



**6th Bomb Group
Association**

**TINIAN ISLAND
1944 - 45**

**JANUARY
2017**



6th Bomb Group 2016 Reunion on Treasure Island

Well, another of our fantastic reunions is now history. We should review a few of the major events and accomplishments of this event. Our major objective was to have the company of Harry George and Jack Koser, and we held the reunion close to their residences in Florida. Sadly, we lost Harry to a natural death at age 97 only a few months before our reunion. This was, of course, a sad occurrence, but was accompanied by some thoughtfulness by Harry in his planning for his passing. He bequeathed to the 6th Bomb Group his memorabilia which was quite plentiful. David Wilson and I visited Harry about 8 months prior to this as he had told me he was ready to give us all of his records and documents. During our visit, it became obvious he was not quite ready to give this up, so we helped him clean out his storage shed instead and organized much of his memorabilia. We left him simply hoping that he would indeed document his wishes for the 6th to receive it and he did! His sons organized it, and presented it to David Wilson, our Historian, while we were all in Sunset Vista, Florida. For this we give a final THANK YOU to Harry for his generosity to his fellow Veterans.

We certainly all enjoyed the company of Jack Koser. He was accompanied by his grandsons as chauffeurs and assistants. We all THANK these young men for their love and respect for their grandfather and his long commitment to the 6th Bomb Group. They made it possible for Jack to attend 2 of our events, and he was his usual humorous self. He was true to his nature as he inquired of the accomplished female Wing Commander of MacDill AFB, "How many single Colonels like you are on the base?" Jack has always had the reputation of flirting with the ladies. We are always proud to see our Veterans do what they have always done: beat the odds in health and attitude as Jack has done since WW II. Our hats go off to Jack and his Grandsons for commitment and consistency.

Due to the hard work of David Wilson, our Veterans were honored at a Major League baseball game between the NY Yankees and the Tampa Bay Rays. They were ushered on to the field and recognized by the Ray's announcer before the first pitch was thrown out. I believe the picture was broadcast to the TV networks, but I could be mistaken. This was a great tribute to our Group and much appreciated by everyone for the planning David did.

We are proud to report also that we had 44 people in attendance including a few new members. One of the new members, Dick

Masceri, volunteered to host the next reunion. This will be detailed in another short article in this newsletter.

Yes, this Reunion was different in many ways, but certainly fun in every way. We had cramped rooms and a crowded banquet facility, but it all came out OK in spite of my worries. The 2 bedroom condos apparently were a help as we had a number of large family contingents with Veterans' children, grandchildren and great grandchildren attending. Maybe the beautiful sandy beach had a little to do with it also. So, in spite of many different conditions, accommodations and airport distances, we honored our Vets and had a great time doing it. Thanks to all for the help in arranging the things required.

We are very proud to announce the addition of some new Board Members to assist us in future strategies of educating young people concerning WW II and the indebtedness we have to these men of the 6th. Shirley Bates, Glenda Richards, Mary Gresko and Kent Vincent have all agreed to join the Board of Directors. We welcome their ideas and commitment to our future. We are NOT replacing any current Board Members, only adding these four. Veteran Board Members are appointed for life and will remain honorary for as long as they are with us.

Dick Masceri is a VERY welcome new member and will host our next reunion in Galveston, TX. He has selected Moody Gardens Hotel that is adjacent to the famous Moody Gardens.

I have not been to Moody Gardens for about 25 years, but it was quite spectacular back then and no doubt truly amazing today. There was no hotel then, but the gardens will be fascinating to everyone. Please look at two websites: www.moodygardenshotel.com and www.moodygardens.com to get a glimpse of next year's excitement. As always, all of us who have contributed to the planning of one of our reunions stand ready to help or offer ideas, advise, etc. to Dick for his generosity to host. He is planning early November 2017 so it will be quite pleasant on Galveston beach for our annual honoring of our Vets.

I give one more BIG THANK YOU to all who assisted in making this last pretty tricky reunion as successful as it was.....it was different, but it also achieved its goals.

☆ John R. Creek, Jr. ☆



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

THE FUTURE OF THE 6th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

As many of you are already aware, one of my personal goals as a member and as your President has always been the involvement of the children, grandchildren and even the great-grandchildren of our Veterans and any friends of the group found along our way. This has improved the enjoyment of all of our Reunions and has, I hope, kept interest alive in the actual events of WW II. This has always been additionally enhanced by keeping our History Room interesting, fun and full of new discoveries of the 6th Bomb Group's achievements.

It has occurred to me in my many thoughts of what we should be 5 or 10 years from now, that our history memorabilia is indeed our greatest legacy for future generations. To set this future course, I met with our Board of Directors during our Florida Reunion and offered suggestions to move our Reunion activities to be more educational and perhaps a little less tourist oriented. Our goals must be met by our actions, and I have become concerned that we have slowly evolved to a family vacation event as opposed to an educational organization that honors our Veterans with fun activities while maintaining the concept of teaching our younger generations what these gentlemen did and why they had to do it. What they did is hard to communicate in today's world as it was brutal but absolutely necessary. Freedom as we know it had to be defended and protected just as it does today.

To set new actions reflecting this objective, we are going to schedule more Veteran Q&A sessions and include local students age 10-18 to attend through a variety of outreach methods in the cities in which we conduct our reunions. The idea is for the students to come to our history room and participate with our Veterans discussions. Consequently, we will have a few less tourist type events, but will learn more from our Vets and teach more to local citizenry as young students. This is an important change from my perspective and I invite everyone to join in a slightly different agenda, but also achieving some meaningful contributions to the communities we visit with our Vets.

I look forward to incorporating this agenda change at our next Reunion in Galveston, TX. Dick Masceri, our host, is already looking into ways to accomplish these new goals and still have a great time at Moody Gardens. Hopefully, we will succeed in introducing some young people to the Veterans who shaped the future of their country.

Thank You,

☆ John Creek ☆

FROM THE EDITORS



Shirley and Fran Bates are the new editors of this newsletter, and

we have some big shoes to fill! Bill Webster and Rebecca DiFilippo did a fabulous job! We accepted the challenge to continue to make the newsletter a voice of and for the 6th. We hope to incorporate many of the ideas that John Creek has mentioned in terms of direction and focus for the group. In this issue of the newsletter as an educational piece, we are focusing on the organizational flag that is now hanging at MacDill. The Group's history began in 1919 after it was activated in Panama and lives strong today with the flag as a living symbol. A big thank you to David Wilson for providing photos and information for this issue.

We strongly believe that this newsletter belongs to YOU and to that end we hope that **you** will send us **your** ideas, stories, photos, and any other information that you want included. We will be as responsive to you as we possibly can be.

The deadline for articles for the June newsletter is 15 April. You can email us at swbates1@gmail.com

We are happy to take on this new responsibility and look forward to working with you at every opportunity.

☆ Fran and Shirley Bates ☆

This newsletter is the official publication of the 6th Bomb Group Association Inc. and no articles or photographs may be used without prior approval from the editor.

2017 REUNION

Dick Masceri, chair of the 2017 reunion, announced that the 6th Bomb Group annual reunion will be held in Galveston, Texas, at the Moody Gardens Hotel, from Wednesday, November 8 – Sunday, November 12, 2017.

Moody Gardens Hotel
7 Hope Boulevard
Galveston, Texas 77554

Phone: 888-388-8484
Website: www.moodygardenshotel.com

The location is approximately 41 miles from the Houston Hobby airport and approximately 72 miles from Houston George Bush International airport. Registration and program details will be in the June 2017 newsletter.

A Gofundme account has been established to help raise funds to support the reunion. It can be found at www.gofundme.com/6th-bomb-group-reunion-2017

Please share this fund raiser with your contact lists!

THE 6TH FLAG LIVES ON AT MACDILL AFB, TAMPA, FLORIDA



Our flag is proudly hanging in the headquarters building of the 6th Air Mobility Wing at MacDill AFB

☆☆ TAMPA REUNION PHOTOS ☆☆



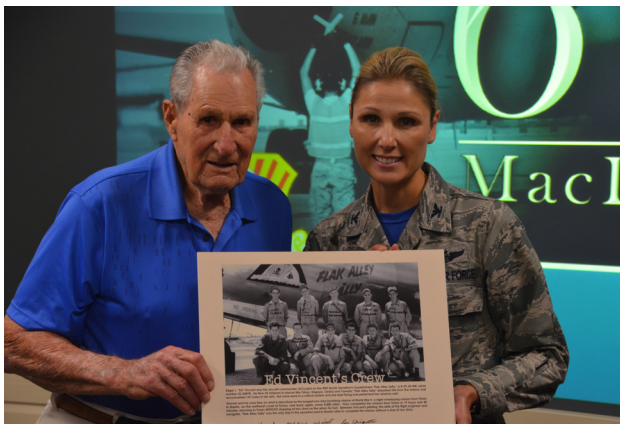
At the Tampa Rays v NY Yankee game. Kelly Vincent, Ed Pitts, Ed Vincent, Charles Pitts, Dick Randall, Jerry Benesh and Paula Thomson



Dennis Cole, 6th Air Mobility Wing Historian speaking to the group.



Jerry Benesh, Ed Vincent, John Dragoni, Dick Randall, Charles Pitts, Jack Koser, and Colonel Vogel, the Commander of the 6th Air Mobility Wing at MacDill AFB.



Ed Vincent presents Colonel Vogel with a picture of Flak Alley Sally and his crew for display at MacDill AFB. Carole Sullivan printed the picture and had the remaining crew members sign it.



Antique quilt presented to Jerry Benesh by his family at the reunion.



Veteran's Panel



Jerry and Ed can be credited with bringing the most relatives to the reunion.



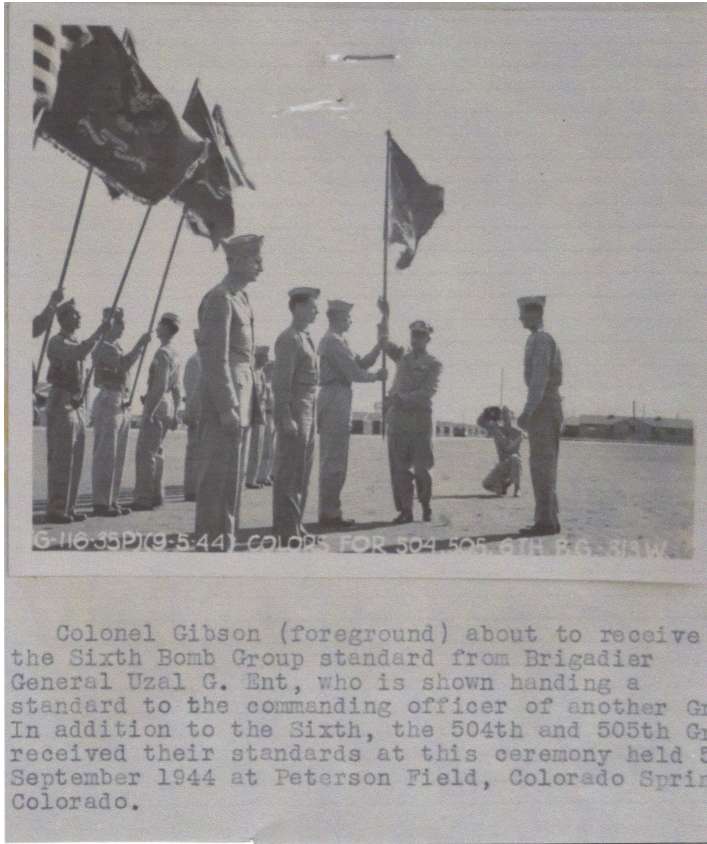
Carole Sullivan, daughter of crew member Bill Spellman, had this photograph of Flak Alley Sally digitized and restored. It was auctioned off at the banquet for a high price.



Color Guard

A BIT OF 6TH BOMB GROUP HISTORY FROM DAVID WILSON

The Pirate's Log, page 22 Colors Presented to Group



On Sunday, 10 September, the Sixth received and dedicated its official standard. The day's program included a review by officers and men of the Group, convocation by Chaplain C F. Murphy, and short addresses by Col. Gibson and Col. John H. Davies, Commanding General of the 313th Bombardment Wing.

All officers and men were present for the ceremony which included presentation of the Distinguished Flying Cross to Captain Garrett J. Jones of the 24 Bomb Squadron. A crowd of approximately 400 civilians attended the impressive ceremony in addition to the military personnel present. The Group's standard had been received on 5 September 1944 from Brig. Gen. Ezal G. Ent, in a ceremony at Second Air Force Headquarters, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

In an address on the dedication of the standard, Colonel Kenneth H. Gibson, commanding officer, pointed out that the Group standard represents twenty-five years of Army Air Force effort and experience. The Group, he told his listeners, had been activated in Panama in 1919. The Colonel cited the fact that the standard had not yet earned any battle honors, but that the future might well see such a reward which would be dependent to a large extent on the effort and efficiency shown in this training period.

Nearly 400 civilians –wives, other relatives and friends of the Group personnel—attended the event. Col. Davies, Commanding General of the 313 Wing, and Col. Ingram, then commander of this field, took the salute from the reviewing stand where the Sixth Staff Officers stood. Other invited guests were: Mayor Harry S. Grimminger and members of the city council; Mr. George Winters, general manager of the Grand Island, Independent; Mr. Arch Jarrell, editor; and Mr. W. George Keister, assistant manager; Rev. William A. Hubbard of the Rotary Club; Mr. B. F. Douthit of the Kiwanis Club; Mr. Dent Holcomb of the Cosmopolitan Club; Mr. C. D. Kelley of the Lions Club; Mr. C. R. Russell, president of the Chamber of Commerce; Mrs. William Suhr of the USO; County Attorney John McCorthy; Major George Grant, commanding officer of the ordnance plant; Mrs. Franklin Tully of the Gray Ladies and Mr. David Kaufmann of the local chapter of the American Red Cross.

[Photos and text from 6BG microfilm archives, Air Force Historical Research Agency, Maxwell AFB]



IN MEMORIAM

- Archie W. Miller, Arcadia, CA. was a lieutenant and navigator in the 24th squadron during the war and a doctor in civilian life. He died June 6, 2016.
- Harry George, Clearwater, FL. Was a 1st Lt and pilot of the Anne Garry V and crew 3902. He died June 11, 2016.
- Tommy Savala, Fresno, CA. died March 26, 2016.
- Richard L. Blaisdell, Fort Worth, TX. He was a TSgt and the CFC on E.G. Triplett's crew 4005. He died Nov 10, 2015.
- Glen O. Lewis, Dallas, TX. He was in the 24th squadron. He died before September 10, 2016.

Larry Dananay maintains the "place of record" for deceased 6th Bomb Group Members. Please send information to him at: Larry Dananay, beagle22b07@yahoo.com or mail to 224 Indian Hill Road, Leechburg, PA 15656

A Note About One of Our Own

Lori Forsman, daughter of the late Bill Litzenberg, Tail Gunner of the Bad Penny and the Bad Penny 2 of the 40th Squadron, has been fighting ovarian cancer for the past two years. She has been sorely missed as a beloved supporter of many of our reunions.

Bill and Naida Litzenberg raised ten children, many of whom were able to attend at least one of the annual reunions while Bill was still with us. Of Bill's children, Lori took the most active role in supporting the 6th Bomb Group and its veterans by beginning an email and phone roster to keep track of our veterans and their family members. Lori often called many of our veterans to wish them a happy birthday, to gather their oral history, to update their contact information and to check in on them and encourage them to attend upcoming reunions. Lori provided administrative assistance during many of our reunions and organized the Veteran's Cruise following the Charleston Reunion in 2012.

Although her traveling has been limited over the past two years, Lori loves to cruise and visit family members throughout the country. Other members of the Litzenberg family who have attended reunions include: Pamela Shedlock, Marc Litzenberg, Amy Weeks, Paula Sorge, Ward Litzenberg, Julie Roseto and Sue Litzenberg, not to mention the numerous grandchildren of Bill's who also attended.

Editors' notes: In addition to what Ward wrote about his big sister, We want to add that most if not all of the 6BG Veterans have probably been touched by one of Lori's random acts of kindness at some time. Most recently, Lori heard about John Dragoni attending his first 6BG Reunion in Florida so she mailed a Sixth Bomb Group patch to him with a nice note. Lori took care of her father during his last years in their home they shared.

Lori's current address if you would like to send a card: Lori Forsman, 516 Olins Avenue, Girard, PA 16417. Or contact her at loriforsman@aol.com.

BOARD MEMBERS

John Creek, President
Virgil Morgan, Vice President
Ed Vincent, Secretary
Larry Dananay, Treasurer
Shirley Bates*
Robert Frick
Mary Gresko*
Steve Hays
Warren Higgins
Herb Horst
Jack Koser
Glenda Richards*
Kent Vincent*
David Wilson

*New Board members

Shirley Bates, daughter of Captain Ralph C. Wilson, pilot of *The White Mistress* in the 40th Squadron. She and her husband, Fran, have enjoyed coming to the reunions since their first one in Midland, Texas. They have two children, Kathleen, who lives in Doha, Qatar, and Greg, in Miami Beach. Shirley was an educator and Fran served in the Air Force for twenty years before retirement.

Mary Gresko, daughter of George Gresko who served with the 6th bomb group, 24th squadron as a tail gunner on a B-29 (Circle R #9) on Tinian Island in World War II. Mary and her parents started attending 6th bomb group reunions in 1986 in Omaha, Nebraska. Mary considers it an honor to have been able to meet and get to know so many of the "Greatest Generation" as well as listen to their many acts of heroism so humbly spoken about. One of her most treasured memories is a trip to Tinian Island with her parents in the summer of 2005 to visit in person the places where her father served his country. Mary currently works in the health care field as a pharmacist in an operating room setting in Toledo, Ohio.

Glenda Richards, wife of the late Captain Jeffery Richards. She has two children and four grandchildren. She loves being involved with the Sixth Bomb Group, and serving on President John Creek's board. Glenda has attended Bomb Group

Reunions for many years and say all are very special to her. A particularly memorable reunion was the one held in the huge hangars in Seattle, Washington.

Kent Vincent, son of First Lieutenant Edgar L. Vincent, commander of *Flak Alley Sally* in the 40th Squadron. Kent and wife, Nancy, have enjoyed attending 6th Bomb Group reunions since 2011 in San Diego. They have two children, Scott and Kim, who live near their home, as does Kent's parents, in the San Francisco Bay area. Kent is a retired mechanical engineer, Nancy a retired high school teacher. Their retirement is filled with travel, golf, volunteer activities and, most importantly, family and friends.



It's A Small World

Ed Pitts, son of Charles Pitts of the 6th, and Fran Bates, son-in-law of the late Captain Ralph C. Wilson of the 6th, reunited after almost 40 years. They were once roommates at Udorn Thani Royal Thai Air Force Base during the Vietnam conflict. It was an unexpected reunion within the reunion and made for some interesting stories that their wives, Donna Pitts and Shirley Bates, had never heard before.



Fran Bates (left) and Ed Pitts enjoy a reunion within the reunion





6TH BOMB GROUP SCHOLARSHIP MEMORIAL PROGRAM

Every year the 6th Bomb Group sponsors a scholarship. The Truman Heartland Community Foundation manages our scholarship fund and recently announced the winners for 2016.

- Gina Turner—relative Grandfather John “Jack” Nichols. Turner is a 2016 graduate of Aitkin High School in Aitkin, Minnesota. Studying Medical Laboratory Science at North Dakota State University.
- Keara Murphy— Studying Sociology at Clemson University. Murphy is a 2013 graduate of North Hunterdon High School in Annandale, New Jersey. She is studying Sociology with a concentration in Social Services and minoring in Life Sciences. Her grandfather is Warren Higgins of the Sixth Bomb Group.
- Lauren Benyo—relative Grandfather George Benyo. Benyo is a 2012 graduate of Appleton North High School in Appleton, WI. Studying Psychology with a minor in Family Life at Brigham Young University.

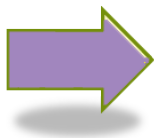
To apply for the scholarship, visit the website for the Truman Heartland Community Foundation www.thcf.org. On their homepage, look for the “Grants and Scholarships” tab; pull down and go to “Scholarships”; then “High School or Under Grad”; then choose “6th Bomb Group Memorial Scholarship”. Apply! Or contact the Truman Heartland Community Foundation, 300 N. Osage Street, Independence, MO 64050, (816) 836-8189.

DUES REMINDER

There is an envelope enclosed in this newsletter to remind members and associates of the need to pay their dues to the organization. A couple of notes:

- ALL PAST UNPAID DUES ARE FORGIVEN
- YOUR DUES ARE PAID THROUGH THE YEAR THAT FOLLOWS YOUR NAME ON THIS NEWSLETTER ADDRESS LABEL (*for example: Smith 16 means dues are paid through 2016*)
- DUES ARE \$20 PER YEAR AND THIS IS REFLECTED ON THE ENVELOPE. YOU CAN PAY FOR MULTIPLE YEARS.

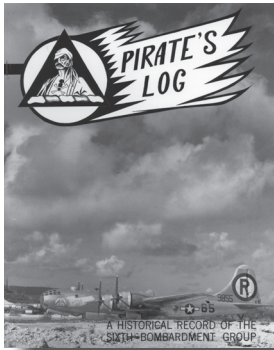
Make check out to Sixth Bomb Group and mail to Treasurer, Larry Dananay, 224 Indian Hill Road, Leechburg, PA 15656.



To donate items to the 2017 auction, please contact Dick Masceri via email at dickmasceri@hotmail.com

6TH BOMB GROUP MERCHANDISE

THE PIRATE'S LOG, 6TH BOMB GROUP DVD,
AND OUR DISTINCTIVE T-SHIRTS AND HATS
ARE NOW AVAILABLE



THE PIRATE'S LOG: first published in 1946 and often reprinted. It is a 74 page book chronicling the 6th Bomb Group from reactivation in 1944, training in B-29's at Grand Island, over-water flights to the Caribbean and departure for Tinian in the Pacific. The book follows bombing and mining missions over the Japanese Empire and the conclusion of history's greatest conflict in September 1945. With second, third and fourth generation young people continuing to show more interest in WW-2, this is a must for family members. Each copy of The Pirate's Log costs \$30.00 which includes mailing.

DVD: contains 450 photographs and runs 58 minutes. It tells the story of the 6th Bomb Group and all of the support personnel from reactivation stateside in April 1944. The DVD follows the bombing and mining missions culminating with the dropping of the Atomic bombs and the signing of the unconditional surrender of Japan on September 2, 1945. Each costs \$30.00 which includes shipping.

To order The Pirate's Log and DVD, contact Larry Dananay at: beagle22b07@yahoo.com or Larry Dananay, 224 Indian Hill Road, Leechburg, PA 15656.

For T-shirts and other gear, contact Steve Dananay at www.6thbombgroupgear.com

PRESERVE OUR HISTORY

As you come across diaries, photographs, articles, magazines, or other items of interest from the time your Sixth Bomb Group Veteran spent with the organization, please consider donating them to The Sixth if no one in your family wishes to hold on to them.

David has worked hard to preserve and share this memorabilia with other members who attend the reunions and visit the history room. All donated items will be cared for properly and at some point in time, archived at a central location containing all that relates to the Sixth Bomb Group. We all must strive to continue the legacy of The Sixth.

For more information or to arrange for a donation contact David Wilson at damaabrca@embarqmail.com

FOLLOW THE 6TH BOMB GROUP

☆ FaceBook - Sixth Bomb Group (Very Heavy)

☆ On the Web - www.PhilCrowther.com and www.6thbombgroupgear.com

☆ GoFundMe - Reunion funding account: www.GoFundMe.com/6th-bomb-group-reunion-2917



A Report from the Treasurer

6th Bomb Group Association

Financial Report

Period of January 01, 2016 to September 30, 2016

Checking Account

Balance Checking Account
1/01/2016.... \$7,263.20

Income:

Membership Dues.....	\$860.00
DVD & Pirate Log Sales.....	\$0.00
Proceeds From Reunions.....	\$0.00
Scholarship Contributions.....	\$60.00
Total Income	\$920.00

Expenses:

Misc Expenses:	\$0.00
Newsletter Expenses.....	\$0.00
Mailing Costs.....	\$27.16
POW Reunion Reimbursements.....	\$0.00
Memorial Donations (Aultice, Segall).....	\$100.00
DVD Reproductions, Etc.....	\$0.00
Scholarship Fund Donations.....	\$0.00
2016 Reunion Expense Advance.....	\$1,000.00
Total Expenses	\$1,127.16

Balance Checking Account 06/30/2016 \$7,056.04

Truman Heartland Community Foundation Scholarship Fund

Period of January 01, 2016 to September 30, 2016

Balance Scholarship Account
01/01/2016.... \$31,383.54

Additions:

Contributions/Gifts to Fund	\$0.00
Interest Income	\$239.72
Dividend Income	\$304.52
Capital Gains/Loss	\$1,212.22
Total Fund Additions....	\$1,756.46

Distributions:

Grants	\$500.00
Administrative Fees	\$356.02
Total Fund Distributions	\$856.02

Ending Fund Balance 09/30/2016 \$32,283.98

**TINIAN ISLAND
1945**

Larry Dananay
224 Indian Hill Road
Leechburg, PA 15656
Address Service Requested

