

Wartime flier recalls fallen 'Lady'

By Tom Beer
staff writer

Glenn Purdy, a man who fought the war, loves to tell war stories. And the Farmington Hills resident knows some exciting tales.

There's just one thing before anyone starts to listen, though. He doesn't want people thinking of him as a war hero.

No one thought so during the last days of 1944 when he and his Army Air Corps crew crash landed their grievously wounded B-17 Flying Fortress in France — and lived to tell about it — and he doesn't want anyone thinking so now.

"We were some of many thousands who were on those flights," said Purdy, then a 21-year-old Air Corps captain and first pilot of "Lucky Lady," a B-17

scheduled for a bombing run over Frankfurt in Nazi Germany on Christmas Eve of 1944.

Purdy, now an executive with Federal Mogul in Southfield, isn't likely to forget the events of that particular Christmas Eve day. That was the day that the Lady's luck ran out.

The B-17 bomber received a direct hit between its fuselage and third engine. A hole was ripped through the floor of the plane and three of the four engines were knocked out.

The explosion sent the aircraft and its crew of 10 into a fiery 10,000-foot dive. Miraculously, all of the crew members survived the crash landing in a wheat field outside Sarraube, France, and went on to finish their tours of duty — a total of 30 missions.

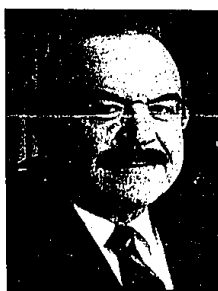
NEARLY 40 years later, they gath-

ered at a Ramada Inn in Dayton, Ohio, one recent weekend to toast their survival and swap memories about the day Lady Luck lost her good fortune.

The plane, part of a 12-craft squadron, hit the ground at 3 p.m. on Dec. 24, Purdy remembered, touching down at miles per hour, its bomb bay doors blown off on impact.

On the way down, Purdy and the crew members tossed out everything they could break loose. They were thankful that the steep dive put out the fire which had been raging as a result of the direct hit on the left wing by a German shell.

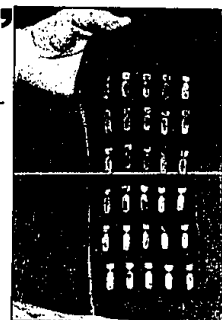
"The only reason we rode it down was that, if we'd have jumped, we'd have landed in German territory," Pur-



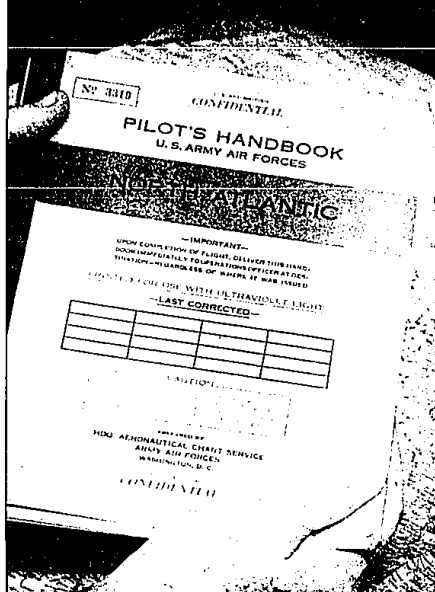
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'Sitting in the dark in the rain waiting to take off on a mission is very scary. That's when you feel afraid. But, when you're crash landing, there's just so much going on that you don't have time to be afraid.'

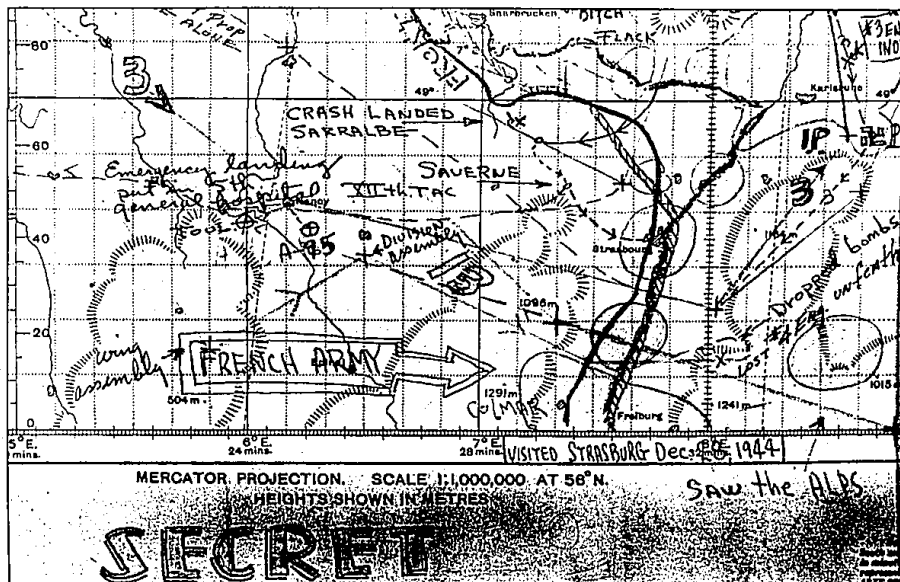
— Glenn Purdy
former bomber pilot



Flight jacket showing bombing runs still fits Glenn Purdy.



Handbook guided pilot Glenn Purdy to Nazi Germany on bombing missions.



A map marked 'secret' shows some of Glenn Purdy's bombing runs. The site of his crash landing at Sarraube is shown in upper center.

photo by RANDY BORST/staff photographer

INSIDE ANGLES

Know someone doing something notable? Let us know. Write: Inside Angles, Farmington Observer, 23332 Farmington Road, Farmington 48024.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NIDA ABINOJA-TURSE of Farmington, who became an American citizen during naturalization ceremonies at Cobo Hall Monday, Oct. 1. Nida came to this country from the Philippines 10 years ago. She is a graduate of the University of the Philippines and Wayne State University.

WENDY WESTENBERG AND MARKUS GREINER of Farmington Hills achieved placement on the summer quarter dean's list at Michigan Technological University.

DANIELLE SIMON, in authentic native Croatian dress, will join "The Parade of Nationality Costumes" in International Institute's Hall of Nations. The parade is one of the many events that will be happening Thursday through Sunday, Oct. 18-21 during the Institute's Old World Market days. The Farmington Hills resident is one of 30 who will be in the parade wearing the dress of their forefathers, many of which are family heirlooms.

THE MICHIGAN ADOPTIVE Parent's Association (Ma-Pa) is sponsoring a Vegas Night 6 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 20 at St. Linus School, Hass at Gully Road, Dearborn Heights.

IN HONOR of October being Crime Prevention Month, Oakland County Sheriff Johannes F. Spreen announced that his crime-fighting canine, "Deputy McGruff" will be able to give crime-prevention tips by telephone. Concerned citizens can hear Crime Dog McGruff by calling 888-BITE, Monday, Oct. 15 to Sunday, Oct. 21. During the past four years McGruff has helped Oakland County residents "Take A Bite Out of Crime" by helping reduce larcenies, breaking and enterings and other crimes.

NEIL SIMON'S "Play It Again Sam" will be performed as a benefit for Farmington Hills Chapter of Sweet Adelines, at 8 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 21 by St. Dunstan's Theatre Guild of Cranbrook. Donation of \$5 includes an afterglow with the performers. Reservation information is given by calling Lora Wiljane, 477-9139.

SPEC. 4 WILLIAM QUINN, son of William Quinn of Farmington Hills, has been decorated with the third award of the Army Achievement Medal at Fort Campbell, Ky. The Achievement Medal is awarded to soldiers for accomplishment, meritorious service or acts of courage. Quinn is a cannon crewman with the 2nd Battalion, 31st Field Artillery.

GREAT SCOTT DAY, sponsored by the Booster Club of North Farmington High School, is being held Thursday, Oct. 18 from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. at the Great Scott Supermarket, Orchard Lake and 13 Mile. Five percent of the total sales will be donated to support all sports, music, drama and clubs at North. While shopping you can enjoy a hot dog and coke for 75 cents. Come on down!

ROBERT BOND, son of Marlene Klien of Northville, has entered the U.S. Air Force's Delayed Enlistment Program. Robert is a 1984 graduate of Farmington High School. He will enter the Regular Air Force on Dec. 17. Following graduation from six-week basic training course at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, he will receive technical training in the mechanical aptitude area and be assigned to an Air Force duty station.

LESLEE PFAFFMANN of Farmington Hills is one of 226 students from 91 colleges and universities enrolled in The British University Year, sponsored by Beaver College, Pa., in cooperation with 11 British universities and colleges who left New York Sept. 18 for London. Students participating in The British University Year are integrated with the British students in the regular degree programs of the cooperating institutions. Each university offers opportunities for extracurricular participation in music, art, drama and sports. An art history major, Leslee is a student at the University of Michigan and is enrolled at University College, London, in The British University Year.

BETH EMERY, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David Emery of Farmington Hills, has pledged Alpha Phi Fraternity for women at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio.

AIRMAN MICHAEL McFARLAND, son of David McFarland of Farmington Hills, has graduated from the U.S. Air Force corrosion control course at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas. He is scheduled to serve with the 60th Field Maintenance Squadron at Travis Air Force Base, Calif.

DOUGLAS TROJANOWSKI, son of Diane and Jerome Trojanowski of Farmington Hills, is a semifinalist in the National Merit Scholarship Program. He is a senior at Lutheran High Northwest and is planning a career in mathematics and computer science.

MAUDE C. MOORE of Farmington recently participated in a Classical Garde-Manger-Butterf Catering class held at Northwood Institute. This hands-on seminar teaches the attendee to display and serve food as works of art. How to "coat out" catered events for fair and profitable pricing is also included in the course.

We think our newly remodeled Twelve Oaks is really something special, and we'd like you to try it on for size by joining us at some of the exciting events listed below.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18

Attend our Cuisinart Cooking School and learn how to save time and become a kitchen wizard with the food processor that just about does it all for you. From 6:30 to 8:30 in our Marketplace.

We'll show you how to create "new looks" with all those exciting accessories you've been dying to try. Bring along one of your favorite "oldies" and we'll transform it with the latest in fashion complements. At 1 in Accessories.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23

Just for you gents, the spotlight today is on the Ruffini menswear collection. Drew Lenhe, Ruffini's personal rep, will be on hand to answer any questions you may have. From 11-3 in our Woodward Shop.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24

Meet Sparky Anderson, famed manager of your favorite team, the Detroit Tigers. Sparky will be autographing his book, Bless You Boys, the diary of the Tigers' 1984 season. From 7-9.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25

Men, the time to snap your wardrobe into shape is now, before holiday partying is in full swing. You can't miss when you choose YSL menswear from our Woodward Shop. YSL rep, Paul Delaware, will be there to make suggestions and comments on this exciting collection. Don't miss the informal modeling from 11-3.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27

Early birds, we're having a fashion show just for petites this morning during breakfast at the Greenery. Call 348-3232, ext. 2016 for reservations. See you there at 9.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28

Put on your dancing slippers and join us at "Spirit of '84," a romantic interlude of dancing, sparkling champagne and scrumptious hors d'oeuvres. Also preview the latest in men's and women's fall fashions. Reserve your ticket (\$25 per person) today, by calling Hudson's Events office, 223-1908 or 851-4524. All proceeds will be directed to the American Lung Association. Our gala begins at 7. Please enter Hudson's from Novi Road.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30

Don't miss this rare opportunity to see one of the world's expert engravers at work. Waterford's James Burke will personalize your selection right before your eyes. The Waterford people create their magnificent crystal pieces "by hand, with heart." Today only, from 11-2 in Fine China.

GROWING FOR YOU
hudson's twelve oaks

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