

# Memories from page 1C

back to base. But 29 B-17s completed the mission, sending Hitler the message that his stronghold was vulnerable 24 hours a day. For that mission, the 95th Bomb Group received its third Presidential Unit Citation, the only combat unit in the Eighth Air Force to receive such an honor.

**War memories**  
Lane, 77, grew up in Detroit and went into the service in 1941. Commissioned in 1943, he was assigned as a B-17 navigator to Ephrata, Wash.

Later, Lane was assigned as the navigator on a B-17 with the 95th Bomb Group at Horham, England.

"You did a couple practice missions over England," Lane said. "Then the day would come when they would wake you up at 4 o'clock and tell you you were flying to bomb Europe today."

"If you flew on a mission, they gave you real eggs. Otherwise it was powdered eggs. Then you'd go over to a big briefing room. There was a big wall with drapes over it. They opened the drapes and you knew, for the first time, where you were going. Still in the dark, the planes took off, one at a time, about 30 seconds apart."

Lane was in England during the time when the build-up of American forces was most spectacular.

"We started off on raids of maybe 200 or 300 airplanes," said Lane. "Eventually, when I finished my missions, we were up to maybe 800 to 1,000 bombers in the air with several hundred fighters with us in the air."

### Lasting images

One of the missions that Lane recalled most vividly occurred Feb. 4, 1944, a month before the raid on Berlin. Returning from a raid on Frankfurt, Lane's aircraft took some flak and lost one engine. Losing altitude, they were forced to drop out of formation. "Normally, when you drop out of formation like that, they say you're a sitting duck and the fighters can just keep on circling until they get you down," Lane said. "We came right down, almost treetop level."

"That's when Lane's experience



Edward Lane

as a navigator was tested. "I figured, well, we've been flying for about a half an hour, zig-zagging and going down through the clouds, and here I am and I drew a circle to England which came right out at the White Cliffs of Dover."

"We finally saw water. Now we were in a dilemma because if you're too far left, you're in the Atlantic Ocean if you run out of gas. If you're too far right from England, you're in the North Sea which is just as bad."

"The airplane went completely silent. Nobody was saying anything. We're over this water and all of a sudden we see ahead of us (and they are white) these White Cliffs of Dover. Everybody let out a cheer!"

### Safe again

But Lane's navigation experience was not over yet. As the injured B-17 approached the English coastline, dusk was falling. At night, the English would erect steel cables to shear the wings off any low incoming enemy aircraft. Once past that danger, the bomber was finally landed and the crew set foot on firm, safe ground once again.

"I think when I got out of the airplane, they all kissed me on both cheeks," Lane said with a laugh.

Lane finished flying 25 missions in April 1944 and left England on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

After the war, Lane and his wife, Dorothy, whom he had married in 1943, moved back to the Detroit area and raised seven children, three girls and four boys. Lane worked in the finance business with REDISCO and Board Warner and ran a furniture store in Wayne.

In 1970, Lane was hired by Panasonic when it first opened in Farmington. He was on the Farmington Campus in Commerce Township and was executive director for 10 years. During that time, he remained active in the Air Force Reserves. Each year he was required to fly 100 hours to maintain his wings and he retired as a major in 1976 at 60.

Lane's wife, who died in 1990, was one of the first women to be inducted into the Christian Youth Organization Hall of Fame. She was honored for her contributions as a swimming coach at St. Mary's of Redford. The Dorothy Lane Award is given each year to the best girl athlete and scholar.

Lane, who is retired and living in Dearborn, has remained in touch with the 95th Bomb Group with yearly reunions.

### Giving back

The group established memorials throughout the world, including one at Wright Paterson in Ohio. Contributions have also been given to a museum in Tucson, Ariz. A dedication by the 95th Bomb Group last year in Horham, England, holds special meaning for Lane.

"We decided to help the people in that town restore the bells of their church, St. Mary's. We contributed \$35,000 of that. Now that didn't take care of all the restoration but the parishioners chipped in and they restored the bells and now they're ringing. They never rang during the war. They were in disrepair and the tower was in disrepair."

"One hundred years from now, maybe that church will still be there. And, maybe, the bells will still be ringing."

# Jacobson's unveils bridal show

It has the makings of a marriage made in heaven — an extravagant bridal fashion show produced by a premiere specialty retailer at a breathtaking Detroit venue.

On Tuesday, Feb. 22, Jacobson Stores Inc. will unveil an array of fashions for the entire bridal party at the Fox Theatre, and "The Making of a Great Wedding" promises to be the most engaging bridal show of the season.

Actress Lynda Carter will host the bridal spectacular. The singer, dancer and producer is best known for her role as "Wonder Woman" in the show of the same name.

When she isn't entertaining, Carter is lending her time and talents to such charitable causes as the Susan G. Komen Foundation for breast cancer education and research. Recently, the organization acknowledged her efforts by giving Carter the Jill Ireland Award for volunteerism. Because Carter and Jacobson's share a commitment to breast cancer treatment and research, a portion of each \$20 ticket sold will be donated to that cause.

During the event, brides and their families will be treated to an evening of fashion and fun, including complimentary refreshments, hors d'oeuvres and souvenir gifts. Everyone in attendance



Lynda Carter

will be eligible to win prizes such as a honeymoon cruise for two. Prior to the runway show, those attending can obtain advice on wedding planning from an array of exhibitors featuring table settings, gift ideas, jewelry for the bride and bridal party, bridal accessories, makeup and salon consultants and other merchandise relating to wedding and honeymoon planning and setting up a home.

Women are attaining higher education levels, experiencing more career opportunities and getting married later. In 1997, the average

marriage age for brides was 20.6 years. In 1992, the average age was 25.7.

Individuals who are getting married in the 1990s are more sophisticated than ever and they have more money to spend. A recent survey found that an average wedding ceremony and reception consisting of approximately 200 guests costs more than \$10,000. In urban areas, that number can jump to more than \$35,000.

In fact, first-time marriage couples will spend \$28 billion for goods and services, including \$1.1 billion on wedding and reception, \$7.8 billion on housewares and home furnishings, \$3.7 billion on honeymoon travel and apparel and \$3.2 billion on engagement and wedding rings.

Portions of "The Making of a Great Wedding" will air as part of a Jacobson's bridal TV special at 7 p.m. Saturday, March 19, on WKBD-TV Channel 50. The hour-long program will feature highlights from Jacobson's bridal event at the Fox Theatre. It will be augmented by specially-created segments devoted to advice on all aspects of planning a wedding, honeymoon and setting up a home.

Tickets for the bridal show are available through all TicketMaster outlets or at Jacobson's stores in the metro Detroit area.

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