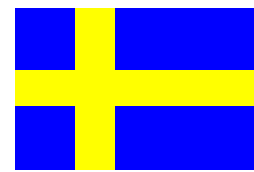


Volume 1, Issue 1

SWEDEN AFTER THE FLAK



Winter 1999

BULLTOFTA JUNE 20-21, 1944

By Ingemar Melin

Bulltofta in Malmö, Sweden was, since the very early twenties, used as a commercial airfield. During the war it also became the home of the Swedish Air Force Fighter Wing F10. The wing was established in 1940 and was based at Bulltofta until the autumn of 1945 when it moved to Ängelholm, about 80 miles north of Malmö. As an airforce unit in a neutral country during the war, most of the time was spent by the pilots in patrol duty and in flying reconnaissance missions along the coastline of the south part of Sweden in the county of Scania.

Obviously they were often in contact with foreign aircraft from the belligerent countries. The allied strategic bombing campaign over Germany brought a lot of damaged heavy bombers to neutral countries. A distance of not more than 250-300 miles between the German coast to Sweden, made the Bulltofta airfield in Malmö a good alternative. During the hot summer months of 1944, F10 fighters could often be seen escorting American heavies over the flat country of Scania on their way to Bulltofta.

In 1943, crews of the first force landed American bombers in Sweden had destroyed their planes immediately after the landing, in some case with the help of Molotov-cocktails. This was a problem for the Swedes because of the fact that wrecks could occupy the landing strips for several days. This was of course unacceptable. Therefore an agreement was made between the American Bomber Command and the Swedish government in early 1944. It stated that no more force landed aircraft would be destroyed by their crews. In exchange, information was given to the Americans about which airfields would be suitable for force landings. A number of Swedish Air Force Wing airfields were selected. Bulltofta, in Malmö, was one of these.



Some of the many planes that landed on the 20th of

The duty as a neutrality guard was not always an easy task for the F10 pilots. The unit was operating, during the war years, with the miserable Italian-built fighter plane, *Reggiane RE 2000 Falco*. These planes were of very poor quality. The government and the Air Force Command had, since the late '30s, been searching for a more modern fighter as a replacement for their double winged Gloster Gladiator.

A large order for fighters from the US, the *Vultee Vanguard* and the *P-35 Republic Seversky*, was cancelled due to the American embargo. Discussions were also held with the Germans about ordering the Messerschmitt 109 without any result. (*The Me 109 was probably not a good solution when you remember the situation that would come later; escorting American bombers*).

The only country interested in offering Sweden fighters was Italy. In mid 1941, Fighter Wing 10 in Malmö received their bright new Italian fighters. The fighter also brought with it a lot of problems. A lot of the fighters were always grounded due to technical problems. The Italian designers had calculated a lifetime of 7.5 flying hours. This was probably acceptable for a front line fighter directly engaged in combat, but for service in the Swedish Neutrality Guard, it was not acceptable. The Swedish Air Force had expected around 200 hours. The ground crews did a great job keeping as many of these aircraft as possible in the air throughout the whole war.

After bombing missions over Germany, a lot of pilots of damaged and crippled aircraft decided to go to Sweden instead of trying to go back to England. A ditch in the cold water of the North Sea could be very hazardous. Except for nine fighters (one RAF Mosquito and eight P-51s), only B-24s and B-17s force landed in the southern part of Sweden. Two came down in 1943, but the main part of them came during the spring and summer 1944.

A total of 131 B-24s and B-17s landed or crashed in Sweden between July 1943 and May 1945. Of these, Bulltofta received 33 B-24s and 29 B-17s. The culmination was reached on the 20th and 21st of June 1944 when not less than 25 heavies landed at Bulltofta after very large bombing raids over Germany. The main targets were German petrochemical plants in Politz and Ostermoor. Around 300 heavy bombers dropped 500 tons of bombs, and after the raid 34 planes were missing. The groups that bombed Politz were very heavily attacked by German forces consisting of Bf 110s, Me 410s and Ju 88s. Between Rugen and the Danish Island of Bornholm, not less than nine B-24s from the 492nd BG were shot down.

An eyewitness who survived the attack reported, "*On our mission to Politz our formation was attacked at 09:15 over the Pommerische Bay by several waves of enemy fighters. In a couple of minutes a lot of B-24s were seen going down burning. Two of them exploded in the air*".

Between 09:27 and 10:30, 16 B-24s landed or crashed at the Bulltofta airfield. In the newspaper from the 21st of June, the following could be read:

"There was literally a queue of heavy bombers coming in for landing at Bulltofta yesterday. For several hours yesterday morning in Malmö, there was intense activity in the air."

"A large number of foreign aircraft invaded Malmö. It all started when the

"There was literally a queue of heavy bombers coming in for landing at Bulltofta yesterday"

anti aircraft-artillery was heard firing just before 10 o'clock, and shortly after that a lot of heavy bombers came in over the city. They began circling around waiting to land at the Bulltofta airfield. According to unconfirmed reports not less than 16 Liberators landed there yesterday..... "

".....reports from the hospital said that they had received seven crew members from the force landed American bombers. One of the men was dead on arrival at the hospital. Two were seriously injured, but not gravely. Four were slightly injured. Two Liberators landed safely at Halmstad at around eleven o'clock. One at Helsingborg, and still another one crashed at Ljungbyhed. In that case the crew had already bailed out.

"With such a great number of Liberators and Flying Fortresses force landed in Malmö, it's hard to find an empty spot at Bulltofta. It's not without concern that you think of what's going to happen during the next few days if similar invasion waves, as we've seen today, continue."

Most of the planes that came in were in rather good condition, but due to hydraulic and brake failures, a couple of them were not able to keep inside the airfield borders. Since such heavy air activities had never been seen before at Bulltofta, there was soon complete chaos at the airfield. The field had no asphalt or concrete runways, it was only a large grass field, so the Americans made their



Sweet Sioux II, #42-95013 (448BG, 713 BG), on the ground in Sweden June 20, 1944

landings from different directions. Another problem was that there was no time for towing away damaged aircraft. Some of them had to make belly landings.

The F 10 personnel were organised into different groups in order to take care of force landed aircraft and their crews. Since the number of aircraft and crews greatly exceeded the number of these groups, the organisation soon collapsed. In spite of the fact that there were too many American bombers that landed in one day and too few Swedish personnel, most of the planes and their crews managed to land safely.

Unfortunately one plane ended up a complete disaster on the 20th June. It was a B-24H "Take it Easy", flown by 1st Lt Elwyn Shaw from the 93rd Bomb

Group. It had been hit by flak over Germany and lost the two right engines. The navigator was badly wounded and had lost consciousness. The crew made the decision not to bail out but to stay with him. Surviving crewmembers told that the pilot and the co-pilot struggled with the controls to fly the plane to Sweden. Upon the final approach for landing, the sudden appearance of a hillock forced the pilots to apply full throttle to the good engines in an attempt to clear the hillock. However, full power on only one side caused the plane to tilt. The right wing hit the ground, and the plane rolled over and ended up as a burning wreck, up side down in the middle of the field.

A group of three men from F 10's emergency service immediately went to the crash site to try to rescue the crew of 10 men inside the plane. They made a very heroic rescue attempt. This group consisted of Fanjunkare (senior Master Sgt.) G. Jönsson, Flygplansmästare (workshop foreman) B. Boström and Furir (S/Sgt.) J.E. Carlsson.

One of *Take it Easy's* crewmembers managed to get himself out of the burning wreck and G. Jönsson's group managed to get six more men out of the burning inferno. Due to exploding ammunition and oxygen bottles, the group was, unfortunately, not able to reach the last three crewmembers.

The rescuing work also engaged fire brigades from both the airfield and from the city of Malmö. Of the seven rescued men, two later died due to their injuries.

The rescue group, G. Jönsson, B. Boström and J. E. Carlsson, was later awarded a silver medal with the inscription "FÖR BERÖMLIG GÄRNING" by the King of Sweden, Gustav V.

All of the bombers that landed on the 20th and 21st of June brought a lot



B-17 # 42-97144, Piloted by Lt. J.C. Walters of the 351st BG, after over

of foreign airmen that have to be taken care of. Several were wounded, some of them dead. Many of the men that were physically unhurt were in the state of shock after what they had just been through.

170 airmen arrived at Bulltofta on the 20th of June. Every one of them had to be interrogated and fed. Some of them were sent, the same day, to internee camps in the middle of Sweden, but most of them were accommodated at the camp of the 3rd squadron of F 10.

To have Americans accommodated in an ordinary residential area in Malmö was not without its problems. A lot of curious youth from the city were coming to see what was going on. For that reason, a guard had to be placed at every barrack room to avoid trouble.

Citizens living in the area north east of Malmö were requested not to go out, unless it was necessary. This was due to the risk of pieces of the damaged aircraft falling from the planes that were coming in to land.

Belly-landed and crashed aircraft were also a problem for the ground staff. For example, on the 21st of June, there were two serious landing accidents. In one case, a B-17 was not able to stop due to lack of hydraulic pressure. To avoid a collision with a hangar and two parked aircraft, the pilot guided his aircraft between them but the right wing hit the roof of a small barrack house. The wing was cut off just right of engine #4. With fuel streaming from the fuel pipes, the plane finally stopped against a hillock that covered an air-raid shelter. The 10-man crew was unhurt, but the plane was so badly damaged that it was scrapped



Jiggs, #42-52733 (446 BG, 704 Sq) upon its arrival at Bulltofta on June 20, 1944

in 1945. During the mission to Berlin it had been hit in #2 engine, and the prop had fallen off.

On the same day, one of the other planes that came into Bulltofta was a B-24 nicknamed "Lovely Lady's Avenger" (see photo below). It also had hydraulic trouble. The pilot did not manage to stop before the end of the field, so the plane ran over a hillock and down the other side. No one from this crew or anyone on the ground was injured.

Text by
Ingemar Melin Trelleborg, Sweden
Sources
"Nödlandning Sverige" (Widfeldt/Wegmann)
"Tionde Flygflottiljen på Bulltofta" (Stridsberg)
Trelleborgs Allehanda 21/6/44 (Newspaper)
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Making for Sweden Vol. 2

by Widfeldt/Wegmann

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B-24J Lovely Lady's Avenger # 44-40093 of the 466th B.G 786Sq.



Unidentified crew poses for a picture after their safe arrival in Sweden



The Crew of Pitstol Packin Mama of the 44th BG 68th Sq.

A Personal Story

By Harold Ferrara 44thBG/68th Sq.

It is June 20, 1944 at an airfield named Shipdham in England just two weeks since the invasion of Europe. It began for me when I was awakened by the bright light of the officer-of-the-day's flashlight shining in my face. He informed me that I was scheduled to fly on today's mission and that breakfast and briefing will be at 02:00 hours. After breakfast the crew went to the briefing room. There was a large map of Europe on the wall with a long ribbon hanging down, one end pinned at our airport and the other end was a large pin. The briefing officer started by saying that today's raid if successful, would surely shorten the war by months. "Your target, (at this point he picked up the end of the ribbon and as his hand moved across the map, one could feel the tension in the room increase) will be the oil refineries in Politz, Germany. This refinery produces 50% of the synthetic oil used in the German tanks. It would be a feather in our caps if we destroyed this facility completely. Our intelligence informs us that there will be light flak and a small amount of enemy aircraft in that area."

At 04:30 the green light is given and mission No. 5 for crew 55 is on the way. 30 seconds after the lead aircraft has departed our pilot shoves the throttles forward and we start our roll down the runway. Four powerful R1830 engines whine and moan as they reach 2700 RPM and 47 inches of mercury, necessary to lift our B 24 Liberator Bomber off the ground. Power is reduced to 2200 RPM as we climbed to 8000 feet to form the group and continue our climb to 28000 feet to the target. En route weather was good and we experienced light flak and few enemy aircraft. As we neared the target area, we were met by a large group of twin engine planes. Our intelligence informed us that there would be little if any fighters in this area so we thought that they had to be British Mosquito bombers on a raid some where in this locale. It wasn't long before all hell broke out, these aircraft were ME110s. The gunners were reporting "Bandits" from every clock position (twelve o'clock high, nine o'clock level, six o'clock low, etc.) as they closed in on our group. The Bombardier now had control of the plane as we started our bomb run. There was a large BANG as a shell hit the forward end of the plane. Our plane seemed to hang in space as

the group left us. The shell had knocked out the supercharger electronic controls and with a full load of bombs and the bomb bay doors open our airspeed dropped considerably. We were now alone and as we slowly descended, we really were a sitting target. Another hit and I felt a piece of metal hit my right foot. I said in a loud voice "I've been hit". The Captain wanted to know how bad my injury was. I was afraid to look down. I had heard from other crewmembers that one could never really know how bad a wound could be right after it happened. I tried moving my toes and that seemed to be O.K., next moving my ankle didn't cause too much pain. I didn't feel that I was bleeding. It seemed I lucked out for now. I reported "I think I'm only bruised." We continued the bomb run alone and the Bombardier released the bomb load over the target. Unfortunately one of the bombs was still in the bomb bay. At about this time our right Waist Gunner had a piece of flak go straight through his right thigh and was calling for help. As Flight Engineer I had work to do. I got out of the top turret and the Radio Man took my place. I put on the walk around oxygen bottle and went to the panel where the amplifiers were located and tried to use the spare amplifier to set up the superchargers one at a time. No luck, the problem was in the wiring. Next I headed for the open bomb bay where I manually tripped the bomb, I was glad to see it go. I closed the bomb bay doors and headed to the injured gunner. He was on the deck moaning and said "do something, PLEASE". He wasn't bleeding very much but was in great pain. I got the morphine from his escape kit attached to his parachute harness and administered the shot. He was going to be O.K. Now back to the top turret and just in time to be greeted by some ME 110 fighters who were waiting outside the flak area. The gunners filled the sky with 50 caliber bullets, with every fifth bullet a tracer. Those tracers kept fighters at a distance since they illuminated the sky. Although we were much lighter we still couldn't hold our altitude and we were using our gasoline supply very fast. It was obvious we could not make it back to England. Our choices were, ditch in the Baltic Sea, or land in occupied German Territory or head for a

neutral country. We were all relieved when we heard the Captain say "Navigator, give me a compass heading for Sweden."

That day was a black day for the 8th Air Force. We later learned that the oil refinery at Politz was very close to the testing site for the V2 rocket at Peenemünde and that was the reason it was so heavily guarded. Forty-seven bombers and seven fighters did not return to England. We lived up to the 44th Group Motto "THE FLYING EIGHT BALLS".

After landing at Malmö's Military Airport we were greeted by a Swedish Officer who proclaimed "the war is over for you gentlemen." So it was, the next two weeks were spent in isolation at the airport's barracks where we were given physicals and some interrogations. The wounded waist gunner was taken to the hospital. I didn't mention that I had a swollen foot for fear I would be separated from my crew. Things became more pleasant when the American Delegation became involved. We were treated very well. There were many restrictions and we did have to work five days a week maintaining the American aircraft that were interned there (the number swelled to over one hundred American plus a large number of British and also a few German planes.) We were quizzed as to what schools we attended in the service and after a few weeks all crew members without the technical skills were flown back to England in the dead of night in a converted B24 that was stripped of all armament and painted black. This group was known as the "Flying Carpet Baggers". They made routine clandestine flights throughout the war between England and Sweden. I had attended the B24 factory at Ypsilanti, Mich. where the Ford Motor Company manufactured this model aircraft. In war time, three weeks of schooling makes one a specialist. I remained interned for thirteen months.

After the war in Europe ended I made five ferry flights as Co-Pilot to return our aircraft from Sweden to England. I joined the Ex Prisoners of War Depot in London. I was reissued a complete set of uniforms and shortly after I was transferred to the U.S.A. I was scheduled to be trained as a Flight Engineer on the B29 bomber. The war ended

American Internees in Sweden 1943 - 1945

By Pär Henningsson
Uppsala, Sweden

During WWII, 1939-1945, a total of 327 aircraft from belligerent countries found their way to Sweden. Most were damaged during missions, some had navigated astray and some brought refugees or deserters.

Of these 327 aircraft, 140 were American, 113 German and 58 British. The most diversions occurred in 1944, when 160 aircraft came to Sweden. During this year the Allied Air Forces bombings of industrial targets in Germany and German held territories were most intensive.

As Sweden had declared neutrality, and did not support any of the belligerent states, a diversion to Sweden meant internment for aircraft as well as crews. Nearly all interned airmen were repatriated before the war's end, after longer or shorter terms of internment. The reasons for how long different airmen were interned, and the time of repatriation varied.

A Brief History of Sweden's Neutrality

To understand Sweden's neutrality and foreign politics of the war years, one must take glance back at history.

Sweden had not been at war since 1814. During the seventeenth century Sweden had been one of Europe's most wayfaring "superpowers", with superiority over most of the Baltic states. Slowly the Swedish position weakened, and the country was a military "weak" nation in 1939. With a low population of just over 6 million inhabitants, and an outdated Army as well as Navy and Air Force to protect the long border, Sweden could never have defended itself against one of the "stronger" nations.

The nation was however rich when counting natural resources and industrial products. Ore, steel and the much demanded ball-bearings became "bargaining-chips" when Sweden declared neutrality at the war's start, and continued to stay that way during the whole war.

Historic and economic traditions made Sweden more orientated towards Germany rather than Great Britain. Especially within the Army and Navy, pro-German forces thrived.

In 1940, German forces occupied Norway and Denmark. Sweden was isolated from the rest of Europe. An established historic fact is that Germany did

not need to occupy Sweden, but could maintain a steady flow of ore, steel and ball-bearings, shipped from Swedish harbors to northern Germany.

Sweden was even "persuaded" to allow transit-trains with German troops to pass from Norway and southwards.

It must be said that the general public supported Sweden's occupied neighbors, and the support for the Allied countries steadily increased during the war. When information of German atrocities started becoming public, opinion turned even more. By 1943, not many Swedes dared to support Germany openly.

The First Internees and Internment Camps

The first aircraft to divert to Sweden was a Polish RWD 13 with refugees. The second was a German He 60. These two came in September 1939. During 1940 mostly German aircraft came to Sweden. The crew-members were interned at an internment camp in Kronobergshed, a former Army training camp, in southern Sweden.

The first British aircraft to force land in Sweden was a Swordfish Mk 1, in September 1940. It was followed by various Blenheims, Hampden and other medium bombers later that year. The allied fliers were interned in Främby in the county of Dalarna. Internment camps in various villages in Dalarna were to become the ones most used for housing allied airmen.

During the first four years of the war, airmen were repatriated on a basis of "one for one". As one German was sent home, also a Brit was repatriated.

Americans Change the Balance

In July 1943, the first USAAF aircraft came to Sweden. It was "Georgia Rebel", a B17 F from the 535th BS, 381st BG based at Ridgewell, UK. The GR had participated in a massive raid against southern Norway, been hit by FLAK, and turned towards Sweden for safety. When the GR crashed in a bog in western Sweden, piloted by 1st Lt. O V Jones and co-piloted by 1st Lt. G B McIntosh, it started a new era in Swedish internment history.

During 1943 only seven American aircraft came to Sweden. The boom of force landed aircraft was to start during

the spring of 1944. Flying Fortresses and Liberators started coming in large numbers as the Combined Bomber Offensive (CBO) was re-started by USAAF against targets in Germany.

The targets were aircraft industry and fuel plants. The Germans had many of these in northern Germany and Poland. The safest, or least dangerous way of reaching these targets, was to take the route over Denmark and approach over the Baltic Sea. This took the formations very close to Sweden and the USAAF issued maps of southern Sweden to guide damaged aircraft to safety.

Internment Camps for Americans

Sweden was not prepared for this "invasion" of Americans. No proper internment facilities were ready. George McIntosh, co-pilot of the Georgia Rebel, tells me his crew had to stay in an ordinary flat in the town of Falun the first weeks. Later a closed Guest House, Humlebackens Pensionat, was reopened to accommodate them. As the numbers of Americans increased, more guest houses and health-spas were converted into internment camps. These were in small villages in the Dalarna/Bergslagen area in central Sweden. The villages were Rättvik, Korsnäs, Älvdalen and Loka. Later two more camps were opened in southern Sweden in the county of Småland. They were in Gränna and Mullsjö.

The internment camps had very few restrictions for the internees. There were some guards, and a curfew time of 10.00 PM, but not much more. Some internees even stayed at different Air Force bases and helped the Swedes with the maintenance of the interned aircraft.

The reason for the relatively easy life of the internees was an agreement between the US and Sweden, giving Sweden the right to use nine B-17 Fortresses and convert them to courier planes. Five of these planes were actually converted and used on the route to Prestwick, Scotland. One of the men behind this deal was the American Air Attaché in Stockholm, Lt. Col. Felix Hardison. In his honor the converted aircraft were named "Airplane Felix".

Repatriation of Internees

As mentioned before, the earlier internees from Britain and Germany had been repatriated on a "one for one" basis. With the large number of Americans arriving, this was not possible. "There were not enough Germans!", as Bo Widfeldt writes in his book about internees in Sweden.

The Swedish authorities allowed Americans to be repatriated "as soon as possible", meaning when there was a place on one of the courier flights. Some had to stay several months, some could go home pretty soon. As the Swedes only had a few courier aircraft, American Air Transport Service, AATS, started courier flights using C-87 Liberator Transport Aircraft. This operation was started in April 1944 and led by Colonel Bernt Balchen. The AATS flew a total of 549 missions to Sweden.

American Casualties in Sweden

A total of 40 American Airmen were buried in Sweden. Two of these had been killed in accidents during their internment. One drowned during a canoe trip, and one crashed while test flying an aircraft. The remaining 38 died of wounds after arrival, were dead on arrival or were later found at sea. All 40 American casualties were buried in the town of Malmö. 38 of these were moved to Military Cemeteries or private burial places in 1948.

Today there is a monument at the cemetery in Malmö. It consists of a full sized propeller and bears the inscription:

**DUTY CALLED THEM
TO GOD AND COUNTRY
THEY REST IN PEACE WHILE
MEMORY OF THEIR
SACRIFICE IS WRITTEN
IN ETERNAL GLORY**

Sources

"Facts about aircraft, internees, internment camps and courier flights have in part been gathered from the following publications:

Lars Axel Nilson and Leif A. Sandberg, 'Blockade Runners'

Bo Widfeldt and Rolph Wegmann, 'Nödlandning' 'Aviation Historical Review', Special Issue November 1976, ed. by Torbjörn Olausson

I have also had interesting and enlightening conversations with George B. McIntosh, Captain (ret.) AF, Kerrville, TX, Lars Axel Nilson, Captain (ret.) SAF reserve, ABA and SAS, Svanesund, Sweden "



Walter Kurk and Herbert Grant



Capt. Bob Davey, C.O. at Mullsjö



Above: Group of Internees at Mullsjö.

The photographs on this page were sent by Herbert Grant. 2nd Lt. Grant was a navigator on B-24J #42-50770 of the 492nd B.G.. He was on his second mission, to Kiel, Germany, on August 4, 1944. Their ship had two engines shot out by FLAK and they were forced to fly to Sweden. He was interned at Mullsjö, which is about 225 miles south of Stockholm.

Herbert Grant makes his home in New Hyde Park, NY.

FLAK is a German acronym taken from their word *Fliiegerabwehrkanonen* meaning anti-aircraft-guns. The word applied to the fuzzy black *caterpillar* of smoke in the sky as well as to the fragments of burst shell which rattled against the aluminum skin of the plane while doing their damage. The munitions manufacturer had placed a black (or colored) substance inside the shell to leave a mark in the sky as it exploded. This was to allow the gunners on the ground to see where their shells were detonating in relation to the moving aircraft, and adjust their aim accordingly. The word *flak* had already passed into the English language during World War I.

An excerpt from "32 Co-Pilots"

A manuscript by Dick Bastien, a co-pilot With the 492 & 448 Bomb Groups



From left, Hopper (the man with the pipe) who worked at the US Legation as "an 8th AF historian", Leo Sager, who was in charge of all the Allied camps in Sweden, General Axel Ljungdahl, chief of the Swedish AF, General Curtis, USAAF. And C.O. Capt. Bob Davey, USAAF. Other persons go unidentified.



Loka Brunn 1944

During the Second World War, a large number of emergency landings in Sweden were made by American aircraft. Hence, the arrival of more than 1200 American airmen to neutral Sweden dictates they must be interned in this country. Principally, they are quartered in 4 locations. One of the places is Loka Brunn.

The first camp was established in Dalarna, where the airmen lived in hotels or boarding houses. The Americans' wages are considerably more than their allied colleagues and Swedes. When you include per diem compensation, they have at their disposal, around 2000kr per man. The average Swede earns under 500kr per person.

Entertainment sprang up suddenly everywhere, soldiers from Swedish I 13 complained loudly about the competition in the dance halls and the restaurants. The situation contributed to the decision to start up a camp, that would have more of a military character.

Loka Brunn was, during the winter and spring of 1944, made available to Danish refugees. In haste the camp was vacated by the Danes, and on the 16th of May, 1944 came the Swedish Commander of the future American camp, Major Leo Sager.

Major Sager was a Foreign Service diplomat and had previously created camps in Falun, Rättvik, Korsnäs, Mullsjö and Gränna. He was the assistant to Count Folke Bernadotte. Folke Bernadotte had within the Defence Staff's Internment Detail, the responsibility for all internment camps in Sweden. Loka Camp was under the orders of the Com-



Warren's House 1944
Sgt. Francis Baker standing in window

LOKA BRUNN

BY TORBJÖRN OLAUSSON
PHOTOS BY WARREN BRANCH



Loka Brunn 1973

mander of the Defense Area of Örebro, Col. Ivar of Sillén and his staff. The Area commander in Bofors was responsible for the maintenance of order within the armed forces, and the County Police Commissioner was responsible for civilian police.

Major Sager arrived on a chilly May afternoon, met with the civilian spa employees and military personnel; manager Lt. Ragnar Sannerstam, aid 2nd Lt. Olaf Berglund, Drs. Holger Lundbäck and Birger Bringel, personal assistant pastor Bengt Hoffman and the guard-detail, a junior officer and 15 men from the 12th depot. The internees were organized under the command of Captain Richard Rollo, who was also their contact person with the American Embassy.



Loka Brunn 1998
A posh spa and conference center
(photo from their web page)

Loka Brunn was in miserable conditions, even according to war-time measures. The sought of improvements, firstly in the sanitary areas, were far from ready. There was no running hot water. Wood-boxes were empty and trying to get a fire in the stoves only brought smoke. Meals were horrible. The breakfast on 17 May, was the first collective breakfast for the Swedish camp management. Offered were slices of rye bread, slices of hard bread, 15 gr of butter, porridge, cold herring and little slices of cold roast pork. Of the 9kr per day that Barabolaget (Bergslagens Restaurang AB, the catering firm) received in bed and board charges from both interns and Swedish staff, they only used 6kr for meals. These were the experiences that reduced the economic framework that the camp management had to work within.

The 22nd of May, 1944, during a heavy snowfall, the first Americans came to Loka Brunn. 55 officers and 105 enlisted men rode in open trucks the 4-km from the Loka Railway-

station to the spa and were quartered there.

They gradually got the camp in order. The management had continuous problems with the liquor license, venereal diseases and various shop-owners who wanted the sole rights for selling civilian clothing, bikes, canoes, etc

The Americans had, regardless of their mobility, seldom conflicts with the Swedish justice. The incidents were only drunkenness at the restaurant Spångberget in Filipstad or the damaging of a telephone booth in Grythyttan.

Toward autumn of 1944, after 5 months, it was time to vacate the Loka camp and on 16 October they broke up the camp. Before they left, they had practically sold all their civilian possessions to the local people. Bikes were a roaring trade, as well as Agfa cameras. The cameras could not be brought to England, where the Americans were going, as they were made in Germany.

During the 5 months the Americans stayed in Loka Brunn 1944, they caused a bit of confusion in the surrounding area. Their sudden arrival widened the view of the world.

They came from the other side of the globe and brought with them nylon, chewing gum, Lucky Strikes and tough leather jackets. Friendships arose mutually. We find still, many ladies, who gladly remember, yet some will not tell. What remains today is a handful of faded photographs, some greetings in guest books, saved letters and many other memories.

Today it is history



Warren's House 1973
Still looks the same, even with the paint job

FOLDED WINGS

We wish to acknowledge the passing of

John Gillis
Husband of Alice Gillis
Father of Jim Gillis
Van Etten, NY

Lt. Col. (Ret.) John C. Nelson
(389 BG)

Jan. 1, 1998

and

Mrs. John Neslon

Aug. 24, 1998

Parents of

Sherry Norden
Englewood, CO



If you wish to send me anything via
E-mail:

kbc56@compuserve.com

Attentions all B-24
Vets

The Pueblo Weisbrod Aircraft Museum, home of the international B-24 museum is developing a database of former B-24/PB4Y-1 Liberator and PB4Y-2 Privateer crew members. The database will help veterans locate friends and serve as a source for historical research.

Veterans or family members of veterans wishing to add the names of former crew members to the data base may contact the museum and request a B-24 Crew Member Form. The mailing address is: International B-24 Museum, 31001 Magnuson Ave., Pueblo, CO 81001. E-mail can be sent to pwam@usa.net.

You may also visit their new web site at:

www.co.pueblo.co.us/pwam/crew_registry

The museum is open Monday through Friday 10 a.m. to 4 pm.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; and Sunday 2 to 4 p.m.

Sweden
After the Flak

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



Address Service Requested

Dear Internees, their families and friends,

I started researching my Dad's internment in Sweden, during W.W.II, in March of 1998. During this time, I have learned so much that is not generally known about the American Internees and their "host" country. Dad's plane (#42-95011) was hit by flak over Politz on May 29, 1944. They started losing fuel and determined that they did not have enough to get back to England. They decided to try for Sweden. They landed at a small field at Rinkaby around noon on the 29th. Their story will be told in the next issue.

I have made many new friends in Sweden. Two special friends in Sweden, Ingemar Melin and Pär Hennigsson, have been a tremendous help in completing this first newsletter. Their help, along with that of two Swedish authors, Torbjörn Olausson and Bo Widfeldt, have made it a very worthwhile effort.

I would also like to thank the many friends stateside that have helped with the research. Wally Foreman has supplied countless plane numbers, crew ID's and nose art descriptions. Allan Blue, author of The Fortunes of War, the story of the 492nd BG, was able to supply me with Dad's MACR record and other details of their missions. Dick Bastien has allowed me to read his manuscript detailing events of the 492nd BG. Norma and Bill Beasley have answered countless phone calls when I needed more information on the 492nd, 8th AF or 2nd ADA. Norma and Bill have supplied so much support for this newsletter, I can not thank them enough. I would also like to thank my parents, Lee and Warren Branch. Without their support, none of this would be possible.

Since I sent out my first letter, I have received an enormous amount of information from Internees and their families. I will be starting on the Spring edition as soon as this one is off to the post office.

This newsletter is not part of any Association. I am doing this on my own. I do not receive funds from any organization. If you would like to contribute to it, I would be most appreciative of stamps for the next newsletter and any memories that you would like to see published. I can scan photos or other material that you may send. I can also accept photos sent via email (see email address above).

Thank you to all who have sent their best wishes and I look forward to hearing from you again.

Yours Sincerely,