

885 Bomb. Sq. (H) (Special)  
2641 Special Group (Provisional)

"A UNIQUE Squadron in the 15th Airforce"

Predecessors:

- 122 Bomb. Sq. (H)
- 122 Liaison Sq. / 68 Tactical Recon. Gp.
- 122 Liaison Sq. / 68 Recon. Gp.
- 122 Observation Sq. / 68 Observation Gp.

Add to Roster:-

Paul V. Callis  
1125 Beach Dr.  
Delray Beach, Fl. 33483

Phone (FL) 407-278-6735  
" (TN) 615-292-7649

Original Pilot on "Miss Charlotte"  
and original member of 122-885. Paul  
was our first Operations Officer with  
over 50 Missions and 4000 B-17 hours,  
including time spent in 12th AF and  
301st Bomb. Gp. under Jimmy Doolittle.  
Paul honored his future Mother-in-Law  
by naming his plane "Miss Charlotte".

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PHILIPPE AND FRIENDS RETURNED TO MT. GRAN MIOUL ALONG WITH  
RELATIVES OF "MISS CHARLOTTE'S CREW ON 24/25 JULY 1993. \*\*\*

Leola & Don Sydzynik of Council Bluffs,  
Iowa and Louise Sheley of Davenport,  
Iowa (Leola and Louise are sisters of  
Ernest G. Kolln Radio Operator-Gunner  
of "Miss Charlotte") were met at the  
train station at Cuneo, Italy by  
Christian Vigne - one of Philippe's  
friends - and given an apartment for  
the night and treated them to a deli-  
cious meal put on by Christian's girl  
friend Veronique and Alain's wife Hele-  
na. (Alain is another friend of Phil-  
ippe). Along with Philippe that night,  
toasting the arrival of the Americans,  
were Brian, Daniel, Bernard, Christian  
& Veronique and Alain & Helena. These  
were all members of Philippe's team.  
The next day they traveled to the moun-  
tain by 4X4 as far as they could and  
walked the rest of the way. "It was a  
gorgeous day" Leola wrote. Leola and  
Louise placed a bouquet and a card with  
all the family names on it with a nice  
little poem in the side of the rock pile  
where other momentos were placed last  
year. Also they brought a flag that  
was placed at a high point above the  
momentos. About the time this was be-  
ing done the "Clouds formed a perfect  
cross in the sky. We felt so close to  
Ernie at that time". stated Leola.  
Philippe and friends were all moved by  
this too.

A Bronze plaque was installed and ded-  
icated at the base of the mountain on  
a villager's home where it will be  
seen by all Making the journey up the  
mountain. In Italian, French and  
English it read: IN MEMORY FROM THE  
NINE CREW MEMBERS FROM THE B-17  
"MISS CHARLOTTE" KILLED IN ACTION IN  
THE AREA THE NIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 10,  
1944. Also at the bottom of the  
plaque it says: B-17 SERIAL 42-30500 -  
885th SQUADRON SPECIAL - 15th USAAF.  
Also: ASSOCIATION AERO-Re.L.I.C. FRANCE  
06210 Mandelieu - LA NAPOULE.  
"OUR LAST THREE DAYS WITH PHILIPPE  
AND THE GUYS WERE JUST FANTASTIC".  
And "What A Great Group of PEOPLE  
They Are" \*\*\* Leola.  
"IT WAS EXHILARATING, AND AN UNFORGET-  
TABLE EXPERIENCE". And "We Immediately  
Felt Like We Were Amongst Old Friends"  
\*\*\* Louise.  
AERO-Re.L.I.C. of 925 La Napoule,  
06210 France is an organization headed  
by President Philippe Castellano and  
it stands for: Recherche, Localisation  
et Identification de Crashes. A great  
and top rated organization!! It de-  
serves support!!  
Ernie has 3 brothers and 5 sisters -  
Ray, Eldon, Arnold, Louise, Leola,  
Louine Nave, Lorraine Kolln & Lillian  
Poublon.

Denison (Iowa) Review of July 17, '93 along with the Omaha World-Herold of Omaha, Nebr. edition of July 26, '93 reported on Ernie Kolln and his family. A very nice tribute to Ernie and to all in the 885th that were on any of those dangerous missions. Charlie Miller of Atlantic, Ia. and Albert Prochnow of Bellevue, Ne. - 885th Air Crew Members - both added to the articles.

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Pictures in "B-17 Magazine" included Paul Callis' Crew and ground crew in a early picture and his later crew in front of "Miss Charlotte". Also Philippe's team on Mt. Gran Mioul and the mae-west of John R. Meyers located by one of the team members. Meyers took over from Callis after Callis & Crew finished their tour of duty.

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Wilbarger County Courthouse lawn in Vernon, Texas was the scene last Memorial Day for the dedication of a monument to Veterans killed in action during WW2, Korean and Vietnam conflicts. Included in the 94 Wilbarger Co. residents honored was Walter M. Bildstein.

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Hiram J. Lloyd of Stanwood, Wash. brother of Robert B. Lloyd, Gunner on "Miss Charlotte" sent a "In Memory" card from Robert's funeral. It was held on March 17, 1949 in Boise, Ida.

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Edward "Red" Bearden - original Radio Operator-Gunner on "Miss Charlotte" reports the passing of Ermil Mann original gunner on "Miss Charlotte" on 25 December 1992.

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In my last newsletter I mentioned the Fred Schwarze Crew as being on B-24 "Miss Judy". Actually "Miss Judy" was assigned to Norman Wilde's Crew but Fred's Crew did fly it on occasions and also flew it home. It was named by Jerry Ziomek, Bombardier of Norm's Crew in honor of his new baby daughter, Judith Ann, who was born while he was enroute to Italy. In fact he painted it on himself. My thanks to all for straightening me out on this.

Just received a copy of French Magazine called "B-17 Magazine" published in Paris with a terrific 4 page report from Philippe Castellano concerning "MissCharlotte" and their trip to the crash site in July 1992. Also a detailed report on his organization :- AERO-Re.L.I.C.

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Also pictured was Ian S. Raeburn, Navigator on "Miss Charlotte" the night of 10 Sept. 1944. Ian had 2 sisters & one brother:- Rosemary Pullin, Dorothy Raeburn & Alan Raeburn. His family has a letter from Ian dated that same day before he went out on his last mission. Ian's folks came over from Scotland a year before Ian was born. His dad was in WW1 in the British Army.

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Walter was gunner on "Miss Charlotte". This memorial adds to one already erected to WW1 Veterans. Walter has one living sister Marie Lemon. (This from information supplied by Francille Aderholt - Niece of Walter.)

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Burial was in Field of Honor - Morris Hill Cemetery. Bob had 5 brothers & 1 sister. Hiram, John, Leonard, Russell, Idris "Spud" and Ruth. Ruth passed away in 1991.

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"Red" pulled 13 Missions in "Miss C." before ear problems forced him to be grounded. Later he worked in Communications/Operations.

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Jerry's Crew was:-

- Pilot Norman M. Wilde
- Co-Pilot Harold C. Rose
- Nav. Francis R. Ward
- Bomb. Jerome J. Ziomek
- Engr. John M. Spence
- Radio-Opr. Jack Bergstrom
- WGunner Grover Plogger
- WGunner Thomas Burrow
- TGunner Alfred H. Maloney



"Rusty" Williams on his way to Trinidad this past June and returning in July passed directly over the spot between Florida and Puerto Rico where his brother S/Sgt. Elmer E. Williams of 68th Observation Group was lost on 8 November 1942 on the way to the N. African invasion.

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885th mentioned in Air Force Magazine March 1945 on page 25 in "Battle Honors" section:- A Distinguished Unit Citation for 12 Aug. '44 Mission.

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Also a very nice write up in the "Stars & Stripes" edition for 18 July 1945 by Capt. Bill Munro Jr.-Special to The Stars and Stripes.

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Made some great contacts with RAF 624 Sq. lately. They were stationed at Blida, Algeria also when we were there. They had Halifaxs and later Stirlings. We had a very good relationship with our British friends there. Couple of their ground radio operators gave us a hand in getting us set up and helped us in receiving the ETA's as the planes reported in as they returned from their individual missions. We were parked along the runway in our "299" signal truck for a few weeks before moving inside the Operations building. There was 3 of us for a short time and 2 more added later under Capt. VanTuil.

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On April 29th at the American Cemetery, Chaplain Rieke conducted funeral services, attended by Col. MacCloskey and members of the squadron, for the Crew who were buried with full military honors. Representing RAF 624 Sq. was Stanley M. David Air Gunner-Dispatcher. Stan said they read a letter from one of the crew members that was written just before he went on this search-mission. He remembers that it was addressed to GOD - "a very traumatic experience", he related!

\*\*\*\*\*  
As you all probably know General Jimmy Doolittle, our first 15th AF Commander, passed away Monday September 27, 1993 in California. He certainly left a mark in US Air Force History. He was kind enough to exchange Christmas cards with me the last 4 years - I sure appreciated that. We will miss him.

\*\*\*\*\*

On February 26, 1993 at Barksdale AF Base in Louisiana Elmer was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal Posthumously. His family attended the ceremony:- C. M. "Rusty" Williams, C. E. Williams and sister Bessie Rawls.

It was approved in 1944 but never awarded until now. Long overdue!

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Also "Saga" magazine for August 1965 Page 12 titled "Heroes Out Of Gutless GI's" by General Monro MacCloskey (Ret.)

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It was titled "Target For Tonight : Partisan Country". Also sub-titled : "The 885th Never Dropped A Bomb But It Played A Big Part In Victory".

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Newsletter #2 mentioned our first loss: B-17 with Pilot William W. Ketcham & Crew which crashed 27 April 1944 outside of Blida. No survivors. From official records:-"Capt. Paul Callis made a determined attempt to reach the scene of the accident which had occurred at a most inaccessible spot in the mountains. With great determination on his part, he succeeded in arriving at the wrecked aircraft late at night amid torrential rain."....."At the foot of the mountain an elderly Frenchman was waiting with flowers that his wife had gathered to place as a tribute in the ambulance with the earthly remains of the gallant air crew."

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1 October 1993  
T.F.T. #6



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Thanks for the stamps and donations towards stamps!! - J.K.M.