

Memories

By Don Newman (93rd BG)

*This poem is dedicated to my crew and brothers I did not know who flew
With the Second Air Division, 8th Air Force.*

I'll take you back in memory, when the B-24 rode the wings of war
and the men who rode them and looked down the Flak Guns bore.
The E.T.O. was the theater and the enemy occupied lands the stage
and the young crews were the actors who destroyed Hitler's rage.

Let me take you back to the briefing shack and the Mission of the Day
and to your chagrin the target's Berlin, and you begin to pray.
On the Other Side, the Abbeyville Kids are stroking their ME-109s
and the Artillery sighting their 88s all along the firing line.

You get up slow when it's time to go, you have done this all before.
You came back yesterday, and you hope this will be one time more.
Your duty stations takes your time as the takeoff grows like thunder
and the Old Girl shakes, and moans and she claws for the Wild Blue Yonder.

The Cliffs of Dover pass behind, and the Coast of France lies ahead,
no turning back, head for the Target, you face the ride with dread.
The Abbeyville Kids have come up and made a pass just to say hello,
And the accurate 88 gunners are making bet on which engine to blow.

The hours pass, then, there's the target, bathed in the light of the sun.
We "lock on" to "Big B" and make our final run.
We sit helpless, holding steady, moving neither to the left nor right
and we wish the light of day would turn to the dark of night.

Bombs away, and the old girl lifts, we are finally out of the bind
as we flare out and turn and set course for the bases we left behind.
We count the empty spaces in the Squadron elements, all of us wishing
that those who were gone were alive and would be listed only as missing.

Escorts form an umbrella as the Groups head for the English Coast.
Bombers and fighters will be patched and come back again as a ghost
to haunt the enemy occupied territory and throw down a Yankee dare
to the pride of GOERINGS FLYING CIRCUS to try to clear them from the air.

You touch down at your base, flares bursting all around
as the damaged Liberators get the first chance at the ground.
It's been a long and tiring day, at De-Briefing you have had your say
and murmur a prayer of gratitude that you made it back one more day.

You wonder what has happened to the young men grown old,
those daring young flyers made of the American mold,
who gave of themselves and their lives that freedom would live on,
flying high in the hostile sky, headed for enemy lands from dusk to dawn.

Then orders came ending your stay and you're headed on your way for home,
making false promises in your mind, no more would you care to roam.
Now your memory dims into the abyss of life's greatest mystery
and your GREATEST ADVENTURE of yesterday fades into 2nd Air History.

