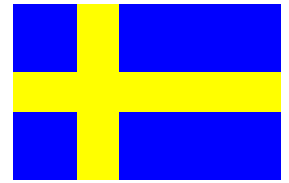


Volume 2, Issue 1

SWEDEN AFTER THE FLAK



April 2000

COW TOWN BOOGIE

By Lennart Westergård ©

England 1944 was seething with military activity. Enormous masses of army, naval and airforce units were gathering. Within two months the allied forces were to take the spring over the Channel and launch the invasion in Normandy. From innumerable bases all over Britain thousands of British, American and Canadian bombers were operating day and night, dropping with growing intensity their cruel loads over Germany and the German occupied areas of northern Europe.

Norfolk England 11th April

Around the little village *Deopham Green* appr. 140 Km NNE *London* is an airbase called 'Station 142'. It contains 452nd BG (Bombardment Group) US 8th Air Force with its 35 - 40 Boeing B-17G Flying Fortresses. Day is breaking. During the night the base units have been working hard to heal the wounds from the raid yesterday, repairing planes, refueling, loading guns, hanging up bombs. A couple of new planes with crews have arrived replacing lost ships. Now 32 operative planes are on the 'line'. The crews are coming from briefing and start embarking. Group Leader is Colonel Thetus O. Odom. The engines are getting started. 128 engines, Wright R1820 with 1200 hp/each, perform a mighty song of power, when the planes are taxing out, one after another. One of them is 'Cow Town Boogie'. She carries ten 500 lbs. GP high-explosive bombs. At 0610 takeoff begins and the heavy planes are climbing with roaring engines. With course out over the North Sea the group joins 388th BG (32 bombers). Escorting P-47:s are closing in. The target is *Krez-*

inki in Poland. Later it is obvious that the weather over Poland is too bad and the alternative target is chosen, *Rostock* in Germany with *Heinkel Werke*, which area will take more than 130 tons of bombs in this raid.

Hjärnarp in Skåne, Sweden

Along the ridge of *Hallandsåsen*, its slope to the south, an artillery battalion of the Royal Wendes Arty. is deployed. Bn. staff HQ and staff company at *Margrete-torp*, the three howitzer companies around *Hjärnarp* and the supply company at *Förslövsholm*. The tactical mission is to regroup and strengthen the brigade artillery in three alternative areas from *Helsingborg* in the south to *Halmstad* in the north. Furthermore it will from battery positions in its initial camp cover with fire the wide plains around *Ängelholm* in case of landing of airborne troops. I am serving as BO (Battery Officer) in charge. We have had breakfast and are gathered in a barn, which is used as our 'restaurant'. The company commander is reading aloud from a paper, which is a general order from the Supreme Commander's HQ to all

personnel in the Swedish armed forces. In this order it is said that aircraft from the belligerent forces are emergency landing or coming down in Sweden in increasing numbers. Not only at the regular bases and airports, but also all over the country. All personnel - every individual on his own - must know how to act with a foreign aircraft and its crew having landed. Our company commander explains in details how this is to be carried out. There are a lot of questions and things are straightened out. When the briefing is over, our captain claims: "OK, now I have hammered this into your heads, as I am supposed to do, but I don't think this is going to happen to us up here! Now get going with your duties in platoons! Dismissed!"

Then we start our planned duty. For my howitzer battery that means technical checkup of the howitzers. The night has been chilly and now, when the sun rises in the sky, a disc of haze covers the fields in the south.

In the air over Schleswig

At 1020 the bomber force is coming in over *Schleswig* on 4000 Meters, just south of the border to *Jylland*. There is AA-fire but rather meager. The course is set towards *Rostock*. Now there are German fighters attacking, Bf-109, FW 190 and even a couple of Me-410. Continuous fighting. The 109:s are firing rockets and guns, the gunfire from FW-190 and Me-410 is observed as unusually heavy, "similar to the 75 mm gun in our B-25". The lead formation loses four ships, a few parachutes are seen. Crew members in other planes are being hit by shrapnel. On target over *Rostock*, bombs away from 5600 Meters, visual aiming.

'Cow Town Boogie' is hit before this, gets cuts in upper part of her fin. Also other problems occur and the bomber breaks out and drops her bombs, probably over *Flensburg*. First pilot decides to go for Sweden. From the south of *Sjælland* he

Cow
Town
Boogie
on the
ground
in
Sweden



sets for *Skåne* and speeds up. The plane has become much lighter and makes now appr. 450 Km/h. Banks of mist cover parts of the sea and the coastlines. He flies towards *Malmö* but activates Swedish AA-fire, turns north along *Öresund*. German AA-fire from Danish coast makes him descend and then the plane sweeps in over *Skåne* north of *Helsingborg*. The northern part of *Öresund* and parts of northwest *Skåne* are still covered by meager mist. Also here the Swedish AA is active. Pilots:

- "Hell, we are too far to the west, Fritz is shooting at us!"
- "No, I believe we are in Sweden!"
- "Oh yes, but why are they firing? They aren't part in the war!"

Hjärnarp

The time is appr. 1100. We are finishing the technical service of the howitzers. The haze is going. Now we hear engines in the south, first slightly rumbling, then a growing hollow interference song, telling us of several engines. We all stare out over the plains. Suddenly she appears, the big Flying Fortress, very low, wheels out. Is she going to crash right into the battery? At the same moment she sweeps over us with 10-20 Meters margin. The giant bird disappears roaring over the treetops to the north. We can feel the exhaust smell. The pilot has to give full throttles to get clear from the rising ridge. After a wide left turn she comes again over us, a little higher, another left turn and then we see her fly southwards and circle descending in the direction of *Barkåkra*.

Now we are getting alert! I order a squad of 20 men to follow me, we sit up in trucks and off we go on poor roads and paths and cross-country over fields and ditches.

The landing

After two wide turns over the plains the pilots find an area, which seems to be

reasonably good for landing. Down there, 1 Km. north of *Ängeltofta farm* and 2 Km. from the new base of F 10 under construction, is a man standing in a clover field, waving at the pilots. He stretches his arms north-south. "OK, he means we can set her there!" Over *Ängeltofta farm* the ship comes in from the south and takes the ground. The pilots are busy with engines, props, rudders and brakes to prevent the plane going on her nose, the soil is soft and the wheels are cutting deep. She stops after appr. 300 Meters, thanks to the soft soil, which is really a lucky thing. Only 10 Meters ahead a deep marl pit opens. The engines are turned off and it is completely silent in the plane. Then shouts of joy break out: "F.....' good landing, skipper, but where are we?" The time is 1120.

The man who waved to the pilots is *Frithiof Nilsson*. He runs one of the farms quite near. He has been for some time in the USA and speaks English, so when the pilots open the windows in cockpit, he can answer: "You are in Sweden!" The airmen are happy to be able to talk with him.

The 'reception'

We approach the plane after the wild ride from *Hjärnarp*. Some crew members have jumped down from the plane. They are talking with *Nilsson*. Some curious civilians are coming up from the road west of the scene. We surround the plane and demand debarkation. It is all going very smoothly. We collect handguns and check the personal equipment. We go on board with the first pilot and supervise emptying of the guns. Then we also can see that no destruction has been made of technical equipment, even the bomb sight seems to be intact. Swedish Air Force technicians, who arrive later, confirm this, happy like children at Christmas. The bomb room is empty. Now police and the Home Guard arrive. From our Battalion Staff Coy,

trucks arrive with medics and a doctor. They take care of the crew and after some time they take them to the Bn. HQ. at *Margretetorp*. We are being relieved and drive back to our company, now on more comfortable roads. We have had a remarkable experience

During the following days the plane is being investigated by Swedish Air Force technicians. A certain famous *Captain Albin Ahrenberg* is said to be in charge of the team. On April 17th the American pilots return with Swedish supervisors and the next day '*Cow Town Boogie*' takes off from the same clover field, which has been prepared and packed, and flies to *Västerås*. There she remains until June 15th 1945, when she flies to England.

Epilog

388th BG and 452nd BG returned to bases from *Rostock* April 11th and landed at 1700-1800. In total six ships were lost with their crews. Two more were missing. One of them was '*Cow Town Boogie*'. She and her crew were safe with us. German losses were reported to be seven confirmed, two estimated and two damaged.

I have had very good support from US Air Force Historical Research Center, Maxwell AFB, Alabama. They have even supplied the declassified 'Unit History April 11th 1944' from both Bomb Groups. I have had stimulating contact with the 452nd BG Association. Unfortunately it has not been able to find any of the crew members of '*Cow Town Boogie*'. (see editor's note below) On April 11th nine B17G's landed in Sweden, eight of them in *Skåne*, one in *Blekinge*. During WW2 140 American planes landed or came down brutally in Sweden. Of these were 68 B-17 F and G. One of them was '*Cow Town Boogie*' (B-17 G no. 42-39995).

Editors notes:

The author of this article, Major Lennart Westergård, was at the time of the event 1944 cadet sergeant, age 20, and served in 2nd Battalion A 23 (Field Regiment set up by the Royal Wendes Arty.). When Lennart Westergård retired in 1984 from Swedish Military Command South, he was CO Ops. Intelligence. In his duties he has often worked with the Air Force.

Since writing this story, we have located the navigator of '*Cow Town Boogie*', Charles (Chuck) McKeag.

Author's note Feb. 1999:

Here I say the 452nd BG had 35-40 planes. In my original article I had wrote that the Group had about 50 planes at the base. That was built on my estimation; there were 32 planes operative on the line and there must have been several under maintenance and repair. Optimistic?

Wheels stuck in the mud





Bill Sapp- Rattvik 1944

I was the right waist gunner/armorer, a S/Sgt, on aircraft 42-39994, named "Snort Stuff," and piloted by 1st Lt. Samuel Lawrence Barrick, copilot 2nd Lt. Ira Arthur Munn, navigator 2nd Lt. James G. Guerrini, toggelier T/Sgt James D. Brady, engineer/top turret T/Sgt Walfred J. Johnson, radio operator T/Sgt Clifton E. Barton, ball turret gunner S/Sgt Edward J. Marlen, left waist gunner S/Sgt Frederick Cecil Thorpe, and tail gunner S/Sgt Hugh M. Fantone.

The name of our plane has been reported in Century Bombers, A Wing and a Prayer, and Target Berlin: Mission 250 as "Barrick's Bag." This is incorrect. The name was actually "Snort Stuff." The error occurred because the source of information was Jim Brady and Jim flew with us only once - on the 6 March 1944 mission - and was not, therefore, privy to what had happened. The crew had considered "Barrick's Bag" but voted on a name and decided on "Snort Stuff." As I recall, Sam Barrick asked that the plane not be named for one crew member only and we agreed.

On 6 March, we had been scheduled to fly in the high squadron and had taken that position but at about 11:00 a. m. dropped into the low squadron to fill

SNORT STUFF

BY WILLIAM SAPP DIXON

in for an abort. An hour later we were attacked and the entire high squadron was wiped out. Almost all of the lead squadron was also gone and at least one of the low squadron. We and another plane from the low squadron joined the lead group where we were again attacked. Our No. 4 engine was on fire and our No. 1 engine was smoking and losing oil. The fire in No. 4 went out and it was stilling pulling power but No. 1 was at about 1/2 power. Then No. 4 went dead, started windmilling, then seized, the prop almost stopped but the crankshaft sheared and the prop broke loose and started wind milling again. We were losing fuel and the navigator indicated there was not enough left to return to base. There was no longer a formation even if we had been able to keep up with it and so at 12:55 we turned off and headed north to try to get to the North Sea and perhaps ditch.

As we turned off both Barrick and I had the same feeling as we looked back. We could see wave after wave of bombers heading the same way we had been a few minutes earlier. Barrick wrote "I had the very distinct feeling that regardless of what happens, the 8th Air Force could not be stopped or turned back." My muttered thought was, "Those poor damned Germans still don't know what they started." We were both overwhelmed by the sight.

Because of the fuel loss, it was realized that we could not make it to the North Sea and so it was decided to head for Sweden. On the last little spit of land in Germany, we went right over a German airfield but no planes came up to try to intercept us and the only opposition was flak from a ship of some sort that was in the area.



We had been briefed to land at Ystad, Sweden if it was necessary, but there was a low overcast and we started looking for a place to belly land when two Swedish fighter planes came up and escorted us to their airfield, Bultofta. Bultofta is just outside of Malm, Sweden and as we were heading for the field, flak was fired to warn us away from the town, I believe. We made a wheels down landing although the field was a sod field and after we had lowered the wheels the thought occurred to us that we didn't really know whether we had tires or whether they had been filled full of holes. They were, fortunately fine, but the Swedes counted over 13 20mm holes in the front of the plane and about 50 flak holes. After we landed, a curious Swedish guard gave the No. 4 prop a shake and it fell off just missing him. There was a hole through one of the blades of the No. 3 prop, a large hole in the No. 1 engine's cowling, and numerous holes in the wings - but very few in the fuselage.

We were taken up to the officer's mess and fed. While we were there a B-24, piloted by a Lt. York, landed. We were all taken into Malmö and put up for the night in very nice quarters. The next day we were shown part of the city then put on a train for Stockholm. In Stockholm we were met at the train station by the American Air Attaché, Lt. Col. Felix M. Hardison, who gave us some instructions on how we were to comport ourselves in Sweden and then



we were sent on to a Swedish Army base in Falun, Sweden. We remained there for about 3 days while we bought a limited amount of civilian clothes (paid for by the American Legation), met other Americans who had been interned earlier (some of them we knew as they were from the 100th and had been shot down during the raids to Posen, Poland), and then we were sent by train to Rattvik, Dalarna, Sweden. Rattvik was a winter and summer resort town, we lived in hotels or pensiones, were paid each month

by the American Legation, and we remained there for varying lengths of time. I was released, along with 52 others, on 28 September 1944.

Earlier, in June or July, some officers and enlisted men were "volunteered" to go to southern Sweden and work on repairing some of the repairable aircraft. Our plane was one of those repaired. Both wings were removed and other wrecked B-17s "volunteered" their wings to replace those on "Snort Stuff" and all four en-

gines were removed and rebuilt or replaced. "Snort Stuff" gained a new nickname at this time. Major Joe Filkins had been sent from England to oversee the repair of the planes. "Snort Stuff" was re-christened "Filkins' Folly" because it was apparently the most damaged of the planes considered repairable. It was later flown back to the UK and then to the States where it was scrapped.

Jönköping 2000



Top: The hotel where many of the airmen visited in 1944.

Center: The new boat to Gränna

Bottom: View of the lake looking from Jönköping to Gränna.



Västerås - Recognize anyone?

Photos from Gil Worthington



The place to get coffee and cake in Västerås



Some of the fellows working on a B24 from the 492nd 857th at Västerås



RED LETTER DAY

By Robert Wilcox
452 BG 731 SQ

January 17, 1945

Today proved to be probably the most momentous day of my life. *"They woke me at 03:30 for briefing. This was to be my first combat mission. My navigator, Norman Hartung, flew with a Lt. Betts."* I discovered later that three other members of my crew flew with him, as well. And he was flying his 35th and last mission. (Editor's note: Lt. Betts' story is to appear in the next issue)

I flew with Lt. Ira Smith and his crew. I knew he and some of his crew were flying their last mission. I was flying in place of Smitty's copilot in order to give me the experience I needed in order to take my own crew into combat.

As we were being driven to the plane, Smitty said, *"Wilcox, you're a first pilot, aren't you?"* I said I was, so he then asked me what seat I'd be most comfortable flying. I told him I'd never flown anything but left seat, so, naturally, I'd be most comfortable there.

"OK," he said, "you fly left seat, and I'll fly right seat. I just made first pilot, and I've never flown anything but right seat." So, although he was airplane commander, he flew from the right seat.

"It was a fine, clear day, and I got a great charge out of seeing the hundreds of ships strung out in our division column."

I formed up and flew formation all the way across the channel to the coast, where we hit the IP (the initial point at which you then flew in a straight line with no deviation until you got to the target). *"I flew pretty good formation. When we hit the coast, Smitty took over. We put on our flak helmets and suits."*

When he took over, Smitty said to me, *"You keep your head in the cockpit. Watch the oil pressure and the other gauges. I'll do the flying from here."*

I then kept my eyes glued to the instruments, primarily to look for a drop in oil pressure, so we could get a prop feathered promptly, should that become necessary.

We were on our way to bomb the suburbs of Hamburg, and were flying southeast over the waterway leading to the city. *"In what seemed a very short time, the flak started bursting all around us, and we were over our target."* The flak felt like someone was hitting the wings with a sledgehammer.

As it grew in intensity, I finally couldn't resist taking a quick look over the side, down at Hamburg through all the flak bursts. Although I had looked

away for only a few seconds, when I looked back the oil pressure on #3 engine was down to zero. I yelled, "Feathering 3" and successfully feathered it.

As we turned off the target, we were getting tracking flak, and everyone was "calling flak." The tail gunner called, "Flak, 6 o'clock level. Flak, 6 o'clock level. Flak, 6 o'clock level." Each time he said it, his voice got louder and rose in pitch. By the last time, he was shouting it as if the flak was bursting beside him. At which point, Smitty said, "F--- this noise" and pulled back sharply on the wheel. We rose about 500 feet or so above the formation and took a hit that set our #2 engine on fire. Smitty pointed the nose down and barreled down through the formation, finally putting the fire out.

"#2 started running very rough and losing a lot of oil. Smitty said to feather #2. I tried, but it wouldn't feather. After about three minutes of trying, it did, though, and we could breathe again."

Smitty was pulling about half power on #1, because it was smoking like a sky writer. He had already given orders to drop the ball turret, and they were working on that. We were following the bomber stream south, then east, then north. But, of course, it was going faster than we were, so we kept falling further and further back.

All this time, we kept throwing everything out of the airplane that would move, and that included the guns. And, of course, we continued to lose altitude. I remember the pregnant pause that came after Huffman, the engineer, tapped me on the shoulder and said, "Your flak jacket, sir." But at Lubeck, where the bomber stream turned west to return to England, the last of the bombers flew by us, and we were alone. We were holding minimum airspeed, of course, in an effort to minimize loss of altitude.

Smitty had asked me to take over the controls as soon as we were off the target. I remember wondering if trimming the airplane might adversely affect its performance even if ever so little. I thought of the trim tabs sticking out into the air stream and just felt it better not to do that, so I put my feet up on the dash and got the yoke behind my knees and flew that way from then on.

We were able to drop the ball turret, and that reduced our rate of descent to 200 or 300 feet per minute.

When we got to Lubeck, two interesting things happened. First, Smitty said, "Well, guys, I have no idea whether we can get back to England, so let's hear from you...what do you think?"

Nobody said anything for a minute. Then "Huffy" the engineer said quietly, "Whatever you say goes, Smitty. If you think you can get her there, I'm with you all the way, old boy." Then, of course, everybody chimed in, and we turned toward England. *"It was just like a story book. It sent chills running up my spine."*

The second interesting thing was when Smitty called 'Red Leader' for fighter support. Even though we hadn't seen any fighters, we could expect that we'd soon have them. Red Leader rogered and asked, "Where are you in relation to point Peter?" Smitty scratched his head briefly, then said, "I don't know where the f--- point Peter is, but I'm right over Lubeck." At which point nobody wanted to see anybody.

When we turned west, Lubeck was on the leading edge of our wing. At the end of 20 minutes, it was on the trailing edge of our wing. We had an 80 knot headwind that day, and we were holding 120 mph indicated, so we weren't doing well. I then called Nicholson, the navigator and said, "Hey, Nick...where are we going to hit the ground?"

Nick said, "Oh, yeah..." like that had never occurred to him. In a couple of minutes, he called Smitty to say we were going to hit the ground halfway to the front lines.

Smitty immediately said, "That's all she wrote" and told me to make a 180 in the general direction of Sweden. Where our ground speed had been about 80 mph, it was now about 200 mph. Nick then did a superb job of steering us around all the flak areas on our map of Germany.

It wasn't long before we drew close to the undercast that was now below us. I'd been wondering what to do about that, since we had lost our two inboards and thus our vacuum pumps. So we had no gyros. "Huffy," I said, "get me a length of wire and something heavy I can tie to it." He came back with a piece of wire and the biggest goddamn nut I had ever seen. We tied it to the end of the wire and tied the other end of the wire to the top of the cockpit. My idea was that, when we went through the undercast, if I made an uncoordinated turn (and that would be the only kind we

would make if we turned at all), the wire would be displaced and would tell me we were turning.

When we got to the undercast, I put the nose down to get through it as quickly as I could. And it turned out to be very thin. So, when we broke out, I pulled the nose up again and sacrificed air speed for altitude. And we didn't really need the wire after all.

Shortly after that, we crossed the coast and headed out over the Baltic Sea. The water we were flying over was full of islands. Most of them I guess were Danish...and thus manned by Germans. But we realized that, when we got to the Swedish coast, we really wouldn't know it, because, with the bad visibility, as we approached the coast it wouldn't look any different than any of the islands we were flying over. Also, we had no map of the area, so we were just flying on...and hoping for the best.

When we got really low and it seemed clear that we weren't going to make it, Smitty decided to try starting #3 engine. There was a chance that the line might simply have been severed by flack, and the problem might be only in the instrument. The downside, of course, was that if our oil pressure was the problem and we were able to get the engine unfeathered, we might never be able to feather it again, and it would windmill, canceling out our one good engine. But, at that point, we really had no choice, because we weren't going to make it without that engine. Everybody held his breath while Smitty tried it, and damned if it didn't roar to life. Now we had two and a half engines, but we were still losing altitude.

There was coastline ahead of us though, so Smitty asked if anybody knew anything about entering Sweden. Somebody said they thought you were supposed to have your gear down. And somebody else said he thought you weren't supposed to be any higher than 3,000 ft. Well the latter wouldn't be a problem, because that was about what we were at. What we learned later was that we were also supposed to be firing flares, which, of course, we didn't do. There was a little town ahead of us (which we later learned was Trelleborg, Sweden.) So we lowered the gear. But as we flew over the coast, they nailed us with small arms fire.

We banked sharply away to get away from the ground fire. Although it turned out that we were over Sweden at the time, we didn't know that. And at that point, two fighters came directly at us in a head on attack. Nick still had his chin turret guns, because they couldn't be

moved. And, just as he was about to give them a burst, the planes broke up and over us in a big Immelman, and one of them sat down on our left wing. I saw three crowns on the tail...and breathed again. The blond, blue eyed guy flying the plane grinned at me and waved for me to follow him. I banked to do that, and Smitty said, "Where ya goin'...where ya goin'?" I said, "I'm following that guy." He led us right to the airfield at Malmö, which was only a short distance away, although we hadn't been able to see it because of the lousy visibility. I learned later that it was Bulltofta Airfield.

By the time we got there, we were right at traffic pattern altitude. Smitty said, "You take the throttles, and I'll take the wheel." It was a grass field and looked very wet. What we didn't see until we were low on final was a grass bunker at the end of the runway. Smitty hauled back on the wheel, and we hopped over it, only to come down with a jarring thud on the grass beyond it, because the ground was all frozen solid. That had been ice we saw, not water. We bounced on down the runway, just being glad that we were on the ground in Sweden...and not in Germany.

We taxied over to the edge of the field and could then see that there were many other B-17s and B-24s with various amounts of war damage (some standing on their nose, others obviously bellied in, etc.). By the time we shut down the engines, the Swedes had come out in a six-by and had surrounded the airplane, with their tommy guns cradled in their arms.

I went back through the airplane and opened the rear door. There was a young Swedish lieutenant there who popped me a brisk salute and said, "You are now in Sweden. Leave all your weapons in the airplane and come with me."

I asked him if the other pilot and I could examine the airplane, and he agreed we could. So we did, while the rest of the crew went inside with him. There was plenty of flak damage, and there were lots of holes from the small stuff they hit us with over the coast.

"The most amazing thing to me is that I wasn't the least bit nervous during the whole darn flight. I got a big charge out of the whole affair."

When we got inside, they were feeding us sandwiches and real milk. That was a special treat for the rest of the crew, who hadn't had real milk in a long, long time. Pretty soon, a Swedish captain drifted near me, and I said, "Captain, could I ask you a question?" "Certainly," he said, in perfect English. I

then told him about the Swedes firing on us, when we were at 3,000 feet, with our gear down, an engine feathered, and an engine trailing smoke. "They did?" he said, looking surprised. Then, obviously concerned, he asked, "And did they hit you?" "They sure did," I replied. "Well," he said, wagging his head slowly, "That's very unusual. They often fire. But they very seldom ever hit anything."

That evening, they loaded us on a sleeper train, and, when we woke in the morning, we were deep in the center of Sweden, with snow everywhere. We soon arrived in Falun, where it snowed for the next two weeks.

After a couple of months, they moved us to Västerås, where there was an airfield. They kept us busy repairing the aircraft. The repairs that those flight crews made, without proper tools and equipment, were amazing. The pilots test flew them and it wasn't unusual to raise the gear and have the flaps come down instead.

We were so casual that I remember taking Bill and Margit Dahl up in a B-17 one day. They came down from Falun to take advantage of the opportunity. Bill had lived in the U.S. for a lot of years. He worked in the courthouse and he and Margit made a fetish out of inviting the internees to visit with them in their apartment.

I was in Sweden six months. When the war ended, I flew four of those patched up B-17s back to England. I had three forced landings out of the four trips. Luckily, none of them happened over the English Channel. On one flight, we flew low over the northern Germany cities. The devastation was simply unbelievable. It's beyond comprehension how people could have lived through it.

On the boat going home from England, I remember being with a guy who flew recon missions and never saw a shot fired in anger. Yet, he had bronze and silver clusters on his air medal, while I didn't even earn the medal itself.

Which reminds me, we had Americans on the ground at Malmö who went over every arriving airplane with a fine-tooth comb, meticulously filling out a multi-page report on each airplane's physical status. Months later, one of those guys visited us where we were interned in Falun. I got talking with him, and he asked me what plane I had flown in. When I told him 602, he asked me what seat I was flying. When I told him left seat, he said, "Boy, are you a lucky man! We took a huge chunk of flak out of that plane. It had been lodged about three inches below your butt."



There is now a web site that will display the Swedish internees' stories and pictures. Daniel Petterzon, a young man living near Jönköping, Sweden, started the site in the Fall of 1999. He became interested in two particular forced landings that occurred near Jönköping on 7 October 1944. Through this interest and subsequent research, he became more and more interested in all of the planes that ended up in Sweden during World War II.

The web site is located at:
<http://user.tninet.se/~vwu458u/>

Daniel has started the site with the planes from the USAAF that landed in Sweden, but he is adding stories about all the foreign planes that made it there.

It is our intention to eventually have the newsletter displayed on the web site. Daniel has placed a link to a copy of the first page from the Vol. 1 issue 4, but due to the size of these files, it is not possible to display the other pages at this time. I am hoping that I will be able to find an affordable copy of Adobe Acrobat 4.0 (full program). This program will enable me to convert the newsletter to a

reasonable size file that can be downloaded by anyone who is interested. I am relying solely on donations to keep the newsletter going, so if you know of any sources for used software, please let me know.

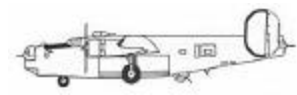
The distribution numbers are continuing to climb as the newsletter makes its way around the world. There are over 225 on the mailing list now. This includes over 150 internees. The others receiving the newsletter for free are family members or other interested persons. As the number of copies distributed rises, the number of pages that have to be printed also rises (the last issue used three reams of paper) as do the number of stamps that need to be purchased from Uncle Sam (2 ½ pages last issue) to say nothing of the ink cartridges. My thanks go out to all of you who have helped me with my labor of love by contributing stories, stamps or money and thus have made it your labor of love, too!

A special thanks to those I have heard from since the last newsletter:

Jim & Sue Augustus
Bill & Norma Beasley
Ed Betts
Herbert Grant
Par Henningsson
Vernie & Quilva Honberger
John MacLachlan
Walter Marr
Ingemar Melin
Torbjörn Olausson
Daniel Petterzon
Nunzio & Jane Rainone
Joe Sirotnak
Jack Templeton
Roy Weber
Lennart Westergård
Bo Widfeldt



Reunion?



Suggestions that we consider having a reunion have come from a number of people. Although I had suggested the possibility of having such a reunion in conjunction with the 2nd Air Division this year, it would not be possible for me at this time. Also, internees came from all three divisions of the 8th Air Force and some have suggested having a reunion of our own not in conjunction with any other reunions.

The suggested site of such a reunion have included King of Prussia, PA, Richmond, VA, and Wilmington, DE. The questions that must be answered are:

1. Do enough people want a reunion?
2. If so, what kind of a reunion do you want – a weekend gathering with

dinner the first night, an outing the following day, and dinner on your own the second evening? A Saturday luncheon with the afternoon open for visiting with each other and dinner on your own? Some combination of these or?

3. All costs to be the responsibility of those attending.
4. What time of year should it be held?
5. No business meeting would be necessary since no organization is involved.

My offer is as follows:

I am the volunteer organizer for the Collings Foundation B24/B-17 for the Richmond, VA area. These planes will be at the Chesterfield County Airport

from October 27 to 30, this year. I would be willing to coordinate a reunion in conjunction with this visit. Richmond is just 2 ½ hours south of Washington, DC and 45 minutes from Williamsburg as well as having many historic sites locally for those who would wish to spend more time in this area of the country.

I will need a response from at least 25 interested parties to make this cost effective for everyone.

Please send me a note, give me a call (804-458-7730) or email me to let me know your desires in regard to the questions and if you plan to attend such a reunion if it is held. I also need to know specifically if you approve of my offer and would attend if a sufficient number agree.

Sweden
After the Flak

Karen Branch Cline
813 E. Cawson Street
Hopewell, VA 23860
USA



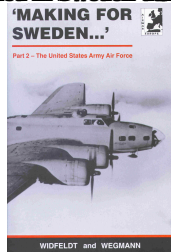
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Interesting Web Sites:

<http://pippi.grm.se/webcam1/> A web camera that displays pictures of Gränna that are taken twice a minute.

<http://www.mixmegapol.com/player1.html> This site is one of the favorite Swedish Radio stations playing a mixture of old and new songs.

<http://www.wwideweb.com/sweden.htm> a site with links to numerous Swedish newspapers and news sources (in Swedish)

<http://www.falukuriren.se/> is the link for Dalarna newspaper (in Swedish), including Rättvik

<http://www.nada.kth.se/skolverket/swe-eng.html> is the site for a Swedish/English & English/Swedish dictionary

Pictures Identified Vol. 1 issue 4 page 8

#1 (from left) George Keller, Richard Donaher, Frank Quagliano, Frank Butler and unknown. (Id provided by Karin Hessel from her brother, Charlie's photo album)

#3 Sherman Gillespie is on the left. Photo take near Granna

#4 The internee band from Granna (from left) Sherman Gillespie (who sent the id's) is on saxophone; R.G. Fox, trombone; Hank L. Gan carz, accordion; Jack Dashev, Drummer; the pianist is unknown.