



Vol. LII No. 4

Yuba City, California

October 2010

Tour the
Sutter Basin
Oct 30



Luncheon
at Ruthy's
Oct 16

The Huntington Children

[photos courtesy of Margit Sands]



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*The year the director joined the Board.

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The 2010 dues are payable as of January 1, 2011. Mail your check to the Community Memorial Museum at 1333 Butte House Road, Yuba City, 95993-2301 530-822-7141

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President's Message

We have an exciting new fundraiser coming in October! Our April luncheon presentation on the Sutter Basin raised interest in seeing just how all these waterworks function, so we've developed a tour that will show you, start to finish. On **October 30**, we'll begin the day at the Robbins Community Hall, with shuttle service from the Museum for those who are interested. Then we'll board a Winship-Robbins school bus and head for the Karnak pumping station for a look at the equipment and grounds. From there we'll head north on the river road, stopping at several points along the way to take in the sights, and park ourselves at the Reclamation District 1500 and Sutter Mutual Water Company offices for a catered lunch from The Buckhorn in Winters under the trees. After lunch we'll visit the Tisdale pumping station and famous fish screen, then head back to Robbins.

We hope many of you will take the opportunity to learn more about this area, which comprises nearly one-fifth of Sutter County. Look for more information in this issue of the Bulletin.

Also, I'm sure there are other tour ideas out there that just haven't occurred to us yet. If you've got a hankering to go somewhere that might be appropriate for our group, please let me know.

Our annual fall luncheon is **Saturday, October 22** at Ruthy's. Our program will be Norm Piner and Ken Calhoun talking about the Peach Industry in Sutter County. Lunch is only \$15 and reservations are required. See the insert in this Bulletin.

Audrey Breeding
President

Trees & Traditions Change

This year Trees & Traditions will be held on **FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3rd** from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. It's the same festive ambiance with delicious food, wonderful company, silent auction and drawing prizes -- just a different night!

Tickets are available at the Museum and from Museum Commissioners.

Cost is \$40 person, \$75 per couple.

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Director's Report

In what seems to be accepted as the norm around here, the Museum is in a flurry of fall activity. At this writing, the Meeting Room Project is preparing to go out for construction bids a second time. Assuming all goes smoothly, the construction schedule will be very tight. But we are still optimistic that we will have a shiny new building by spring.

We are also optimistic that the permanent exhibits in the new Multi-Cultural wing will be ready by the end of this year. The Japanese-American exhibit will be the first to be completed. We are putting the finishing touches on it now, and expect to have it open sometime this month.

If you haven't yet visited the new exhibit in the main gallery, *Portraits from Glass, Faces of Yuba-Sutter*, it will be here through November 21. The magical thing about this exhibit is that it is just like meeting 75 or so of your neighbors from 100 or more years ago. These portraits bring to life the very people who lived in our community so long ago. From all over our two counties, they climbed up to the second floor of the Odd Fellows' Hall at D and Third Streets in Marysville. That was the photographers' studio, where they went on the very special occasion of having their portrait made by a big camera that used glass plates to capture the image. The only drawback to these beautiful, crisp, artistic photographs is that we don't know the subjects' names. The good news is that, to date, two of them have been identified by visiting family members. We hope that more of you will be able to point out a relative or see a similarity to a family photo you have seen. Please come by the Museum prepared for a rare treat.

Save your Saturday afternoon, October 9, at 1:00 p.m. for a program and book signing with Laurence Tom and Brian Tom who have a new book out called *Sacramento's Chinatown*. We are looking forward to adding to our knowledge of the Chinese experience in California. The event is free, and no reservations are needed.

As you may have suspected, the Museum is gearing up for the big fundraising gala, *Trees & Traditions*. Keep in mind that this year it has moved from its traditional Saturday date to **Friday evening, December 3rd**, with slightly different hours, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. It will be the same festive, elegant, and fun affair that it has been for over 30 years. Please help out with the two ornament workshops, Thursday, October 28th, and Wednesday, November 17th, both at 10:00 a.m. We also need your enthusiastic assistance for Decoration Day on Wednesday, December 1st from 9:00 a.m. on, and for the Hors d'oeuvres Workshop on Thursday, December 2nd at 1:00 p.m. in the Veterans' Hall kitchen. Tickets for *Trees & Traditions* go on sale on October 14, and are available at the Museum or from any Museum Commissioner.

Please put the Museum Store on your list of stops for holiday shopping. We think you will be delighted with the new additions to the store, as it continues to grow and serve you.

Julie Stark, Director

Memorials

In Memory of **Betty Arnoldy**
Tom & Suellen Teesdale

In Memory of **Nora Barkhouse**
Larry & Min Harris

In Memory of **Larry Bigler**
Steven Richardson

In Memory of **Alma Jean Burtis**
Ray & Shirley Anderson
Gwen Barber
Connie Cary
Alice Chesini
Marnee Crowhurst
Bob & Pauline Masera
Laverne McPherrin
Sharyl Simmons
Mr. & Mrs. James Tarke
Tom & Suellen Teesdale
Carl & June Watson
The Zwanziger Family

In Memory of **Amelia Bustos**
Steven Richardson

In Memory of **Ann Carnes**
Helen Heenan

In Memory of **Dean Chellis**
Robert & Sabrina Benton
Miyoko Nakahara
Susee Family

In Memory of **Evelyn Emery Day**
Ashley's Plumbing, Heating,
Sheet Metal & Air Conditioning
George & Shyrlie Emery
Merlyn K. Rudge

In Memory of **Jean Duffy**
Heenan Family
Julie Stark

In Memory of **Katherine Estratis**
Tom & Suellen Teesdale

In Memory of **Robert Hall, Jr.**
James Miller

In Memory of **Don Huckins**
Tom & Suellen Teesdale

In Memory of **Ray Allen Keesling**
Shirley D. Schnabel

In Memory of **Ross Madden**
Bud & Joan Doty
Laverne McPherrin
Jan Perry
Tom & Suellen Teesdale

In Memory of **Ron Matthews**
Dub McFarland

In Memory of **Loretta Middleton**
Tom & Suellen Teesdale

In Memory of **Sharon Kennedy Miller**
Merlyn Kennedy Rudge

In Memory of **Violet Miller**
Tom & Suellen Teesdale

In Memory of **Gayle Morrison**
Tom & Suellen Teesdale

In Memory of **John "Jack" Purcell**
Tom & Suellen Teesdale

In Memory of **Marie Pearl Souza**
Mike & Helene Andrews

In Memory of **G. Dave Teja**
Robert & Wallace Coats Family
Julie Moore Patton
Elaine Tarke

Memorials (continued)

In Memory of Maxcine Vallieres
Steven Richardson

In Memory of Ruth Wilder
Steven Richardson

In Memory of Coraleana Vance
Jim Staas

Outright Gift to the Museum
Larry & Norma Montna



Sock Drawer Secrets

by
Janet Alonso

I have no idea exactly how many mornings I've opened up my sock drawer in the last forty years, but I would venture to guess at least 4,000 times. And what I always find is ... socks, nothing more, nothing less. One morning a few years back, however, there was a surprise awaiting me. The envelope was a bit crumpled, but otherwise in mint condition. Upon opening it, several pages fell out and there penned hastily on the lines, Mr. Dick Ham poured out his love for his wife, his "saucy little varmint," his "honey dear." They were newly married and living apart while he worked on a farm in Huron, California. She was staying with her brother in Three Rivers and they were soon to have a reunion.

Yes, I've cleaned out my drawer a few times in all those years, and even

taken the drawer completely out of the built-in bureau and painted it. Upon closer investigation though, I discovered that within the construction of the bureau there are some spaces above the drawer itself, and the letter must have gotten stuck in the infrastructure. The Hams had moved to Robbins in the 1930s and purchased the Edward Schranz home in 1942. They lived there for twenty-five years before the next owner came along. We bought the place in 1969.

I gave the letter to Mrs. Aldean Akin who had been a close friend of the Hams for many years. In fact, the Akins named their children, Dick and Colleen, after Mr. and Mrs. Ham. I keep waiting for "our 73-year-old walls" to do a little more talking, but so far they are keeping any additional secrets to themselves.

Far from Home: The Letters of Bill and Harry Huntington Part IV

edited by Phyllis Smith

This is the fourth and final part in a series of articles based on the letters of Bill and Harry Huntington, local boys who served in World War II. In our last article we left Harry at the end of the 1943, recovering from ten days in the New Guinea jungle after he and his crewmates had parachuted out of their plane. He continues to respond to questions from home about his ordeal, including reports that he had been injured.

Our special thanks to Margit Sands for sharing her family's letters and photos and her own memories.

New Guinea Dec. 20, 1943

This picture [*can't locate the picture*] was taken about a week after our experience. Do I look injured, maybe a little in spirit. Don't feel bad if it don't look like jungle, cause right there it wasn't much to speak of.

Dec. 22, 1943

Made a little trip down to the bay and watched them fool around with boats and other stuff. Climbed out of a car we were hitchhiking in and started walking. The car went about 100 yards and a truck forced it off the road. It ended up about 300 feet down the steepest hill I ever seen. Driver was hurt but not bad. Sure had a funny feeling to think what would have happened if we hadn't removed ourselves when we did. Darn, thing are getting rugged around here.

Dec. 23

Heard some good news. That long forgotten furlough seems to be remembered. Might get it yet, if things keep going.

First Sgt. overlooked me today for detail so I didn't feel like reminding

him, instead I'll finish this letter. The Life magazines arrived with the swimming suits, course I didn't need the latter because there isn't any civilization. The birthday suit seems to be in style.

Dec. 27, 1943

Guess the war department is keeping track of me pretty well. Yes, I was in the hospital but not from any injury, was just getting rid of crud and other stuff without names.

Furlough has finally arrived, am leaving tomorrow. By the time you get this I'll be back so don't stop writing even if my letters are a little farther between.

Jan. 16, 1944

My first letter in the new year. The furlough came through and was suppose to last 7 days. I came back on the 21st day. Ball and myself were the only two who left Sydney on the date we were supposed to and we were the last ones back. An elevator broke off our plane and we had to lay over until it was fixed. Had a good time though, course it was not like being home, but

it sure was swell to be in civilization again.

I've got quite a few packages but I don't know for sure if yours was among them. I've gotten Arnold's, Bernice's, and one that Grandmaw addressed. The socks came in handy cause I haven't very many after the affair.

I got most of the stuff back now, yes, I've still got the knife. Funny someone didn't take a fancy to it. Sure glad though cause I intend to bring it back.

The crud isn't well, the Doc don't know what it is cause he has nothing to cure it. It finally goes away if you don't scratch it. What a willpower a guy has to have to do that, so far I'm fighting a losing battle. The trip south helped a whole lot though.

We didn't have any kind of a pill to take, our kits were cleaned out. We were lucky to have the chocolate, although it wasn't much for six of us. The other four went 11 days eating only a 2 pound fish which they had shot on the fifth day. We fared pretty good compared to them.

It is the malaria what makes me cold at a 100 degrees, it being used to a 130 degrees or so, then have a cold snap. That sounds like the nuts doesn't it.

Jan 17, 1944

My letter are censored even though they aren't cut open. We turn them in unsealed so all the censor does is seal them (if there is any stickum left on them.) and I sure worry a lot about that.

Don't know whether it was my head or my hands or feet I used coming out of the tree, but I do know I was never so poop out in my life. Just lay

there for 15 minute or so. That was only the first couple hours, wasn't so bad after sleeping that night (in the rain) Sure got a lot of sleep too.

Well back to civilization. Had a darn good time. I filled up with milkshakes, ice cream sundaes, banana splits, then of course we celebrate the New Year, Army stile, only they weren't Tom and Jerrys. Guess that sounds pretty rugged coming from me.

Becoming a bird-man again, one of the armed eagles as the cartoons put it. Sure feel go[od] getting my big feet off the ground again. Sure is getting tiresome walking every where I go and besides it's too slow.

Jan. 21, 1944

Have got some good news. Your Christmas package has arrived and those wooden shoes affair are right in order. Got to walk about 300 yards to the shower so they eliminate putting on those ole heavy GI and I don't have to worry so much about athletes foot. That stuff sure is rough over here about 4 days start on the medical department take quite a while to cure. Now I am taking a shower in peace of mind anyway.

Still don't have much use for all those razor blades but I guess before I leave here they will be used. Soap is good anytime of the year and I was low - to make a long story short the present came just in time and many many thanks.

All but two of us landed in trees, the two went clear through, they were a little luckier I guess. It took the six of us 3 hours to get together and sweat each other out of the trees.

I sure hope they get something new in the line of helmets cause the steel one pressing the earphones too

tight on the hearing apparatus (ears). After all the junk is put on there isn't room for a person's head.

Jan. 26, 1944

We fixed our tent today, at least we hope so, got the junk on it and plenty thick too. Just waiting for the rain now to give it a test. Fraid we won't have a very long wait cause it's getting that time. Rains with the clock nowadays. Sure wish someone would throw the clock out. I'm tired of taking showers every night after I've gone to bed, reminds one of someone's roof where we would turn the bed inside out to miss the holes. Yeh, this is almost like the good ole days.

Poked my head out to watch the bombs fall. Heard one heck of an explosion and seen a lot of black smoke. You think a blue racer is fast you should have seen my head come back where it belonged. Was a little too close for me.

Jan 27, 1944

Ah, free at last, free from the ground, no longer do I have to sit around with clipped wings like the poor tame ducks. Course the same happens as in the case of the duck, no clipped wing & they get shot at.

Sure is a crazy world, guys going around shooting at each other. Bet a lot of guys know now what a deer feels like to be shot at. Kind of exciting while it last. Guess I'd better get the firework off my brain and see what I can scare up in the line of good news.

Feb. 1, 1944

After the storm is over I write. Have just woke up and it's about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. We were scheduled to fly last night which we

were glad to do but after all the trouble none of us would have flown for the president of US.

Started off with Tojo a little off course and out of his own hole. That delayed a few minutes. Next the truck wouldn't start, then after we got to the plane - well after running around half the night looking for a flyable plane we gave up. Decided we weren't supposed to fly that. So even if we had found a plane it would have been mutiny or something like that.

Have scraped up enough energy to wash clothes but now that is all gone too. In fact I hardly know how this pen is able to be moved.

Got word from some of the crew we trained with in Pocatello. Those who went the other way and most of them have their names among the missing list.

Better stop writing it's just going from bad to worse. Will try again when the sun is shining a little brighter right now there is one of those thunderclouds like Loretta used to create.

Feb. 8, 1944

No mail for quite awhile now but don't break down and send V mail though. None at all is better. Been through that before though.

There isn't much new that I can write about. We've been flying nearly every day and the newspaper takes care of that end. We have some [*a whole section was censored by cutting it out of the letter*]

Think I told you about getting a hole in our plane, no damage sown to get excited about. Just that it was close.

Read in the paper where Germany and U.S. stopped fighting for

an hour or so to go pick up the dead and wounded. Wonder what they will do next. Have the holidays off too and double time on Sundays.

Steffaneli's [Eng] brother came over and visited about 3 days. Had quite a time although we ran out on him for 8 hours or so. We went visiting too that day but that's beside the point. Last week we had a regular turmoil every time we set foot on the ground. All of us wore metal guards around our necks. Things are settling down a bit now. Ball and I celebrated being together a year last week too. Had a toast of chlorinated water and an argument.

Feb. 13, 1944

Talk about things being dreary this place takes all the cakes. Even tired now of feeling sorry for myself. Now that is going some. Spent three days on KP but it was worth it. Darn guy who turns in names for detail shows just a little too much favoritism. So we had it out. He's still doing nothing and I done 3 days KP. Anyway he got full blast of everything I could think of. Guess things are about square although accidents do happen.

They had me all excited for awhile, thought maybe I got promoted but on checking up, found it was only a good OLE rumor.

We had a mission over what was supposed to be a rather rough place. Really had the most wonderful disappointment so far of our overseas career, nothing came up to speak of so nothing could go down again. Listened to music right after we left the target. Seemed funny waiting for whatever to come show up and having music jangling in your ears. Took some pictures from the plane so I guess I can

be called an official photographer now. More fun taking pictures, get to see all the bombs hit and the damage done more like in the movies.

Had to wash again, every time I clean guns I get grease all over everything. Sure is getting tiresome washing clothes and then getting dirty the very next day, to heck with it. Guess I'll take them all off and save me a lot of trouble.

Feb. 16, 1944

Today is the day of days. Been waiting for mail for two weeks but no avail. So today I got 4 which will last me for a couple more weeks. A person doesn't mind waiting to receive a long letter like you [Grandmaw] write though.

Well I spent my vacation in Australia in the berg of Sidney only it's a darn berg. Got lost the first day and finally got a taxi who put me right again. Things are sure high priced in town. Spent around 50 pounds which amounts to \$3 per pound. Went for a good time so no price was too great.

There isn't much to this stuff. Just ride over the target dropped the bombs and watch for enemy planes. Sometimes you open your mouth in surprise when a bunch of flak come extra close. The sweat rolls off you at high altitude so you nearly freeze afterwards. It has it's troubles but no use worry about them.

Ball our tail gunner is from Chicigo (?) and he don't help anybody unless it something for his benefit. I keep saying "I'm learning the big city ways" when he wants some favor done and just sit on my stern & grin.

Of course this morning we had a little excitement. A big gas tank was about empty so they drained the water

& excess gas out of it into a small stream. Some guy was about 4 miles down and he lit a match it travel up the stream and blew the tank up. Made quite an explosion. Scared us in camp, thought sure we were being bombed.

Feb. 18, 1944

Was sure surprised to hear you have gotten the do dad so quick. It's just a bunk of parachute silk, use it for a scarf or what ever it comes in handy for. It's the same type of stuff that let me down fairly gentle.

I was wondering about the swimming trunks but I still like the bare skin better. Use them to run around camp in though.

We seen a good show the other night. Lady Take a Chance¹, also the march of time.² It didn't rain but a couple fighter squadrons had to land during the middle of it. Couldn't hear much for awhile. Have one tonight something about "Bomber Moon."³ Guess I'll go see it so I know what kind of moon to use, even though I prefer daylight raids.

Went out one night by ourselves and had a little game with some night fighters. Just sit there waiting for the other to shoot and make sure it's in the right direction. All a person does is watch and wait, no excitement to speak of.

Sure run into trouble, the bombardier found out I know how to fuse bombs. Now, I have a steady job. Hit an air current or something and me and fuses were scattered all over the bomb bays. Someday I'll learn to put weights on my feet.

Taylor (pilot) came down about 11 o'clock PM woke me up from a sound sleep and said we had a recon.

Like darn fool I pile out of bed put clothes and all my battle garb on and stand there waiting for him to move. Then he tells me that he was wondering if I'd get up after flying all day. Now he comes down to the tent armed. Sure burnt me up and I couldn't sleep the rest of the night.

Too bad those cookies can't keep until they got over here. I'd request them every day. How about making a batch when I get home anyway. Don't mix the dough now though, cause it isn't going to be that soon.

Well you learned about waist gunners the easy way in their little wind tunnel. I learned too but the hard way as usual. Isn't too bad after a person gets used to it. The worst is freezing and then coming down into the blast heat of New Guinea, at least I get a canteen of cold water out of the deal. It's worth it too. Too bad we don't have some ice cream mix. Nothing like dessert after a flight. I'll bet it can be done, so don't laugh.

Fity (radio) grabbed the water tilted it up to pour water in his helmet, nothing came out. He started raising heck, never any water in the bag. Looked again and found he hadn't taken the cap off. No wonder people lose their heads and not by head hunters. It happens more than once.

Feb 19, 1944

We are situated in the 5th air fors 5. The insigne if you can make it out — big 5 with a shooting star and some other do dads.⁴

Don't know what to think now. we had fried chicken for dinner. Must be the christmas dinner catching up. That ole saying "better late than never" sure holds true.

Feb. 21, 1944

On a raid the other day and seen so many planes, whole head was swimming. They didn't get too close so all sent well.

Sounds like good news, Truk being hammered a little, maybe ole Japan will wake up yet.

Is writing paper hard to get a hold of? If not send a big hunk of it. Mine is getting darn low and New Guinea doesn't have very many 10 cent stores or restaurants, or anything for that matter. Just paper and no envelopes.

One of the guy's girlfriend wrote to him and said it was wonderful to have so many movie stars coming over to entertain us. Sure hell broke loose then we haven't seen one of those type creatures as yet. Course Gary Cooper⁵ did get pretty close - not more than a couple hundred miles. We had a crew picture taken yesterday maybe the censors will let it through, that is if they turn out OK.

Stopped and talked to A. Floyd, he's from Susanville, never knew it until today though, must be getting pretty important when he wants to know where I'm from, say maybe it's the other way around.

Use to wonder why Raymond said be home soon now I m wondering why I say it. Guess it's about the best rumor a guy has so he has to keep it alive.

Camp is getting to be a regular stock yard, got more horses around than you can shake a stick at.

Feb. 24, 1944

Got a letter yesterday dated Nov. 11, 1943, not bad for a fish in coming over. It's no fault of the guys at home.

Might say a few words about the

wings but it sounds pretty good the way it is now, so we'll just let it be.

Gunners wings do have a bullet in the center but they weren't authorized before I left, maybe they have since.

Well about the bomber for [censored]. I seen one he used and it was a fortress. I think it must be the same one cause there is more comfort in a fortress. That is without special features of which the ole boy has plenty.

A few days ago you should have seen the way we carried on while out scanning the sky ways for trouble also the water ways, there we sat. Had a cup of pineapple juice in one hand and a book in the other. Then before us sat our faithful servant waiting for orders - ole chatter gun proves to his worth too.

March 2, 1944

All the original crew except two are again flying. Freeman (copilot) got another crew and Townsend (Nav.) is now in Topeka, Kansas. Hurt his back when he fell from the tree so I guess his flying days are over.⁶

How much of the Marshells⁷ have we got now over here we know what's going on in the immediate surrounding and very little else.

Sorry but I don't even know about the volcano. Wouldn't sound much different than a bunch of bombs I imagine.⁸

Must be kind of thrilling to listen to a drama raid on the radio, was he on the ground or in the air, either case must have been rough. Think I rather hear about on the radio too.

Get a lot of mosquitoes around so I can get used to the states kind of gradual like. Course I better keep a bottle of atabrine or stuff handy.⁹

Those missing in Germany have a

good chance to escape but they have a darn good chance to return after the war too. I'll just sweat it out over here though, no more jumps for me unless it's right over our house — exception of course until that time.

Well we are doing the same ole stuff. Still bombing and having a fairly good time. The other day we done a little strafing, just like the days at Pocatello only these guys are alive once, and the targets at Poky were just painted. A good time was had by all.

Really have some rough storms over here. The other day we hit one and was gaining speed and gaining altitude at the same time. Looked at the wings and they were flopping just like some bird that just got shot at. Water was pouring in at every little hole so we were pretty well soaked. Other than little things like that all the trips are pretty enjoyable on all the trips.

March 13, 1944

Got some hill out back that resembles the Buttes if you just glance at them, and the heat is similar to a wheat field burning on the 4th of July. By golly, that's about the nearest I've gotten to describing the heat yet. [*The rest of the page is torn off, probably censored.*]

The dust is plenty thick too after a day of riding around in a GI truck they won't let you in the showers until you shake first. That takes off the two outside layers to get the second two coatings off we use a bulldozer, then a person can shower. Save the precious water that is so hard to get. Beats me I don't know why yet.

Just remembered the fingernail polish arrived a couple days ago. Fraid it won't work on the crud but chiggers

are pretty plentiful so it will be OK. By the way what was it wrapped in. It sure looked like it had been in the outhouse.

A guy ages about 5 years just from being here in the rearward area to say nothing of the jungle men who do the walking. Isn't too bad in the air, they can't shoot from so many hidden spots.

Was about ready to tell Ray to put another mark on the wall for cracked up planes, but we got away without any mishap, "So Sorry," Oh yeah.

March 14, 1944

Sure, it good to be back flying, after so many hours we can come back for a brief stay in the United States. Wouldn't you be willing to risk a few holes in the plane & bullet going by for that. Yes, you would, so no need to answer that.

One thing we do get over here is bananas & quite a few coconuts.

Loretta's candy went like the candy or cake that arrive over here. The person who opens the package has to grab fast cause there is no second chance. Well maybe it ain't quite that bad but it's rough in a mild sort of way.

Ole Paul Mesichke is in Monterey serving his Uncle Sam. Think he's punching a typewriter now. Was he mad. He'd been fighting a forest fire all summer nearly sleeping on the ground, eating almost nothing and having a rugged time. Then the army takes him & sez, you are not in physical shape for fighting purposes - Limited service for you my boy, so there he sit, banging away at a typewriter day after day. Really can't say as I don't blame him one bit. I guess the Marines have a tough training but the army is doing the

same work they are. I guess you hear more about them because they have been trained for water & land long before people even thought of having a war again. Imagine there are more Marines over this way too so it stands to reason. Anyway they're all doing good.

We really have some heat over here. Remind me of a 4th of July in the Tule driving fence post with the knats buzzing around right now a small, very small breeze is blowing & it feels swell.

New Guinea March 17, 1944

Dad had the correct idea, it was 'flak' but even so we get our ears hit some times when the bombs explode. Sure glad I'm not on the ground to be a lot closer than I am.

Just got a slit trench dug, big enough for three. Had a raid and I'll be darned if there wasn't nine in it and still plenty of room. Really some miracles happen at times, when they have got to happen.

In regards to flying it's about the same ole stuff. Once in awhile some new territory passes by so it keeps us pretty busy looking for the easiest way home in case of having to walk back — but let's hope it never comes to pass.

March 21, 19XX

The date is 1944, guess I wasn't thinking when I started on my serial number. Must be in New Guinea too long. That seems to be a very popular statement in these here parts.

Fact is Fitz took out for chow, jangling his mess kit when Ker-plunk and all was silent. Pretty sure a muffled bunch of cuss words reached our ears. Fitz was in so big a hurry he forgot about the fox hole and fell into it full force. Now he goes out the back

way of the tent to be sure he misses the holes.

All the flying seems about the same, maybe one day a little more stuff comes around than the next but it's about the same as usual. No mishap of which I like to hear about.

Sure beats me, the only enjoyment a guy can get is from letters from home and now it seems to me they don't even want us to have that. Sure wished some of the big bugs who make those rules would have to stay in some of these holes and read or try to read the stinking ole V-mail.¹⁰ Bet they would change their minds in a hurry.

Tried to get some ammo from the Armament officer so in case of a bail out we could have a decent gun to use and be darn if he thought we wanted the hair from his head by the way he acted. This proves I'm in a darn bitter mood today.

Golly it's getting hotter every day glad I'm not sitting in a tub cause I'm sure swimming would be necessary to keep afloat. Doesn't do much good to drink water. It comes out as fast as it goes in. Probably save a lot of effort if we just poured the water over us in the first place, wonder why I didn't think of that before.

March 26, 1944

Well am now a year older but it doesn't seem to be much change. Had a big dinner too, guess the cook must have heard about it. Yes everyone could have a second helping of Bully Beef although a person has to be darn hungry to take the first helping.

Sure got some set up now. They have a loud speaker set up on which they play records and they have it hooked up to a radio right now. Sure seems funny hearing a radio without

the usual dot and dash junk on it or someone chewing your stern out on the enter phone (giving you hell).

Native came around yesterday wanting a shoot-light. Boy he had us stumped for what he wanted. Finally he spotted one in the tent and showed us. So now when anyone wants a shoot-light just hand the flashlight to them.

The mail service is getting worse every day. Why the amount of mail coming in could be put in a knat's bladder and still rattle like buckshot in a five gallon can — as Dad used to say about our brains, now my head just rattles as the brains are gone.

Still flying off and on. Just routine stuff, fly over, dump the bomb, watch the ack-ack. Look for fighters and hope there isn't any and then come on back. Sounds pretty simple on paper but it doesn't feel that way for some reason or another.

So Dad is wearing the heavy sweater, golly it's so hot to think of wearing shirt and pants makes me sweat. Sometimes it looks like a miniature nudist colony or a sea shore. Better use sea shore as — that's the way most of the time.

Seen a good show last night. "Girl Crazy"¹¹ with Mickey Rooney and Garland. The "Iron Major"¹² is coming soon so I hope it don't rain too hard as I like to hear and see it, sometimes the rain comes down so hard a person can't hear the sound. Many night we stand through a rainstorm to see a show. Sounds crazy but you get that way after awhile. Maybe not quite that bad but it's worse enough.

We only have four in our tent now, the other two got mad and moved out. Yes, we still fly together and argue just as much but at night they

don't worry about Cap. Midnight like the rest of us do. Ball does all his writing at night about the time the rest of us hit the sack. Sure gets our goat sometimes.

The Aussies we have with us are a little worried, they might have to go overseas. It's just a rumor but it sounds rough, having to go US and put some time in. Golly wouldn't you hate to be in their shoes. Had to do some more washing yesterday but have it dried (ironed, Ha Ha) and put away now so I guess I can go another month without much domestic trouble to stand in my way.

P.S. What do you know we just set the war back an hour. Aren't saving daylight anymore now — winter is coming on

April 1, 1944

Hurray, the mail man has finally arrived. Boy he's getting to be more of a sweat job than going over some of the Japanese strongholds of New Guinea and elsewhere — too bad the stronghold ain't so strong anymore. Getting back to the mail. The two cards have arrived, birthday and St. Pats, were mailed only a month ago so that isn't too bad.

The holes so far have been flack, which is quite a surprize to me. How in the devil the bugger can miss a big thing like our boxcars beats me. Had a little tussle the other day and they lost [censored] from us heavies along. That's not counting what the fighter got or those the bombs blew up. I use to read those figures in the paper back home. Their losses so many, ours, that much less it sure looked like the properganda stuff to me. By golly it's true and I'm seeing it myself.

Had me on KP yesterday which

wasn't so bad until some half witted nincompoop stole my mess kit. Had my John Henry on it and so I stole it right back out of some bird's paw today. He didn't seem to like it, but I didn't either so I guess things are about even.

Went to the show and seen the "Iron Major." While the scenes were in France during the war we had quite a display of fireworks. Some of the local boys were trying out their shooting eye and the sky was full of tracers and explosions made the show a trifle too realistic. It was enjoyed even with the interruption and a few close ones.

Was sitting here writing when Ken yelled your beds on fire. I jumped up and was already to put it out when darn fool yells "April Fool," said he sounded like a little kid. "April fool daddy" and the guys in the next tent got quite a bang out of it, every five minutes or so he repeated it over and laughed.

Heard from Raymond and by golly — I think he's after ready for a crazy house. How does this sound to you coming from Raymond, Quote "I mustn't write about those subjects as it might be that little bit of information that our opponent may want," Unquote. He's talking about some book he read about England, Good gravy sounds like some ole hen — now junior! Mustn't touch. Sure a kick isn't it?

So some of my disrespectable talk about officers got cut out, well it doesn't matter, he had to read it first so the main point was accomplished. Heck of a way to give an officer a piece of your mind but it had to come sooner or later. Sure would hate to have their job. It's too rough for me censoring the mail.

Mar-April 6, 1944

Darn if another month hasn't gone by & what have I done. A hell of a lot but they wouldn't let me tell you. You asked about the ships name well the one I fly in is call "Super mouse." ¹³ Sounds nuts to me but I didn't name it.

Some guy swiped my good ink so I'll have to finish up with this 6 pence stuff. It's rugged stuff but it does make some kind of a mess people call writing. Hope it passes O.K.

April 7, 1944

Received the Easter card yesterday and the long letter. That is the way I like to see them so I can spend the whole evening reading mail, course it's still news the next day so love to read it again.

According to the army records I was born on the 24th of March. So someone put on the consent. I'll bet that will lead into trouble when my time is up over here.

We just received some bad news. We fly until replacements arrive or until the hospitals get us. The replacement will probably arrive after Germany gives in so it looks like a dark future. Sure makes me mad in England 25 missions and back you come for rest. Well so far our crew has only flown 30 missions in which each trip is about twice the length of those in England. The ground men say, "See what we mean by all those broken promises that are made." They are right too.

Too bad you can't send fresh eggs over here. Guys get up at 4 o'clock when we have fresh eggs to eat, otherwise some don't even get up for the other junk they have. Mention eggs and Fitzgerald's mouth just froths.

I don't know about Townsend, it looks like a discharge from the medics [?] and his letters anyway he's in the

states which is one important thing.

No, Lt Floyd is not our co-pilot, he is a first pilot and now a fighter pilot. He gives the camp area a buzz every now and then about 25 foot high or so.

Maybe it's a pretty sight to see red white and blue parachutes but I know one that was the most beautiful thing man has ever encountered and it was pure white, maybe its color is so our troops won't shoot them when floating down.

God darn flies sure are making pests of themselves now. Feel like my back is being used for a landing field or race track. Yup, no use sending cookies but a fruit cake will arrive OK if you have one handy send it over double quick. In fact I request it.

Sure beats a person to get old mail last and new stuff first but it doesn't make much never mind over here a letter is something good whether late or early. Got another grumble for you, it's about this censoring stuff. They put in paper magazines what our guns are and what happened to the targets and all about the planes, now if I said we started fires which we could see for hundreds of miles, I'll be darned if they wouldn't cut it out. Say we are giving aid and comfort to the enemy.

1944 APR 18

The Secretary of the War desires me to express his deep regret that your son Staff Sergeant Harry F Huntington was killed in action in defense of his country on nine April in Nubia New Guinea period Letter follows Dunlop Acting the Adjutant General

Tuesday, April 18th, 1944

Dear Sis,

Our beautiful Harry is gone. Killed in action, April 9th at Nubia, New Guinea.

There is a letter to follow from the WD(?). I have a feeling it may have happened during a bombing attack by the j--s. while our boys were on the ground.

I hope the pictures of him that I have in my mind will stay clear and bright.

In a way it does not seem possible. I took an Anacin to keep from getting down with a headache.

If you have to work after you get this news, take something like that, something to quiet your nerves.

Dad does not know yet. I dread to think of how he will feel.

And I know it will be hard for you too. We can be thankful we had such good boys in our family, and girl too. You are all we have left.

Love, Ma

June 15th [1944]

There was a letter from the Chaplain Saturday. I had written and asked him if there had been a burial service for Harry, and if it was possible for him to tell me where the grave was located.

This is what he wrote -

"Your son was on a combat mission when the end came. The sea was his grave and all the crew went with him. We considered the crew one of our best. It was deeply regretted by all."

That was a possibility that had not occurred to me. They went down into the Bismark Sea. And now I am wondering if they were a flaming torch as they fell.

WAR DEPARTMENT
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE
WASHINGTON

Jeb

AD 201 Huntington, Harry F.
PC-N 107097

21 April 1944.

Mrs. Dorothy D. Huntington,
Butter, California.

Dear Mrs. Huntington:

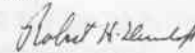
It is with regret that I am writing to confirm the recent telegram informing you of the death of your son, Staff Sergeant Harry F. Huntington, 19,067,925, Air Corps, who was killed in action on 9 April 1944 in Malia, New Guinea.

I fully understand your desire to learn as much as possible regarding the circumstances leading to his death, and I wish that there were more information available to give you. Unfortunately, reports of this nature contain only the briefest details as they are prepared under battle conditions and the means of transmission are limited.

I know the sorrow this message has brought you, and it is my hope that in time the knowledge of his heroic service in defense of his country, even unto death, may be of sustaining comfort to you.

I extend to you my deepest sympathy.

Sincerely yours,



ROBERT H. INGLEY
Brigadier General,
Acting the Adjutant General.

1 Inclosure
Bulletin of Information.

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREA

AFD 520
May 21, 1945

Dear Mrs. Huntington:

My deepest sympathy goes to you in the death of your son, Private William H. Huntington, while a prisoner of war of the enemy.

You may have some consolation in the memory that he, along with his comrades-in-arms who died on Bataan and Corregidor and in prison camps, gave his life for his country. It was largely their magnificent courage and sacrifices which stopped the enemy in the Philippines and gave us the time to arm ourselves for our return to the Philippines and the final defeat of Japan. Their names will be enshrined in our country's glory forever.

In your son's death I have lost a gallant comrade and mourn with you.

Very faithfully,


For Harry, we will have to place our flowers on the river, or the ocean if we are near it.

With love,
Ma

[appears to be back side of above letter] To-day we received a letter from the Adjutant of the 65th Bombardment Squadron and this is the

information he gives. [letter from Adjutant dated 6/6/44]

"While on a mission over an assigned target, the formation in which Harry was flying was forced to fly through an intense barrage of enemy anti-aircraft fire in order to complete the bomb run. It was observed by others in the formation that the plan (sic) in which Harry was a crew member

was hit on the wing causing it to come off. The plan plunged into the ocean and sank instantly. It has been definitely ascertained that none survived the crash.”

Undated, pg 2

... but this time our Harry did not escape.

We wish that you lived nearer so we could see you now and then.

The last time we were all together was on Memorial Day, 1941. We just relaxed and enjoyed one another. We have had some grand times together as a family. Our picnics with the Nelsons, our trip to the Oroville Orange and Olive Exposition, and many other times too.

The same day the telegram came about Harry, there was a letter from Captain Grashio about Bill.¹⁴ To hear of both on the same day seemed unusual. I had given up hope of hearing from Captain Grashio. He asked me to keep the information confidential, and reveal it to no one not directly concerned. [*Grashio's letter was dated April 15, 1944*]

I read the letter to Grandma, and I think you are directly concerned. Dad knows too.

The Captain knew Bill and said he performed a wonderful job during the Battle of Bataan. He praised his courage, willingness and efficiency. The last time he had the pleasure of seeing William was at the time of the surrender, April 9th. At that time he was alive and in good health.

So it is on the second anniversary of the surrender on Bataan, that we lose Harry.

Aftermath

As would be expected, the Huntingtons never recovered from the loss of their two boys. At their sister Miriam Coon's funeral it was said that she was greatly affected by their deaths. Miriam and her husband, Jack, had no children. Miriam worked at the post office in Durham many years, and after she retired she and Jack traveled throughout the world. They went to the Philippines and made the effort to find Bill's marker and Harry's name on a memorial wall.

Notes

¹ *A Lady Takes a Chance*, a romantic comedy starring Jean Arthur, John Wayne, Charles Winninger, Phil Silvers and Mary Field.

"A Lady Takes a Chance," *Internet Movie Database*, date unknown. <<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0036092/>> (8 September 2010).

² *The March of Time* is a newsreel series shown in movie theaters from 1935 to 1951.

"The March of Time," *Wikipedia*, 2010. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_March_of_Time> (8 September 2010).

³ *Bomber's Moon*, about a bombing raid over Germany, starred George Montgomery, Annabella, Kent Taylor and Walter Kingsford.

"Bomber's Moon," *Internet Movie Database*, date unknown. <<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0035690/>> (8 September 2010).

⁴ The 5th Air Force was constituted as the Philippine Department AF on August 16, 1941 and activated in the Philippines on September 20, 1941. It was re-designated Far East AF in October of 1941, and became the 5th AF in February 1942. It participated in the defense of the Philippines after Pearl Harbor, and conducted operations in Papua, New Guinea, Netherlands East Indies, and the liberation of the Philippines.

"5th Air Force," *Army Air Corps, World War II, 1941-1945, Living History Group*, 2010. <http://www.armyaircorps.us/wwii_5th_Air_Force.cfm> (8 September 2010).

⁵ Gary Cooper toured battle zones and entertained troops in the South Pacific. In November 1943 he and Phyllis Brooks and Una Merkel were in Australia and New Guinea.

"Gary Cooper," *Hollywood's Golden Age*, date unknown. <http://www.hollywoodsgoldenage.com/actors/gary_cooper.html> (31 August 2010).

Heyn, Jack and Peter Dunn, *Jack Heyn's Photo Collection*, 2001. <<http://www.ozatwar.com/heyfotos.htm>> (31 August 2010).

"USO Trip to Australia, 1943," *Gary Cooper Scrapbook*, 2010.

<<http://garycooperscrapbook.proboards.com/index.cgi?board=1940spicsall&action=print&thread=486>> (31 August 2010).

⁶ From Harry's diary entry of October 18, 1943, published in the July issue of the News Bulletin: [After parachuting] "Landed in a tree 150 foot up in the air which took an hour to reach ground left gun and canteen in the tree. Then we sweated Townsend from a tree."

⁷ From February 18-23, 1944 the US armed forces bombed the Marshall Island. The attack included "Operation Hailstone," which was a major offensive against Truk Island and Lagoon.

"Eniwetok, Marshall Islands, February 18-23, 1944," and "Truk February 16-18, 1944," *World War II Multimedia Database*, 2007.

<<http://www.worldwar2database.com/html/>> (8 September 2010).

"Operation Hailstone," *Wikipedia*, 2010. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Hailstone> (8 September 2010).

⁸ Waiowa Volcano (also called Goropu) erupted between September 1943 and August 1944, with major eruptions occurring December 27, 1943, February 13, 1944 and August, 1944. Eighty square kilometers of forest were leveled. The volcano is approximately 130 miles from Port Moresby, New Guinea.

Seach, John, "Waiowa Volcano," *Volcano Live*, date unknown. <<http://www.volcanolive.com/waiowa.html>> (31 August 2010).

"Waiowa," *Global Volcanism Program*, date unknown. <<http://www.volcano.si.edu/world/volcano.cfm?vnum=0503-04>> (31 August 2010).

⁹ Atabrine was once used to treat malaria. <http://www.flexyx.com/A/Atabrine.html>

"Atabrine," *The Free Dictionary*, 2009. <<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Atabrine>> (31 August 2010).

¹⁰ V-mail stands for Victory Mail. It was created by photographing mail to thumbnail-size and placing it on microfilm, which saved weight and space for shipping. At its destination it was printed on lightweight photo paper. The result was a very small letter that could be difficult to read.

"V-Mail," *Smithsonian National Postal Museum*, date unknown. <http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu/exhibits/2d2a_vmail.html> (8 September 2010).

"Brief History of World War Two Advertising Campaigns: V-Mail," *Duke University Libraries Digital Collections*, 2008.

<<http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/adaccess/vmail.html>> (8 September 2010).

"What the heck is V-Mail?" *Darby Rangers*, date unknown. <<http://darbysrangers.tripod.com/id73.htm>> (8 September 2010).

¹¹ In *Girl Crazy*, Mickey Rooney's father ships him to an all-male college where he meets Judy Garland. June Allyson made her film debut.

"Girl Crazy," *Internet Movie Database*, date unknown. <<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0035942/>> (8 September 2010).

"Girl Crazy (1943 Film)," *Wikipedia*, 2010. <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Girl_Crazy_\(1943_film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Girl_Crazy_(1943_film))> (8 September 2010).

¹² A patriotic movie about football and World War I, *The Iron Major* was about real-life Army major and coach Frank Cavanaugh, and starred Pat O'Brien, Ruth Warrick and Robert Ryan.

"The Iron Major," *answers.com*, 2010. <<http://www.answers.com/topic/the-iron-major>> (8 September 2010).

"Frank Cavanaugh (American football)," *Wikipedia*, 2010.

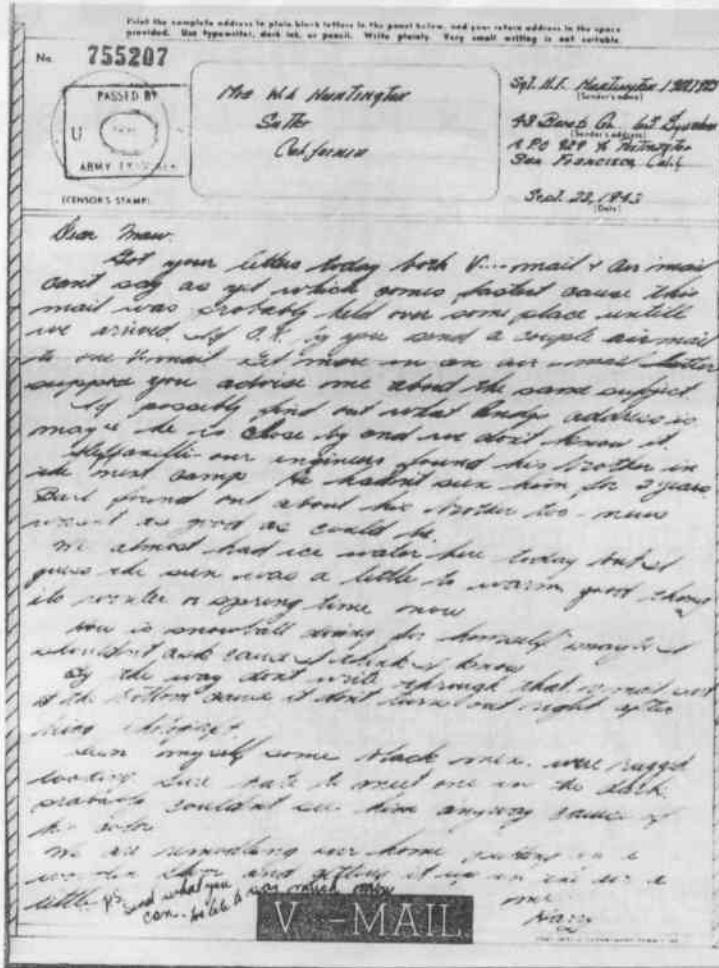
<[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frank_Cavanaugh_\(American_football\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frank_Cavanaugh_(American_football))> (8 September 2010).

¹³ Supermouse aka "The Big Cheese" first appeared as a cartoon character in Standard Comics in 1942. Both Supermouse and Mighty Mouse appeared as nose art on World War II B-24 bombers.

"Nose Art," *B-24 Best Web*, 2010. <<http://www.b24bestweb.com/Default.htm>> (1 September 2010).

Markstein, Don, "Supermouse, the Big Cheese," *Toonopedia*, 2010. <<http://www.toonopedia.com/suprmous.htm>> (1 September 2010).

¹⁴ You can read about Captain Grashio in the first article in this series, published in January, 2010.



An example of V-Mail, actual size, in a letter sent by Harry Huntington to his cousin, Arnold Dean. [letter courtesy of Margit Sands]

V-Mail was written on standardized stationery that folded over and sealed so that no envelope was required. When mailed from overseas, the letters were opened, censored and microfilmed. The film negative was then transported to the U.S. where it was printed and mailed to its final destination. The same process worked in reverse when someone from home wrote to a soldier.

According to the National Postal Museum, V-mail ensured that thousands of tons of shipping space could be reserved for war materials. The 37 mail bags required to carry 150,000 one-page letters could be replaced by a single sack. The weight of the same amount of mail was reduced from 2,575 pounds to 45 pounds.

Puzzling

N E A X P Y N X P U N L W N B T X S
V O F F U R I M O M O I N I I Q D N
V I I F M R H V M A I L J G C S R I
K T F T I A P O C A T E L L O E A B
J G R Y A H S Z R X A K M V U U W B
C R J A D M J N S D R A H D L V E O
Z Y P W D N A A N K O D A K T O R R
N E X D R I M L E N C L O N R Z V K
G E F H V T T Z C I E I U N D D H V
G B W V S C R I S E D V A R M I N T
C Q R I A O E H O N R M Y E N D Y S
B O R D T A R N M N E W U P A Q D B



ATABRINE
BASIN
CENSOR
CHRISTMAS
DECORATION
DRAWER
HARRY
MALARIA
NEWGUINEA
ORNAMENT

PEACH
POCATELLO
RECLAMATION
ROBBINS
STICKUM
SYDNEY
TELEGRAM
TRADITION
VARMINT
VMAIL



Coming Events

October

- 9 1:00 p.m. *Sacramento's Chinatown* program at the Museum
- 16 **General Membership luncheon**
11:30 am Social time, 12:00 lunch
Ruthy's, 229 Clark Avenue, Yuba City
Program: The Peach Industry in Sutter County
See the flyer in this issue of the Bulletin
- 28 10:00 a.m. Ornament workshop at the Museum

November

- 21 *Local Historic Portraits* exhibit at the Museum closes
- 17 10:00 a.m. Ornament workshop at the Museum

December

- 1 9:00 a.m. Decoration Day at the Museum
- 2 1:00 p.m. Hors d'oeuvres workshop at the Veterans' Hall
- 3 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. Trees & Traditions Gala Fundraiser
at the Museum
- 19 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Open House & Children's Program at the
Museum

Reserve your place!

October 22

General Membership Luncheon

Ruthy's

\$15 – reservations required

October 30

First ever

Tour of the Sutter Basin

\$30 – reservations required

see announcements inside