'm sending pictures to Charlie Utter too. He is Editor and Co-Publisher of "The Westerly Sun" news there. He sent along to me a copy of his Hub Cap story that I suppose he was printing up for his newspaper. I thought you might like to read it. We got a kick out of it.

With the help of fellows like you and Charlie, the old Memphis Belle is looking more beautiful every day. Thanks, and

Best Wishes,

*Bill*

Bill Stoots  
Memphis Belle Restoration  
27 South Bingham Street  
Memphis, TN 38112

Charlie's address:  
56 Main Street  
Westerly, RI 02891

Lead Crew Pilot, 401st Bomb Group, 614th Squadron, 8th Air Force over Germany. "Lost a plane & a half, but finished tour with the original crew, if not the original B-17!"

SHELDON BEIGEL  
9813 Bearpaw Ave.  
Las Vegas, NV 89117

17 September 1990

Mr. Russell A. Strong  
5323 Cheval Pl  
Charlotte, NC 28205-4937

Dear Russ;

Before I get into the items I promised to send to you as a result of our discussions at the San Antonio reunion, please find: +Copy of letter to Don Ross, re 1992

reunion suggestions.

+ Please make addendums to the directory, i/e, my name should appear under Nevada and my telephone is 702-363-4848.

+Photo of Wendover AFB from the Review-Journal August 26, 1990.

Regarding my last combat mission on May 7, 1945, the day before the recognized V-E Day, enclosed is a p/c of my sortie or mission list signed by Capt. Richard Nickelhoff, the AD for Ops during my time at the 306th. You can see they counted it as #29.

The previous three special missions were horundous since the May 2nd trip was to drop leaflets and supplies to the Buchanwald Concentration Camp. I vividly recall the scene and it is still impressed in my mind. One would have had to have been a complete dolt, a null and void not to be adversely affected. I was ready to continue the war. I told Major McKinney I would go on any more flights that the 369th had posted. Almost everyone else didn't want to risk anymore than they had to, so the good Major obliged me with three more trips which brings us to the May 7th mission. Somehow, I recall there was a group of die hard SS Nazi's in the Ruhr near the Rhine around Essen, I believe. They kept shooting at the leaflet and other planes and refused to cease, hence this May 7th trip was called. I know there were three 306th BG and 9 others from other groups that made the 12 on this last raid.

I have no idea how this was written up for the history books, since there is nothing mentioned in the Roger Freeman Book MIGHTY 8th WAR DIARY, pages 500-502. He mentions the 306th on May 8th only. Something not being said here for reasons I can't fathom. You are aware I wasn't the only person who dropped on May 7th. The pilot of the plane that I was the toggelier was a Lt. Powers. I have no other ID on him except I was called to fly with him as togellier on April 12 in N-297297 which was scrubbed. The only item I'm not certain about is the name of the target on May 7 '45. While memories don't last, and I'm lacking certainty on the target and other details, one important point is I didn't operate alone. There were other people in that 369th plane with me and other people in the various planes that we joined on. That is why I received credit for a combat mission, it was killing time, for us and them. Mainly them for on my scale of 'roughness', I gave it a 2 meaning what flak there was, was into the chaff. ... What ever you learn and or discover about this "unnoticed" mission, I shall be happy to know. As an adjunct, I'm enclosing a p/c of my concise version of my diary that I put together while I was student at Case Western Reserve University (class of '49) for a history prof who asked all the combat vets to make one for him, in the semester of September '47.



SHELDON BEIGEL  
9813 Bearpaw Ave.  
Las Vegas, NV 89117

Page 2  
Sept.17,1990

Mr. Russell A. Strong

Regarding names I said I would look up for your 'discoveries', I found 33. Of these, only the following are not in the directory. I was amazed to find so many already listed. I can't find the recent directory before the Blue, but they were not listed in the yellow or '86 book.

I have cities for only two; Clifford R. Duggan, flight engineer/gunner 369th. I show in 1945 upon parting, 713 Indiana Street, Hammond, Indiana and the other is one of the pilots I flew with, Milton E. Hansen of Buckyrus, North Dakota. I would know Duggan if I saw him because we were together on the same crew for a short time. I wouldn't know Hansen if he stepped on my foot, except to tell him once to get off.

The others are (alas without addresses) as follows:

James E. Collins, Co-pilot for Duggan	...Lt. Denton- pilot
Lt. Sheib-pilot	Robert L. Slay
Dewey Wilson	R.H. Willhoff
Wm (Bill) Schiffman	Mel Teets (423rd)
Micheal Angelini-Hot tailgunner.	Robt. H. Wood may know where Angelini lives.

I realize without addresses, it severely limits your discovery attempts. But they were flyers that I knew while at Thurleigh 44-45.

I also re-discovered (after my move from California in '89) after almost 40 years in one place, fading photos of friends and airplanes, (flak Shack). They were taken in the 369th Sqn area in front of planes at their stands and in the air. They are small snaps since the camera I had was a cheap brownie and I had the film developed in Bedford. I'm certain you have enough of these types of photos.

RE: Memphis Belle Saga

At the Little Rock reunion, I found myself seated at the banquet between Robert Seelos of 368th Sqn and Al La Chasse of 367th. Before the evening was over I heard about the ½ Clay Pigeon and all his travails. Seelos came up with a competing narrative. Seems he was in competition with Robert Morgan of Memphis Belle and actually was up two with Morgan. Then Seelos came back from a mission with inflamed ears. Our Group medics grounded Seelos. When Seelos heard the next mission was the next day and that Morgan would fly it and catch up with Seelos to be the first to complete 25 missions in the same airplane, Seelos begged the medics to let him go to Hamburg. The medics told Seelos if he develops punctured eardrums aside from the pain, he will be grounded and out of the race completely. No need to state, Seelos got shot down over Hamburg in his race with Morgan. And Morgan finished while Seelos sat as a kriege for the duration. Interesting story, that the 306th might have been the unit to have a crew and plane be the first to finish 25 trips.... After the reunion, with Al Villagran of the Bob Stewart (KIA) crew, we went to Memphis and visited the Memphis Belle parked and almost restored as a memorial. There we met the airplane mechanic who is in charge of the engines and interior. Bill Stoots, Sr showed us the interior even though the display was closed. I noticed there were no hub on the control columns and offered the one I took from the brand new B-17 with electronic sights we flew home ~~in~~ 13 days after VE day. He was happy with the offer. Even the 8th AF News of April 1990 printed an insert about it which prompted another fellow from the 401st BG to offer his. Stoots promised to put the following in the permanent records in the city of Memphis file for the Belle. Hub donated by Sheldon Beigel of the 369th Sqn of 306th BG and the same inscribed in the plastic hub inside before attachment to the Memphis Belle.  
...So the 306th contributed further to the Memphis Belle.

SHELDON BEIGEL  
9813 Bearpaw Ave.  
Las Vegas, NV 89117

Page 3  
Sept.17,1990  
Mr. Russell A. Strong

I am enclosing the correspondence and photos from the Belle's A&E chief mechanic. I didn't answer his last of 8 May 1990. Should/<sup>you</sup>consider this worthy and print something about it in the Echos, then I will send it to him for the permanent log of the Memphis Belle. Please send the letters and photos back when you are through with them. Of course Sellos was in the same barracks with La Chasse in the POW camp. The story is filled with outside coincidences. Right down to the day 46 years later that a member of the 306th asissted the Memphis Belle once again.

I'm particularly interested in the combat mission of May 7 1945 and how the Air Force lists or doesn't list the day's activities. I assume Freeman had access to the official records, so, unless he made an omission, the "people" didn't want to show a punitive raid one day before cessation of all hostilities. The analogy to Dunkirk has been made, and the simple answer is that Dunkirk is a valuable port even today and not to be destroyed where the Germans had nowhere to go as the war ended. Inside Germany was obviously another situation.

Looking foward to your comments,

Sincerely,



Sheldon Beigel

P.S. What can you tell me about 'toggeliers'? I have met since the end of the war just two others who were toggeliers, one who flew well before me Jan'44 and the other flew D Day to Sept.'44. I know there were others in the 306 BG for I met them in the bombardiers briefing. How many of us at Thurleigh from day one to close? How many in the 8th AF? Whose idea to use armorer gunners as toggeliers? Were all trained to use the Norden as Capt. Currier, my instructor, taught me? What information is available?

CONFIDENTIAL

NAME: Sheldon Byigol RANK: T/Sgt. SQUADRON: 369th  
 DUTY: Gunner GRADE: 32975203 GRO P: 306th

Scale 1-10	Date of Missions	Group Mission Numbers	Indiv. Mission Numbers	Geographical Location of Targets	Combat Time	Total Combat Time
4	Dec. 24, 1944	LANDED AT 306th GS	1	Nidda, Germany	9:45	
4	25		2	Koblenz "	6:40	
6	29		3	Bingen "	7:00	
8	Jan. 1, 1945		4	Limberg "	9:30	
8	2		5	Kyllburg "	6:30	
	3			Abortion	1:55	
3	5		6	Niedermondig "	6:25	
4	9		7	Köln "	7:20	
9	10		8	Gymnich "	7:20	
5	ANAKA		9	Bielefeld "	7:15	
4	21		10	Aschaffenburg "	8:30	
6	23		11	Köln "	6:45	
4	29		12	Koblenz "	8:00	
7	Feb. 3		13	Berlin "	7:40	
5	9		14	Eisleben "	8:55	
9	14		15	Dresden "	9:45	
5	21	300th MISSION	16	Nurnberg "	9:05	
6	22	10,000 ft	17	Witstok "	8:45	
7	23	16,000 ft	18	Plauen "	9:50	
8	Mar. 2	ANAKA LANDED B-53 FLYING	19	Bohlen "	10:15	
5	7		20	Giessen "	8:20	
3	8		21	Gelsenkirchen "	6:55	
4	12		22	Swinomunde "	10:25	
9	25	Ship Aboard Landed ON Base FULLY LOADED		Abandoned "	2:30	
8	28	Toggetier	23	Berlin "	8:00	
6	Apr. 5		24	Leipzig "	9:45	
5	11		25	Kraiburg "	9:35	
6	13		26	Neumunster "	7:55	
4	14		27	Royn, France	8:30	
8	19		28	Falkenberg, Germany	8:35	
+ 2	May 2			Non-sortie Special Mission	8:30	
+ 2	3			Non-sortie Special Mission	7:05	
+ 2	6			Non-sortie Special Mission	5:45	
2	7		29	Special Mission	3:20	261:20

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

*Richard Nickelhoff*  
 RICHARD NICKELHOFF  
 Captain, AC,  
 Asst. Deputy for Ops.,  
 306th Bomb Group (H).

CONFIDENTIAL

MAY 20 LEFT AFS III FOR STONE RD DEPOT. ARRIVED AFS 594 WARRINGTON MAY 23  
 PICKED UP A/C 492 AND LANDED MAY 24, VALLEY, W.V. MAY 26 10 hours LATER ICELAND, MEERS FIELD  
 MAY 28 LANDED 11 hours GOOSE BAY, LABRADOR MAY 30 LEFT FOR BRADLEY FIELD, CONN. 4 hours FLITE

NOV 14, 1944 CHECKED OUT BY SQN. BOMBARDIER 1st LT CURRIER AS TOGETTIER

NOV 26 1944 - LT. DENTON PILOT - PRACTICE FLIGHT

27 -> LT. CATION PILOT - SHIP 896 - TOOK OFF WITH PILOT TUBE COVER IN PLACE.  
Flew to practice Toggelien position and to get pilotage time

28 -> worked armaments on line on ship 196

Dec 6 1944 - London 1st time - got caught in V-2 attack - very frightened

10 - called AS Toggelien in Nfu Nov 297 LT Birdwell Pilot - scrubbed on taxiway

19 - called AS Toggelien with LT. Wood - ~~capt~~ CAPT CURRIER SAYS I'M ON LT WOOD'S CREW AS TOGGELIEN  
MISSION SCRUBBED. CAPT. CURRIER HAD ME CHECKED OUT IN G Model. He is Good INSTRUCTOR

20 - called AS Toggelien with LT. Wood Fog caused scrub - CAPT CURRIER told me he wants  
me to fly AS GUNNER FOR A FEW MISSIONS BEFORE FLYING AS TOGGELIEN.

21 - called AS W. GUNNER - scrubbed

24 - called AS W. GUNNER - HAD TO LAND AT 390<sup>th</sup> BG Framingham due to weather  
LT Wood good Pilot - CAN'T SAY MUCH FOR TAIL GUNNER STEVE - SITTING DUCK OVER TARGET  
Returned to Thurleigh Dec 26

28 - called AS W. GUNNER LT. Wood crew - Long mission

JAN 1, 1945 - called AS W. GUNNER LT. Wood NO. 1 + 2 RUNNING ROUGH TOOK FLAK IN TAIL AREA  
2 - called AS W. GUNNER Heavy flak flew 423<sup>rd</sup> ship - SCARED ON THIS ONE  
3 - sent to Clouston AFS Heavy flak flew AS W. GUNNER

5 - ON WAY TO COLONY AS W. GUNNER when Steve in tail had malaria attack  
AND LT. Wood decided to abort mission

6 - called AS W. GUNNER WITH LT. WOOD, NEW COPILOT AND TAIL GUNNER

10 - called AS W. GUNNER WITH LT. WOOD - carried 2 - 2000 lb and 2 - 1000 lb  
103<sup>rd</sup> Fever - IN HOSPITAL UNTIL JAN 14 - LT. Wood, Ullagran and Max Fontenay visited me

17 - Flew with Wood AS W. GUNNER - HAD ANOXIA

18 - took to report to Bomb Trainer - checked out on NORDEN Bomb Sight - MADE 2 BOMB RUNS WITH  
2 Direct HTS - Allowed to fly the LINK TRAINER

21 - called AS W. GUNNER WITH LT. WOOD

28 - called AS W. GUNNER WITH LT. WOOD - SCRUBBED

Feb. 28 - called AS W. GUNNER WITH LT. WOOD - KOLN - 12-1000 lb

29 - called AS W. GUNNER WITH LT. WOOD in 975

3 - called AS WG WITH LT. HANSON - SCRUBBED

8 - called AS WG WITH LT. HANSON - YOUNG & BERLIN - TARGET VISUAL - SCORED

9 - called AS WG WITH LT. HANSON - SCRUBBED

13 - called AS WG WITH LT. WOOD - HIS LAST MISSION - SCRUBBED - Flew PRACTICE with CAPT. Lewis

14 - called AS WG WITH LT. WOOD AND MIKE ANGELINI AS TAIL GUNNER TO DRESSEN IN 297  
GO Bombardier made us do 360'S - FW 190 jumped us - Wood saved us - Richie, Angelini and  
FITZMAN got ALL OR PART credit for killing FW 190'S

18 - called AS WG WITH LT. HANNEY - SCRUBBED

21 - called AS WG WITH THE HANSEN CREW

22 - called AS WG WITH HANSON CREW - Bombed AT 10,000 - Buzzed field on 300<sup>th</sup> mission

23 - called AS WG WITH HANSON CREW - Bombed AT 10,000 ft.

MAR. 24 - called AS Toggelien with LT. Loman - Both had A&H A&S - Friedrich's took my place to Hambro  
BATTLE DAMAGE - Medics put me in hospital UNTIL MAR. 4

7 - called AS WG WITH HANSEN

8 - called AS WG WITH HANSEN

12 - called AS WG WITH HANSEN - Flew over Denmark - Long mission - went on 48 hr leave

25 - called AS Toggelien with LT. BABIN in Flak Shack (619) - Aborted due to weather

26 - called AS Toggelien with LT. BABIN in 619 Flak Shack - scrubbed

27 - called AS Toggelien with LT. BABIN - SCRUBBED

APR. 29 - called AS Toggelien with LT. SHIEB in 896 - BUT NOT ANSWERTY - Flew 619 to Berlin and I dropped on target  
6 - called AS Toggelien with LT. HANSEN in 832

11 - called AS Toggelien with LT. SHIEB in 896

12 - called AS Toggelien with LT. POWERS in 297 - SCRUBBED

13 - called AS Toggelien with LT. POWERS

14 - called AS Toggelien with LT. SHIEB in 896 Bombed France

MAY 19 - called AS Toggelien with LT. SHIEB in P-143 - RACIC selector switch failure - salvo

2 - called AS WG WITH CAPT ROZETT WITH SHEAF NEWS LEAFS in 838 - went to Buchenwald CE

3 - called AS Toggelien with LT. SHIEB in 838 (PFF) dropped leaflets

6 - called AS Toggelien with LT. SHIEB

7 - called AS Toggelien with LT. POWERS



How Soon?

Irish Lassie



Little Joe

the Clinder

Shel Beigel

~~P.O. BOX 321 ENCINO, CALIFORNIA 91436~~

9813 BEARPAW AVENUE  
Las Vegas, NV  
89117-0628

February 07, 1992

Mr. Russ Strong  
5323 Cheval Place  
Charlotte, NC  
28205-4937

Dear Russ;

In response to your request for directory information (from the January '92 Echoes), the below, following your outline is submitted.

Sheldon (Shel) Beigel  
9813 W. Bearpaw Avenue  
The Lakes  
Las Vegas, NV  
89117-0628

702-363-4848

Gloria  
24 Oct. 1924

#052-18-1158

January, 1989, Partially retired; CEO & President of an industrial polymeric adhesive corporation. (California) Presently on part time basis, active with the Department of Energy, Los Alamos Group in a technical support position.

Cordially,

  
Sheldon Beigel  
369th Sqn.

Shel Beigel  
9813 Bearpaw Ave.  
Las Vegas, Nv.  
89117-0628  
March 06,1993

Harry Friedman M.D.  
Memphis Belle Memorial Association  
626 Shady Grove Rd.S.  
Memphis, Tennessee 38120

Dear Dr. Friedman:

I received yours of the 26th of February upon my return from a trip to California and was suprised by the contents Since it has been some time since I heard from Mr. Bill Stoots (27 S.Bingham St. Memphis 38112) I more or less considered the matter between us closed.

As you may know,the 306th association gathered in Little Rock during September 1989, and one of my table mates at the banquet was Robert W. Seelos (368th Sqn) of Glendale, Ca. He was the pilot who was a mission ahead of your Morgan in the Memphis Belle racing to to be the first to complete their 25, when Sellos( as he tells it) was afflicted with a terrible ear ache. Their Sqn . Flt Surgeon wanted to ground Seelos, but Seelos begged to go on the next mission so he could stay ahead of the 91st. The deal that was struck was that if Sellos had to abort due to pain or injury to the ear etc., then he would be grounded until the infection was gone, and of course Morgan would be uncatchable by then.... Well off Sellos went the next morning, as did Morgan, only over the target Sellos was shot down and spent the remainder of the war in a lager as a PW. He actually was ahead of the 91st crew by one mission at the time .

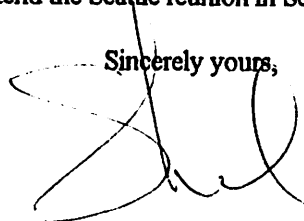
I had met Sellos several times before at different 306 functions, but I flew my missions as a 369 Sqn member and I arived in 1944 and flew into 1945, so Sellos mentioned the Belle only a few miles down the road was available to visit and we could become acquainted with the F model, since I flew in a G model. So, after the reunion. Al Villagran of St. Louis, who was a Sqn.mate of mine, and our wives drove to Memphis where we met Mr. Bill Stoots, who opened the airplane so we could visit. When I saw that your Belle had no wheel hubs, I offered the one I removed from the H or late G model I flew home in May 1945. He accepted my offer and when I did return home, I sent it to him with the stipulation that an inscription be permanantly attached or inscribed on the hub that it came from a member of the 369th Sqn of the 306th BG and he could add my name if he wished too. He responded with thanks and said my wishes would be part of the permanent contributors list to the restoration of the Belle.

I sent it to the Belle restoration program because I wanted to add to the completion program and gave it without any restrictions except it be used as intended. If you now feel it is not original, and you can trade it for an original hub, I would have no objections under such circumstances provided you make it known that the 306BG 369 Sqn member made it possible by contribution. and happily so.

I trust this letter makes it a bit easier to overcome the past concerns you wrote about and since we who flew such airplanes only want the present and coming world to know the Belle aside from her own 25 missions, really represents all of the 4 engine bombers of the 8th AF of that period and the men who flew in them.

I know most if not all of my fellow 306 BG members wish you well as do I. While I don't recall Mr. Don Keller, wish him well for me and if I attend the Seattle reunion in September, I will look for him.

Sincerely yours,





SHELDON BEIGEL  
9813 Bearpaw Ave.  
Las Vegas, Nv.  
89117-0628

March 06, 1993

Mr. Russel Strong  
5323 Cheval Place  
Charlotte, NC  
28205

Dear Russ:

Trust this finds you in good health and spirits. The p/c from the fellow in Memphis and my reply is self explanatory.

I thought you as keeper of the 306th records should be privy to this little episode to something that took place after the 1989 reunion.

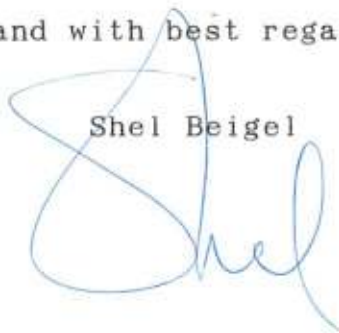
Possibly it might merit the Echos, considering the Belle is a real monument and I know Al Villagran and Bob Sellos would like to see their names in print...

Anyway, it is history related to our past efforts and whatever you decide to do with this iota, is yours to do.

We are considering Seattle and look foward to seeing you once again. Hope you are enjoying your retirement. I am just about 80% retired, on the hold list until the present government decides what to do in July when the moratorium on the Nuclear Test Site is over. If they resume testing, I guess I will be back in harness for my program is in on list.

Stay well and happy, and with best regards,

Shel Beigel



M E M P H I S B E L L E



MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

February 26, 1993

Stahen Corp.  
MAR - 4 1993  
RECEIVED

Mr. Sheldon Beigel  
9813 Bear Paw  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89117

Dear Mr. Beigel:

First, let me introduce myself. I'm Dr. Harry Friedman and am associated with the Memphis Belle Memorial Association. Having been a member for over 15 years involved primarily with the restoration and acquisition of parts for the aircraft, I am also immediate past President. My current role continues to be acquisition of parts and equipment and the documentation thereof of items for the airplane and the museum. I came by your name through Mr. Don Keller, who is an associate member of the 306th Bomb Group and he tells me that you are the gentleman who left with us two control wheel caps with the Boeing logo some months ago. The person with whom you left that equipment, assuming you are the gentleman, is no longer with us. He refused to tell us who the source of the gift was, and we accordingly have no paperwork, and it was in coincidentally talking with Mr. Keller that I learned that you were the donor. There are two reasons for my writing you, one of which is a bit unpleasant. It seems that some weeks ago a former member of the Association who apparently had access to a key took a group of people through the plane and shortly thereafter we discovered that one of the caps which you had donated was missing. Numerous phone calls and attempts to track down the item have been fruitless. For that I am apologetic. We thought we had good security on the airplane, but apparently some keys were still out. We are in the process of changing the locks and trying to increase security.

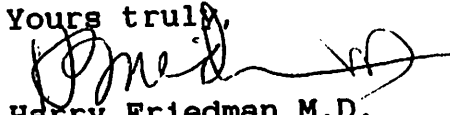
The other thing that I wanted to find out from you was the nature of the transfer of the items to us. Was this an outright unconditional gift, or was it a loan? The reason I ask is that this same Mr. Keller is in the process of building a replica cockpit of a B-17G. The caps which you left with us come off of a B-17G. Keller has the type of cap that would have gone on the control column of the B-17F and we are most anxious to work out a trade with him for this item. His plans are to take this replica cockpit around as a demonstration both to 306th Bomb Group functions and for other educational purposes. I'm sure that it would be used in a very beneficial way. We will abide by your wishes in this matter, but before I closed any trades I wanted to check with

Mr. Beigel  
2/26/93

Page 2

you on this. As I say, we are unclear of the nature of the gift and need to clarify this. Our new policy is that we receive items unconditionally, i.e., we may use them either on the plane or for display or for trade for items that are needed. I hope you understand our predicament.

Yours truly,



Harry Friedman M.D.  
Memphis Belle Memorial Association  
626 Shady Grove Rd. S.  
Memphis, Tennessee 38120

HF/rf

Shel Beigel  
9813 Bearpaw Ave.  
Las Vegas, NV  
89113-0628

August 14, 1993

Mr. Russ Strong  
Charlotte, NC 28205

Dear Russ:

Some time ago I filled you in regarding my donating to the Memphis Belle Memorial Association the control wheel hub from the B-17G I flew home in from AAF Sta 594 on May 19, 1945 under S.O. #139.

While the hub(s) were mounted on the Memphis Belle, they were technically not correct, since the Belle is a F model and they wanted to locate hubs from an F. As I am assuming from the correspondence from Dr. Harry Friedman of the MBMA (enclosed) they, the MBMA bartered my donation to Mr. Don Keller, who it develops, is listed as a friend in the 306 Directory, for hubs from a F.

When I understood that late incoming information, I wrote Dr. Friedman for assurances and verification that the people of the 306th BG will be listed and credited on the Memphis Belle regardless if my donation wasn't attached. Also I have absolutely no idea who Don Keller is or what project he is building that would require G hubs.

Enclosed is the mail from both, Don Keller and the good doctor in Memphis assuring me the Men of the WW2 306th BG will be publicly credited with restoration assistance on both projects.

Keller states he will attend our Seattle meeting, and if he does locate me, I would like you to be present as he describes what transpired since my donation after the Little Rock reunion. It sounds as if the 306th BG will be getting credit from both projects, and if so, I will be more than satisfied.

Looking forward to seeing you again and I hope you can find the time for this little meeting.

With best regards,

  
Shel

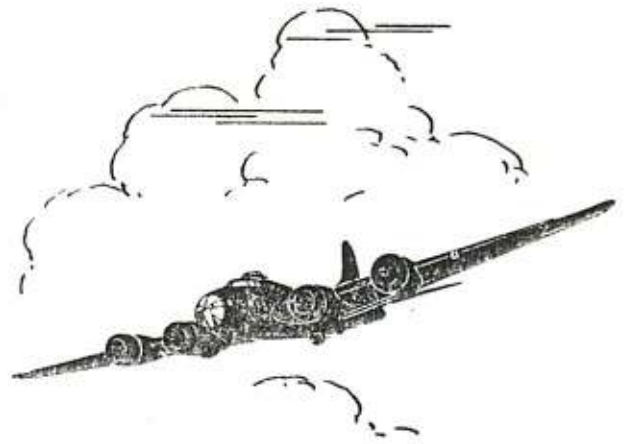
# AIR DEPOT

Donald L. Keller

P. O. Box 2111

Beaverton, Oregon 97075-2111

503-646-4176



Dear Mr. Reigel,

I received your name and address from Dr. Harry Friedman. He has assured me that the cap the currently have will be placed on display, and that proper credit will be given to you and the men of the 306<sup>th</sup> for their assistance.

The other cap will be used on a display of the Boeing B-17, and will eventually be a part of the B-17 cockpit. In both of these displays, the crews of the 306<sup>th</sup>, and yourself will be given honor in the display for their contributions during WWII, and credit for assistance in our veterans reunion display.

It is important to us that you and the other men of the 306<sup>th</sup> are given their proper credit.

I hope to see you in Seattle!

Don

Rec'd  
Aug 9, 1993

Rec'd Beigel

M E M P H I S B E L L E



MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

August 2, 1993

Mr. Shel Beigel  
9813 Bearpaw Avenue  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89117-0628

Dear Mr. Beigel:

Please forgive the delay in replying to your letter of May 29th. The Navy has kept me quite busy. I want to reaffirm as I did in my letter of March 17th, that Mr. Keller is well aware of the importance of having this item credited to the memory of the 306th Bomb Group personnel. I have again spoken with him by phone and he understands this. If further clarification is needed, please don't hesitate to let me know. We look forward to a future visit from you again.

Yours truly,

Harry Friedman, M.D.  
Memphis Belle Memorial Association  
626 Shady Grove Road S.  
Memphis, TN 38120

HF/rf

**SHEL BEIGEL 9813 BEARPAW AVE. LAS VEGAS, NV 89117**

Tel: 702-363-4848 Fax: 702-255-7870

**February 12,1997**

**Mr. Russell A. Strong  
5323 Cheval Place  
Charlotte, NC 28205**

**Dear Russ:**

**I have been meaning to write to you about the tour and the matters relating to the association since the early part of January.**

**In the middle of January we had the MRI taken of Gloria's brain and while it showed no organic abnormalities, it concluded the diagnosis that Gloria is in the early stages of Alzheimer or Alzheimer like disease. As you may know, there is no treatment presently available to stem this malady. Up until the Jan. 24 meeting with the neurologists, we had various examinations, and our course now is not to venture too far from home base. I apologize for not responding sooner regarding our inability to go on the tour. Gloria is otherwise in good shape. She does have short term memory loss and a loss of cognitive capabilities in selecting words sometimes as well as not being able on occasions to do simple arithmetic. If she holds at this juncture, we can live with it until it is time to go...When things are normal with this graduate from U of C Berkeley '48, she is as sharp as ever, but it has taken a toll from her. If she doesn't get any worse, we will attend Orlando in November.**

**I also wish to apologize for my lack of response to the requests suggested at the last director's meeting. Please reiterate just what is needed from me as it relates to the Savannah Center. I am in receipt of your letter of 3 Feb. Do you want additional names of Association members whom I believe can contribute \$500? If so, please see attached and I hope it is not duplication of what you already have received.**

**Feel free to communicate now that we are free of so many doctor's visits, we can perform our usual routines and be responsive. Trust you and yours are well.**

**SHEL BEIGEL 9813 BEARPAW AVE. LAS VEGAS, NV 89117**

**Feb. 27, 1997**

**Mr. Russell A. Strong  
5323 Cheval Place  
Charlotte, NC 28205**

**Dear Russ:**

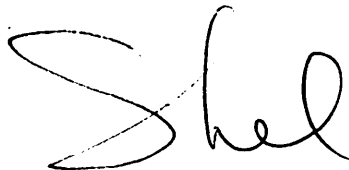
**Thanks for June's and your good wishes regarding our problems ahead of us. It is much appreciated. At the moment, we fervently hope she remains no worse than she is, which is about 5-10% from normal. Positively put, she is 90%+ most of the time, but no way of knowing when she is possessed by the remainder...**

**I am really in the need of your services with Ed P. Maliszewski. He was here for an afternoon and during that time I tried to get him to respond to the letter asking for \$500-1000.**

**He seems for reasons I could not glean, dispassionate regarding the whole program. He also feels that the 306th BG has not received the recognition it deserves over the years. He states with conviction, the 8th AF was established with only three groups. He admits to be the first 369 member and being appointed to many positions, such as S-1, 2, 3 and other s. He was also adamant in stating he was the very first rated pilot in the 369th. He was sent while this initial organization was developing in early 1942, Feb. or so, in Salt Lake City to learn to fly B-24's from Northwest Airlines. When he returned to Salt Lake, they sent to Wendover where the 306 BG was taking shape. He truly was an original in every respect.**

**So his attitude is why establish the museum? He specifically want to know where the money is going? Who is adjudicating the money? Who will it honor? Questions like that. I also suspect he will donate with some coaching from you or your designated upon receiving information . I also believe he should be listed as an honored original who completed his tour. I pass all this off to you, because you are in a better position to complete it.**

**We are in Seattle, in case you noted the cancel on the envelope. Our daughter lives north of Seattle in Marysville, and we all decided they should have some quality time together and help Gloria reconcile herself to the diagnosis. All the best**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shel".





367th, 368th, 369th, 423rd Squadrons, and service organizations  
Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England – September 1942-April 1945

# 306<sup>TH</sup> BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION

*President*

Robert W. Seelos  
1458 Virginia Avenue  
Glendale, CA 91202

*Vice President*

Joseph R. Hathaway  
1031 N. Meade Avenue  
Glendive, MT 59330

*Secretary*

Russell A. Strong  
5323 Cheval Place  
Charlotte, NC 28205

*Treasurer*

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2412 48th Street  
Des Moines, IA 50310

*Directors*

Sheldon Beigel  
9813 Bearpaw Avenue  
Las Vegas, NV 89117

John K. Hickey  
3340 Nantucket Road  
Lexington, KY 40502

Russell G. Houghton  
4444 E. Benson Hwy, #259  
Tucson, AZ 85706

Donald L. Snook  
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Westport, CT 06880

*Past President*

M/Gen James S. Cheney  
630 Cinnamon Court  
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*1997 Reunion Chairman*

D. Luke Jacobs  
3214 Flowertree Road  
Orlando, FL 32812

*British Representative*

Ralph Franklin  
Mill Hill  
Keysoe, Beds MK44 2HP  
England

*1997 Reunion*

6-9 November  
Adams Mark Hotel,  
Florida Mall  
Orlando, FL

July 28, 1997

Dear Russ:

You may find the enclosed to be a space filler, should want to use it sometime. As you can see, I was "surfing" on June 18 last and stumbled onto the Bedford web page. I sent the message to no one in particular other than the Webmaster for Bedford. Being no reply after a few days, I assumed the E-mail didn't get there and forgot about it.

I was pleased to discover the enclosed return when I checked my E-mail the night of the 25<sup>th</sup> of this month. It certainly confirms the adage that we live in a small world.

If you are on the internet, you may wish to follow up with the sender and have a contact within the Bedford gov'n't offices. Your choice as always. Ralph and Daphne should be pleased as surprised. I don't recall they mentioning they had a son called Graham.

Our travails here at home continue, and if Gloria remains at her present state of health, I will make Orlando. If she is not up to the trip, I will try to find someone to stay with her while I make the trip/ It will depend upon her condition at the time.

I trust things are well with you and June.

Most sincerely,

Enc.



367th, 368th, 369th, 423rd Squadrons, and service organizations  
Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England – September 1942-April 1945

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*President*

Joseph R. Hathaway  
1031 N. Meade Avenue  
Glendive, MT 59330

*Vice President*

Alfred J. Switzer  
684 Floral Drive  
Kissimmee, FL 34743

*Secretary*

Russell A. Strong  
5323 Cheval Place  
Charlotte, NC 28205

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Robert N. Houser  
2412 48th Street  
Des Moines, IA 50310

*Directors*

Sheldon Beigel  
9813 Bearpaw Avenue  
Las Vegas, NV 89117

Wallace D. Boring  
2348 Old Knoxville Pike  
Maryville, TN 37804

Russell G. Houghton  
4444 E. Benson Hwy, #259  
Tucson, AZ 85706

Claiborne W. Wilson  
1903 Spring Lane  
Sanford, NC 27330

*Past President*

Robert W. Seelos  
1458 Virginia Avenue  
Glendale, CA 91202

*1998 Reunion Chairman*

Clayton E. Ridge  
7078 Stonington Dr. NE  
Atlanta, GA 30328

*British Representative*

Ralph Franklin  
Mill Hill  
Keysoe, Beds MK44 2HP  
England

*1998 Reunion*

4-6 December  
Savannah Marriott Hotel  
Savannah, GA

January 2, 1998

Mr. Russ Strong  
5323 Cheval Place  
Charlotte, N C 28205

Dear Russ:

RE: On AOL, Keyword:Seniornet

Herewith another one of the unknowns for your attention.

As I do with some frquency, surf the net, as they say, I encountered on AOL, the page called SeniorNet. The links to the page as follows: On the SeniorNet page, click WW2 Memories, then click on Memories Board, then click WW2 Experiences, click the Browse button which will get you SrNet WW2 Board and run down scroll to Bombardiers WW2.

I found a six month old notice for help as enclosed from KTomei@AOL.Com who looking for information on Lemuel B. Smith who was an early bird at the 306th. I answered with the message also attached.

It must be assumed there are hundreds or more out there not 'found' by our association. Hopefully this may lead to something good for all concerned.

Our best wishes for you and June for a healthy 1998.

**From:** whouli3947 <whouli3947@msn.com>  
**To:** Russell Strong <Russell.a.strong306@worldnet.att.net>  
**Date:** Sunday, May 13, 2001 12:36 PM  
**Subject:** Fw: She is in heaven

---

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [Bearpaw4](#)  
**To:** [whouli3947](#)  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 29, 2001 8:18 PM  
**Subject:** She is in heaven

Russ: I believe that I sent this to you? Shel is having a rough time even though he has expected it for a long time.  
Bill & Ruth

It is with profound sorrow beyond measurable means that I relate that Gloria passed on at 6.a.m. on Saturday April 28. She suffered with this damnable disease for more than 7 years and my braveheart never complained inspite of the facts she knew there were no medicines, cure or hope. She stopped breathing when her body slowly shut down her vitals organs and she was nothing but skin stretched over bones. Fortunately she was not in any pain since I was administering the lorazepam and morphine.

The funeral is scheduled for 2 p.m. on wednesday May 2 in Mission Hills, CA (LA area)  
I am forever seperated physically, but not in mind until I am called.

Hug each other ...

Shel

**From:** William Houlihan <Whoulihan@twmi.rr.com>  
**To:** Russell Strong <Russell.a.strong306@worldnet.att.net>  
**Cc:** Bill Landrum <wlandrum@bellsouth.net>; Edward Klutz <eklutz@bellsouth.net>  
**Date:** Saturday, September 15, 2001 2:49 PM  
**Subject:** Fw: Get your uniform out once again

---

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [Bearpaw4@nvcbell.net](mailto:Bearpaw4@nvcbell.net)  
**To:** [William Houlihan](mailto:William.Houlihan)  
**Sent:** Saturday, September 15, 2001 8:11 AM  
**Subject:** Get your uniform out once again

Dear Bill & Ruth;

I, of course, have heard about the Nostradamus predictions and while they always seem to have been predicted correctly, I have been for many years saying to any who would listen, .. that we are going to fight the Muslims one day. However, while I expected some type of instigation, didn't conceive of such magnitude. These events of last Tuesday, require an act of equal or better, form of war decalaration. The dermatologist I saw yesterday, normally as quiet and caregiving you would expect of a medical doctor, simply said upon walking into the room, "...I hope we nuke all of Afghanistan." I and Rita, agreed. I get to stay home at 77, but he is only 39! However should they be short of flight crews to make a bombing run, I would be most happy and ready to oblige since I never have lost my memories of my prior training and experiences of 32 bombing runs over Germany. While I have always thought the Nazis need killing, I have firmly the same opinion about the Muslim world as regarding their feeling of the non-Muslim world, of which I am a part. Ed H will attest to my frequent espression after the many atrocities committed by the Muslim people in the Israeli part of the world,..." Go kiss an arab and ask if he loves you." I would volunteer once again to do what I know needs to be done, if they would allow me to do it. I hope we don't take too long to get our act together and allow for the Pakis, Afghans, Iraqis, Iranians, and the Syrians and probably the Egyptians to learn about the feelings 99% of the Americans express about their dastardly acts and attitudes regarding the United States. The time has come and so has theirs. We need to finish it by completing the task to finality for them.

Hope all is well in the Houlihan house. Rita and I are solidly a pair now. Trying to get settled and finishing the tasks from moving her here asap. Most happy to have a loving person in the house once again. Her family, all 23 of them, have sent their best wishes and all seems to be on a happy road. She is a top cook as well and I am finally eating people food(as I call my feeble attemps trying to cook a decent meal) once again. Establishing a herb garden is already on the works' list for her.

It is 5 AM and while I awoke at 3.45 wide awake, I am getting sleepy now. My sleep pattern has been out of whack since Gloria's entrance into Hospice last December.

Let me know the rest of the reunion story. How many showed up and did you see Em Christianson? Did they earn enough money to come out in a good position in your estimation?

With L & A to the both of you.

Shel & Rita

9/16/01

**Russell Strong**

---

**From:** "William Houlihan" <whoulihan@twmi.rr.com>  
**To:** "Thurman/Joan Shuller" <tshuller@sbcglobal.net>  
**Cc:** "Russell/June Strong" <Russell.a.strong306@worldnet.att.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 11, 2003 7:48 PM  
**Subject:** Fw: Briefing

Sheldon writes a very interesting story. I thought it was worthwhile to pass on to you.

— Original Message —

**From:** Bearpaw4  
**To:** William Houlihan  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 10, 2003 10:20 PM  
**Subject:** Re: Briefing  
**From:** William Houlihan

**To:** Sheldon Beigel

**Subject:** Briefing

Shel,

How about that briefing in connection with your trip?

Bill & Ruth:

This time, the jet lag got to the both of us. Going we were up Pacific time at 6 AM to to put everything in it's place and get ready for the 11AM arrival at the airport. We did make Amer.Airlines happy by being on time for the documents and papers to be stamped, folded and etc. The plane went about an hour after we finally passed all the security tests at 1.07 for Chicago fully packed. Changed planes to the beautiful 777 by Boeing and were in the air arriving the next day at Heathrow time at 10.30 AM. THat is 2.30 AM our time without sleep, dozing on and off. The Doherty's were waiting and we took off for Bedford. To say we were tired is to understste the feeling. Not the chipper young tom I was. Doherty never was in England proper and his lack of direction and driving on the wrong side of the road etc, woke me up.He did take his commando/ranger training in Dundee Scotland in 1964 but never got to England until this trip. I performed the navigators job with a map Jim purchased in the states. It was an area map of the major roads with little detail. It did not show our village Thurleigh, but did show Clapham and Milton Ernest as dits on the aux roads.My last trip there was in 1985 and the changes were overwhelming. However, is due course we presented ourselves at the gate to the autodrome, formerly known as AF111.

7/12/03

After making our presences known, the guard called the Franklins, who were at home and they appeared in a few minutes. They are the among the best Brittain has to offer. After the greetings and hearty hugs and kisses, we followed them to the museum, down the road apiece... I have a long hisitory with the Franklins, and they opened the closed small munitions building of the former 306 BG that houses th museum. I was surprised to see the displays of the old equipment, badges and uniforms. The photos were interesting as were the lithos, drawings and art work were fascinating. He has a jeep with our markings on the bumper, that is from the fighting sqn., the 369th that still runs. While we were there three locals showed up from another village with four softball bats, louisville sluggers, that they somehow gathered as young boys as the war ended. They kept them all these years and salved their sense of guilt but giving them to the 306th museum. Ralph showed them to me as he was taking them to the rear. Aside from one or two them being split from age, they seemed fine to me. In all, we spent about 2 hours looking at all the militaria, from the Brit uniforms and badges and pictures to those of the USAAF and he even has two US Nurses and a red cross dress uniforms on manikins. Both flying and dress gear that we wore while there. Many incidentals, from both, the US and Brits war time duties. There is a continuous playing video of the 306th flying in combat and on station along with an AirForce film running. Several 306th members have donated large lithos of the war time period, as well as photos of the various crews, inclduing those that Strong put in the echos over the past few years. There is an interesting pamphlet that complements the visit by giving the history of the 306th that is nicely laid out. It has the Hennessy picture of the blessing before a mission by Fr. Polliti. I will shortly photocopy it for you along with some other of (hopefully) interest.

I invited the Franklins to be our guests at dinner originally at the the Queens Head where we reserved rooms, but something happened and Ralph seemed contrite about, so I changed it to the Falcon which is nearby. The 6 of us had a gracious meal with the many courses. I was so sleepy about the serving of the dessert, I was barely able to stand. Paid the bill and we retired as the Brits say...Of course nothing is as it was. The old airbase is still an open area but is filled with thousands of cars and trucks. No airplanes. The Falcon is still a nice pub/restuarant. There has been several owners/ managers since even 1985. I did though, had one of the two drinks during my trip back at the Falcon as I did in days gone bye. It is owned by the Chas. Wells brewery of Bedford and still has a nice kitchen with ample choices. No one working there at this time had any knowledge of the 306th BG history with the Falcon.

The Queens Head with its pub became our B&B and it was very comfortable. It also has been purchased by a large firm that has this sort of Pub B&B all over the UK. I should say that everything in the UK is very expensive presently. We rented a Rover 76 stationwagon that was able to carry the four of us and all our luggage. It appeared to get reasonable gas mpg with all that weight and driving 80 mph. Did

you know unless posted at construction or exits, there are no speed limits in the UK? Slow and truck vehicles must stay to the left lane, and any speed goes in the remaining lanes. When it became time to purchase petrol, one needs to take a mortgage on the homestead to pay for it. We estimated the Rover had a 20 gallon tank and to fill it up at 74p, totaled over \$60 USD on the average. Jim and I split the gas and I never gave him as my share for the fill less than 20 pounds which at our time was converted at 1.77USD per pound. The bulk of the price for the gas was taxes. They are taxed for everything because of the socialism of the Gov't. Anyway,

On the morn of Saturday the 28th of June we were off for our digs at the resort in the small town of Carnforth in Lancs. Estimate it to be some 200 miles to the northwest near the Irish sea. Some 8 miles north of Lancaster. Arrived there in the middle of the afternoon and we all dropped just where our rooms were. I rented a suite of two bedrooms, and kitchen, living room and bath on a lake that had some 30 or more swans begging crumbs. After dinner, we decided we were better off to drop the trip to Ireland this time and instead try for Glasgow and Edinburgh as easier on the body. Passed out before dark and on the 29th, confirmed our decision to just do Scotland and went out locally to not too distant villages and towns, stocking the kitchen and visited several interesting places and people. Gathered our strength so to speak. Tried counting the swans again and gave up after 30. On the 30th we took off for Glasgow in the light rain. Glasgow is in a funk or depression. Most of what we saw was shuttered and closed. It was bleak and dirty. Decided by all to get under way to Edinburgh. Stopped in Stirling to go through the Stirling Castle. A highly interesting place to visit. Mary Queen of Scots was born there. Several Kings and Queens were excuted there as well. As Jim said, don't really want to be the head guy or gal here in Scotland, no longevity on the job before they take your head off. He was correct. Scottish history is something to behold. Put simply, if they were not fighting each other. They combined to fight the English. Today, I find it is just verbalized as the Scots seem to be resigned to be waiting for the day...

After Sterling we headed for Edinburgh and hunted up a B&B ala the Falcon and or the Queens Head. It was pouring buckets. On the 1st of July, we drove about Edinburg and were taken by the city. It is a mixture of old and new. Old is 1500 + and new is 1800+. The city was filled with all ethnic types from the globe. Heavy rain compounded by the fact the Queen was in the city and was to visit the Edinburgh castle. Much going on. We finnaly managed to park the car and walk up the steep hills covered with the "Royal Mile" to the entrance. The castle is better with a guide, which we had this time. When I was there in '85, we wandered about with book in hand. This time it was audible and we asked the fellow questions and he answered them. Rita purchased a tartan skirt which I thought would keep me in poverty for a year after paying for it. They have the Scottish crown jewels on display and I asked the guard if they were replicas. He showed some umbrage and remarked there is nothing but the Scottish Honors on display... I looked at them a

bit closer. The crowns and scepters and pins and brooches and they still looked like zirks to me. But then what do I know about such things anyway. This castle is also built on the highest hill in Edinburgh and is fortified to keep the knights of yore at bay. I can't imagine wearing full armor charging up those hills to do battle. I would be dead from exhaustion about half way up the front walk. We spent most of the day there for it is really interesting. They even have a memorial to the fallen from all their wars. From the Zulus to to the Falkans. They have a RAF book of the dead from the '39 to '45 period. Typical Brits, they have the front of the book with the officers' names and the back of the book for the enlisted. Since they had so many Sgt. Pilots, it is 3 times the size of the front. Keeping them separated even in their honored dead places. In a pounding rain we headed back to our digs for some needed sleep, all castled out. On the 2nd of July we drove to the town of Falkirk where they have an engineering marvel, called the Falkirk Wheel. With this wheel, they solved the ancient problem of the failure of locks on the canals where the drop is greater than any lock can handle. Visualize a huge ferris wheel with only two chairs that equally rotate in an upright position as the big wheel itself rotates. These are bays of water instead of chairs and they move you from the a height of 150 feet to the lower level so your canal boat can sail right on once the doors are dropped. We took the ride and it was really enjoyable to watch it happen. The only one of it's kind in the world. Amazing contraption built for to prove it can be done. They had the first commercial boat in the 18 months it has been operating, come by. All the others are the tourists just going up and coming down. Drove the car back to Carnforth slowly since we all were tired. On July 3 we just loafed all day doing almost nothing, counted the swans again to see how many really were there, but they float into a flock and no use beyond agreed 30 number.

On the 4th of July in red coat country we went to York, a very ancient city going back to the 800's. We spent considerable time in the York Minster, a cathedral built in 1100's It is something to behold. Since it began before the Reformation, it was built as a Catholic Cathedral, converted by human sayso to High English Anglican to today. We walked the streets still narrow and as they were in the 12th to the 16th centuries. We walked through the street they call the Shambles where the two opposing buildings almost touch each other from leaning across the narrow cobble "street". Very historic from very turbulent times. Of course we wandered into the many shops of the district and had some very interesting conversations. When I told several middle age people that I "lived" in the midlands for 8 months during my tour, they all thanked me for helping to save Brittain. No lunch though, couldn't get anyone to buy lunch. Younger days I would ask for a drink, but no more at this age.

On the 5th of July we checked out of Carnforth and drove down to Coventry to see the burned out church that Churchill allowed to be bombed even though he knew the Germans were going to bomb it through their breaking the code of the Kraut Enigma system. It was Nov.14, 1940. I went to see it while I was at Thurleigh in



1944. Went back again in 1985 to see the new cathedral built adjacent to the ruins. The Doherty's also wanted to see it. It really is something to see them side by side. We spent about 3 hours there. Getting late after driving through more than a third of England and headed back to the Queens Head in Milton Ernest where we booked for two nights. Called Ralph upon arrival and he asked us to meet him again at the museum. We did and it was really comfortable to be among so much from my early years. I had my 20th birthday there. We took pictures of each other in groups and again said good bye with the kisses and hugs. On the 6th of July, our last day, since the Doherty's live in Woburn, MA, it seemed natural to take them to Woburn Abbey, not far from Bedford, still in Bedfordshire. Upon arrival all were impressed with the amount of land under fence belonging to the duke. We took the car tour of the safari areas where hundreds of red deer run in large herds. Finally parked in the area not far from the motel the Duke lives in, about the size of the Edinburgh castle, when I noticed some old farts in the black beanie and one or two in red beanie of the paratroops, all with rows of shiny medals and some with the holders straps for the flags coming our way. I asked what was happening and they told me it was their equivalent of our memorial day and all the Bedfordshire posts of the British Legion was attending the civic ceremony in the parade grounds just ahead of us. Told them I thought that was very nice they would be doing that. So they asked what I was doing there and I told them I came home to my village, Thurleigh, etc. They called me brother and invited us to join them. For Rita and myself they asked two others to get up out of their chairs along the parade ground near the dias and sat us down. They were not too impressed with Jim's history of being an early long ranging commando in VN in 1964, and he had to stand in the back of the crowd until I noticed he was not close by at the near end of all the prayers etc. I didn't see them passing the word that a flier from Thurleigh of 1944-45 was sitting there until the end when the moguls came over to be introduced to me. So I met the chairman of the Shire council ; a fellow who runs the estate for the Duke, a retired Major from the Brit Marines, who comes to Reno to visit a close friend who lives at Lake Tahoe and promised to call the next time he comes. We exchanged names and addresses etc.

Then there was all the old soldiers from everything from the Falkan Islands to WW2. All types, sailors, RAF, infantry, etc. Some quite articulate and some if the prime minister of all England was there, I still would not understand what was said. A nice lady close to my age, very well dressed by the name of Mrs. J. Shrubbs, MBE, is the Vice President Bedfordshire County gave the "Act of Remembrance". I was impressed with her vibrant voice and stage presence and said so to my host sitting on my right. He must have said something to her while I was busy with the others when she strode up. Even the Colonel of Paratroops, gave way to her as she was introduced to me. She turned out to be quite a merry widow and a happy camper. When the fellows with the gold chains around their necks came and asked some questions that she was needed somewhere for something. Aside from two clerics, Rev. Canon N.P. Morell, County Chaplain, and the Rev. J.A. Heslop, vicar

of the Woburn St.Marys, the service of the massed flags doing the Brit version of Taps was impressive. Particularly when they in very slow unison lay the flag on the ground to the tempo of their Taps. Must have been 50 flags from various towns in Beds. Very impressive. We drove back to the Queens Head, and before dinner, we drove the 2 miles to Thurleigh and parked in the rear of the Jackal. It too is now owned by the Chas. Wells Brewery of Bedford and didn't open until 7 pm. I took Rita's arm and we started walking up the hill from the Jackal until the few streets up ended and became the country road it has always been. The village probably has gained maybe a dozen new homes, modern, not any new thatched roofs to be seen anywhere. I needed to say good bye and close the door on Thurleigh.

Well, that sums it up in a capsul. We were up at 6 am, had breakfast and drove to London getting there around 10 am. Checked in with American A/L and went through some sloppy security and entered the duty free area. Still had about 60 quid left. After eating, we wandered about and I discovered one of my favorite whiskies was there. I like the Black label of Bushmills when I can find it. Here was a whole liter for 15.99 pounds. (\$28.30) Next line over is Bushmills 1608. Never saw that before anywhere. On inquiring, was told it is the limited bottling of 20 years old casked whiskey that is sold only in the UK since there isn't enough for further distribution. I bought the Black label jug and walked on looking at everything from watches to crystal. Still wondering about that 1608, the year Bushmills was granted the license to make whiskey, I asked one of the fancy watch vendors what he knew about the 1608. "Blathering expensive, but excellent Limited production". I hightailed it back to the liquor section and asked for a sample taste of the 1608, which they offer for the many types they have in the Dutyfree section. It was about 10.30 am and I don't recall drinking at that hour ever, but both of us took the little drop and it went down like velvet and now I know the secret of the Irish. They don't really want the world to know they know how to make that kind of whiskey. Spoils their image, doesn't it?

I went back and spent it all, leaving me with just one penny copper. Gave that away also. In the duty free store I spent 24.99 pounds, that is \$44.23 for 1L of the smoothest Irish I have encountered. It is many times smoother than my coveted Black Label up until now. I have both jugs home with me for when I get sick and need to raise my strength.

If you guys ever visit me, I may allow for the rationing of a small taste, if there is any left that is. Hope this is of interest to you.  
Fire any questions you may have.

My best hugs to you both.

Rita & Shel