



331ST AIR SERVICE SQDN
15TH USAAF

Reunion Group



Final Official Newsletter
October 15, 2002

Dear Friends of the 331st Reunion Group:

Another year has passed and all those who had to change their plans or cancel their reservations and could not attend the reunion in September, 2002 were truly missed. As it was, those attending were:

John & Martha Evans
Robert & Mickey Koehler
Gordon & Lena LaMoy
Millard & Irene Lumley
John Prior

Bob Koehler had everything arranged and set up in a hospitality room adjacent to his room where everybody gathered and exchanged greetings prior to a great meal in the dining room at Jumer's on Thursday, September 19, 2002.

For the benefit of those who could not attend, I'll summarize the activities of our reunion. Friday morning, everybody enjoyed a nice breakfast of their choice at Jumer's with more rounds of conversation and visiting. Thereafter, the ladies departed to Millard's & Irene's room to continue their visiting while the members assembled in the hospitality room for discussion and transaction of Group matters at hand.

You may have noticed in the heading that this is the final official newsletter for the Reunion Group. Because of the decrease in attendance, we were faced with an inevitable situation which has been in the minds of all members as far back as 1997 that someday it would be necessary to dissolve the Group. That action was taken at this meeting and a copy of the minutes for that meeting is enclosed.

At the conclusion of the membership meeting, Bob Koehler arranged for a Jumer van to transport the whole group to the Octoberfest being held nearby on the shore of the Illinois River. The main feature was the 'Lederhosen-Musikanten' band group, traveling all the way from Umpfenbach, Germany. That was really great entertainment and concluded a full day, and by then all were ready to retire.

Saturday morning, all the group walked to the 'Coffee House' nearby for a good breakfast. Later, the ladies wanted to go to the large antique mall and, again, Jumer's furnished a courtesy van, to and from, for them. In the meantime the men reconvened in the hospitality room for an informal meeting for winding up the Group's affairs, sending out cards to the known ill members and absentees who could not attend, reminiscing, looking at photos and talking with one another.

At 6:00 p.m. everyone met for dinner in the Library Room at Jumer's. The service was superb and we enjoyed a delicious meal. Picture taking followed, which concluded another great day at our reunion, and one to be remembered.

Early Sunday was a day of packing, checking out, farewells and departures, led by John Prior who had to be at the airport around 5:00 a.m.

I think I'm speaking for everyone who attended, that we really enjoyed the fellowship. We all hope this isn't the end of the association within the 331st Reunion Group. If you think of someone, give that person a call, write a note or, if you're traveling in the area of a member, stop by for a visit. There is enclosed a currently updated roster and attendance record for your reference and record.

I want to say here, THANKS, to Bob Koehler for his unfailing concern and drive to keep our 331st Reunion Group going. Also, THANKS, to John Prior for his devotion as Chaplain for our Group and his generosity in sending cards and making phone calls concerning members. In addition, I want to say, THANKS, in writing, to Irene Lumley for her conscientious effort and time in typing up all my letters and reports for the Group. (You're welcome! - I.)

Other News and Items of Interest

We were really glad that John and Martha Evans could come. John has vision at the sides but not straight ahead. So, Martha did all the driving, clear through, 670 miles each way, from Cleveland, TN, to Peoria, IL. We know that must have been quite a strain, Martha. Thanks.

Bob and Mickey Koehler lucked out this time. Their home at Morton, IL is around 20 miles or so from Peoria, so it was no push for them and no tickets were needed. I mentioned in the previous Newsletter #3 that Bob and Mickey had made plans to take an Alaskan Cruise last August. Well, when the time came they spent the night before departure in Chicago for convenience. Then, when they went to check in, their tickets were gone and everything turned into a great calamity. Bob found out that he could get clearance for the cruise but the airline was going to charge them \$900 each one way to Vancouver, B. C. Then, by grace of God, a woman came running up waving their tickets that she found where he had dropped them outside. I must add that they had a most enjoyable cruise. Bob, I just had to tell that story. I've always dreaded that happening to me and would be forever patting my pocket, congratulating myself that the tickets were still there.

Gordon and Lena LaMoy flew from Snowmass, CO to Tulsa to ride with Irene and I from Tulsa to Peoria. It's hard to see much on the ground when you're flying at 35,000 feet, so we made a leisurely trip with a stop-over at St. Louis to take a ride to the top of the arch and walk through the museum there. Then on to visit Lincoln's Tomb at Springfield, IL and on to Peoria.

When returning, we drove to Hannibal, MO to visit Mark Twain's birthplace, etc., then on to Columbia, MO to see what a 'corn maze' was like. It is a tall grown corn field with paths cut at all sorts of angles to find your way through to the exit. There were a lot of people there and it looked like fun but would take approximately 1-1/2 hrs. which would be tough for Gordon and his bad left knee, so we passed that up. We spent the night in Independence, MO (Kansas City, MO). Had a short visit with my son, Roger and his wife, Suzanne. We went through the Harry Truman Library and Museum the next morning and on to Emporia, KS, my home town. Gordon wanted to see the farm and area where I grew up and spent the first 20 years before going to Tulsa in 1937.

After that, I thought we'd have time for a short visit with my second daughter, Marlene, who is a counselor in an elementary school at Caney, KS, 100 miles south. In my hurry, I overlooked an unmarked car, thought to be a family car with the tops of little heads showing up in the rear seat. Well, to my sudden surprise all those little heads turned out to be pretty bright flashing lights and the Kansas Highway Patrolman didn't like that. Well, after checking me out on the radio, I guess he had sympathy for an old guy and said he was giving me a WARNING ticket and told me to SLOW IT DOWN. Needless to say, we didn't get to Caney before Marlene had left school. Nevertheless, I felt really lucky and arrived home in good time for a brief visit with my first daughter, Jannelle, and husband. I think Gordon and Lena felt like they really had a full day because they hit the sack soon after getting to the house. They caught their flight for home the next day.

Also, an additional unpleasant surprise was that when I arrived home I found that some vandal had shot the rear window out of my Camry station wagon with a B.B. gun. That turned out to be a time consuming, expensive repair.

Again, when we arrived home on September 24th, we had a telephone message from John Prior, saying that -

1. He had telephoned John Herth in Enid, OK, who is not doing good. He has had a colon cancer operation and his wife, Vadah, is nearly blind. I'm sure he would appreciate a card from you fellows.
2. He had also talked with Albino Garcia and he seems to be doing fairly well after having a pacemaker implant. He would appreciate a card, too.
3. We're sorry that Rudy O'Bradovich had to cancel out coming to the reunion. John reported that Rudy has gout in his feet and can hardly walk. I hope I have that right. I received a nice card from Rudy & Liz on October 7th, and he didn't mention a problem with his feet.

I received a nice card from Gordon and Lena LaMoy on September 30th, saying they arrived home O.K. and that they really enjoyed seeing everyone at the reunion again. Irene and I were sure glad to have them ride with us, too.

I think we've had a great and sincere fellowship over the Reunion years and hope we can keep it going in every way we can, even though the official organization is dissolved.

Sincerely,



Millard O. Lumley

Secretary-Treasurer