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398TH BOMB. GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION • 8TH AIR FORCE • 1ST AIR DIVISION • NUTHAMPSTEAD, ENGLAND

VOL. 6 NO. 2

FLAK NEWS

APRIL 1991

# San Diego

CALIFORNIA

The next 398th reunion is still six months down the road ... in this case, the California Camino Real ... but already there is more than the usual pre-gathering chatter about the meeting.

The "California Camino Real" is meant to mean the "California King's Highway" to San Diego. Because it is there that the 398th will meet early next fall.

**Like November 6-7-8-9, 1991.**

The site will be the Town & Country Hotel, located just east of downtown San Diego in Mission Valley. The "T&C" is a spacious hotel with all the amenities expected of a resort styled in the manner of the South Seas — palm trees, tropical breezes and swimming pools.

Yet with the kind of modern accommodations in both guest rooms and function space to satisfy a reunion crowd that could number 500 or more. While a continent away from the heavy 398th population areas of the East Coast, the Southern California reunion can be expected to be well attended.

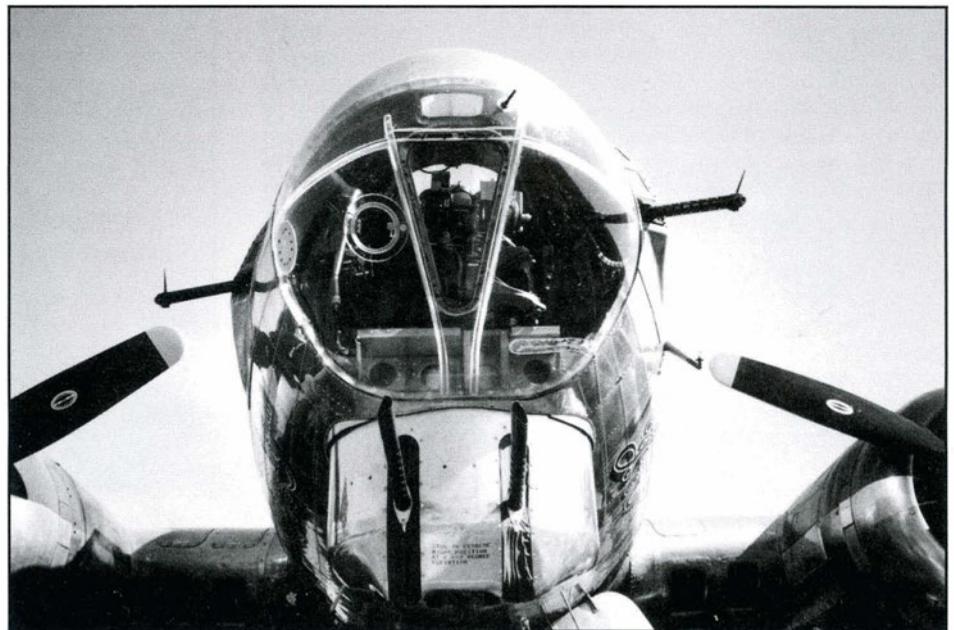
It should be noted that there are more Californians in the 398th roster than any other state (163). Florida is next with 110 and Texas third with 105. Thus, it can be expected that the San Diego reunion will be heavily flavored with a home state attendance.

The reunion chairman, naturally, is a Californian. Bob Hopkins, following an Air Force career, opted to make San Diego his home following retirement. Bob and his wife, Virginia, have been on the job for over a year and are well prepared for their guests.

Hopkins said the Official Registration Form will be available in the July issue of FLAK NEWS.

Normally, the forms are available in the April issue, but with the reunion scheduled

*Continued On Page 3*



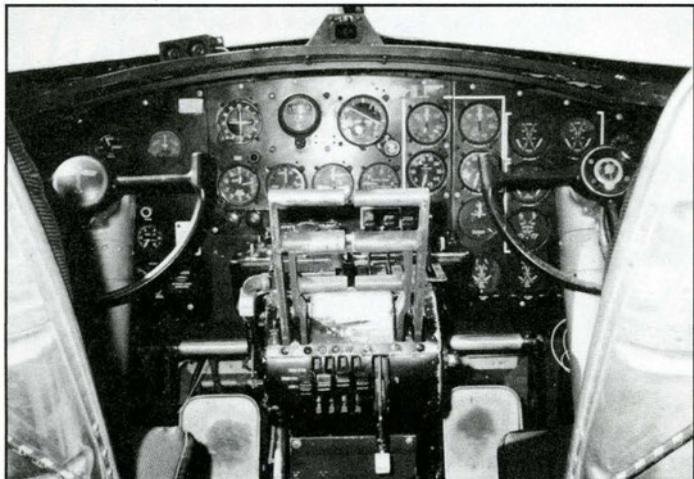
## Just In Case Somebody Has Forgotten

Why a photo of a B-17 on the front page of FLAK NEWS? Actually, no reason is really needed, but in this case it is to encourage you to turn to Page 2 and see some other pictures taken from the inside of a Fortress. Perhaps they will recharge some old memories on how it was way back then before the engines were jet, navigation was computerized and the bathrooms lighted and private.

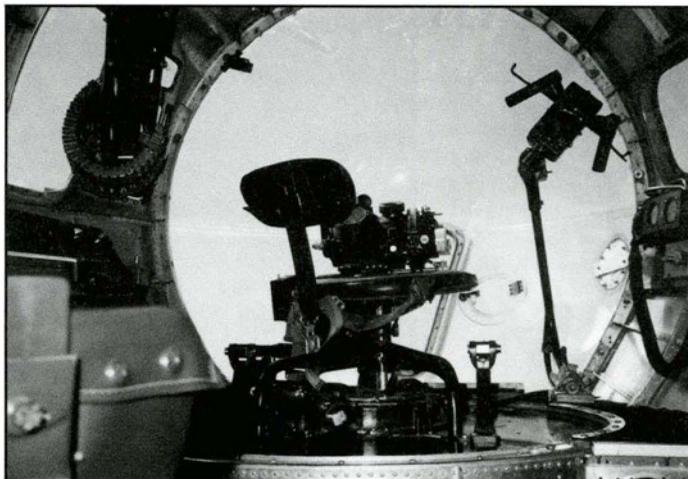
## Did You Ever Think You Would Ever Return To This Place One More Time?

Before turning to Page 5, think of the most unlikely place in the world you would consider returning to for one more visit. Most of you who sweated out those long missions into Germany will probably be in agreement. Now turn to Page 5 and see if you guessed right. Remember that long, colored mission board yarn stretching from Nuthampstead, across the continent, to ... ?

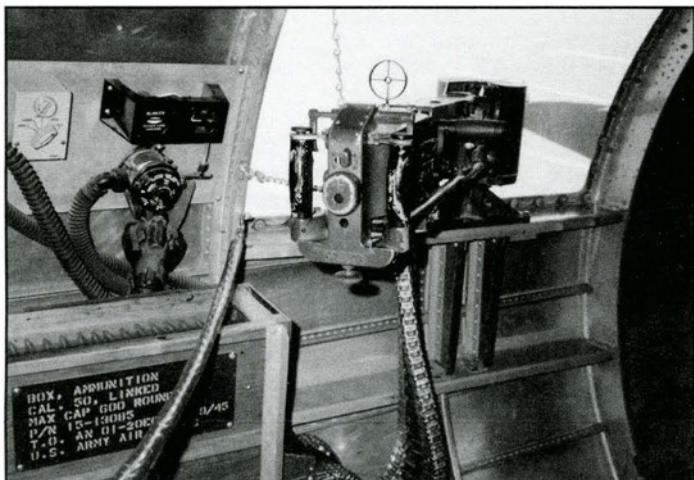
**From The Cockpit**



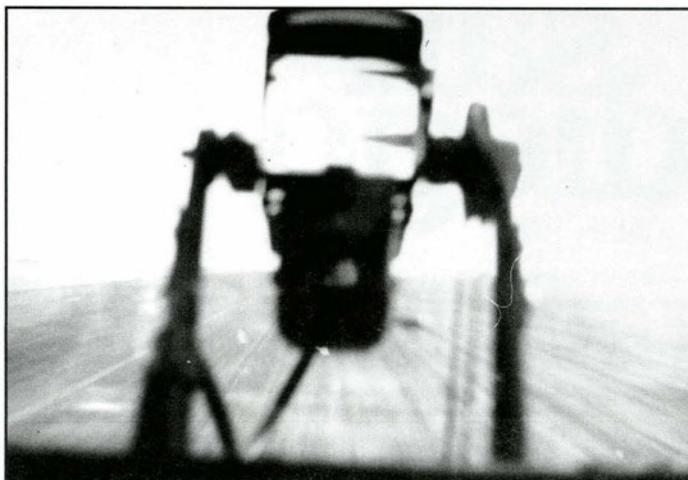
**From The Nose**



**From The Waist**



**From The Tail**



FOR THE BENEFIT of those who might have forgotten what the inside of a B-17 was like, here are a few photos to rekindle memories. The tail gunsite photo was taken during a mission takeoff by your FLAK NEWS editor in 1944. The others by Jerry Johnson, the editor's mailman, who visited the Sentimental Journey in Seattle in 1990.

## **Rosters In The News**

"Rosters" are making news in the 398th these days. Now it is time for some clarification.

All members should have received the printed "second edition," mailed in early February with the January issue of FLAK NEWS. This contains the names and addresses of all members (as of mid-January) plus a list of the 398th officers and a list of all the "UK Friends of the 398th."

In addition to this membership roster, a computer printout is available from Ed Stewart, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33334. Stewart's roster contains such information as squadron and crew affiliation, telephone number, missions flown and military status. This represents the information volunteered on the back of the annual dues cards.

Stewart's roster costs \$10.00.

In addition, a ZIP code printout may be purchased from Harry Gray, Farmington, MO 63640. Gray's ZIP roster also costs \$10.00.

Meanwhile, several new members have been added to the new roster and several address corrections have been made. Members who move should remember to advise FLAK NEWS via the official Post Office form. Also, those who maintain summer/winter residences should make this information available so proper mailing labels can be prepared.

See page 12.

# **Jack's 398th PX**

**NYLON JACKETS** (\$30) White, Gold, Navy Blue, Royal Blue, Light Blue. XL, L, M, S.

**SWEAT SHIRTS** (\$15) White, Light Blue. XL, L, M, S.

**T-SHIRTS** (\$10) White, Gold, Light Blue, Royal Blue. XL, L, M, S. Children's sizes: L, M, S.

**CAPS** (\$7) Navy Blue. Specify squadron.

**SUN VISOR** (\$6) White only. Group logo.

**TOTE BAG** (\$10) Canvas natural. Group logo.

**MEMBERSHIP PLAQUE** (\$25) Specify Regular or Lifetime membership.

**LAPEL PIN** (\$6) Special group logo.

**LAPEL PIN** (\$5) Specify squadron.

**LICENSE PLATE** (\$6) 8th AF logo.

**PATCHES** (\$5) Specify group (Hell From Heaven) or squadron.

**BUMPER STICKER** (\$2) 8th AF & group logo.

**POST CARDS** (\$1) Photo of Nuthampstead Memorial.

**B-17 PHOTO** (\$6) Aluminum Overcast over Lake Winnebago.

**BOLO TIE** (\$12) Spanish silver, group logo.

**SPECIAL JACKET PATCH** (\$4) Same as on jackets above.

Send your orders to Jack Wintersteen, Danville, PA 17821. Make check payable to "398th Bomb Group PX."

# THE STORY OF 'FIGLEAF'

## How We Got The Weather Reports

### CONFIDENTIAL

#### MESSAGES BY WEATHER A/C: 031 PILOT: TOLOCHKO

1. You give a complete report on weather as it exists over the assembly area.
2. You will transmit weather on VHF - channel "A" to "Figleaf" - 1st CBW Command Post. Your call sign is "FLYING FIGLEAF"
3. You will check the following bunchers.
  - (1) Bassingbourn 8 F 8 1181 KC
  - (2) Ridgewell 8 P 8 1040 KC
  - (3) Debden 8 U 8 1028 KCCall in status of each buncher by number only to "Figleaf" on Channel "A".
4. Weather Code Word T B V A I (R)

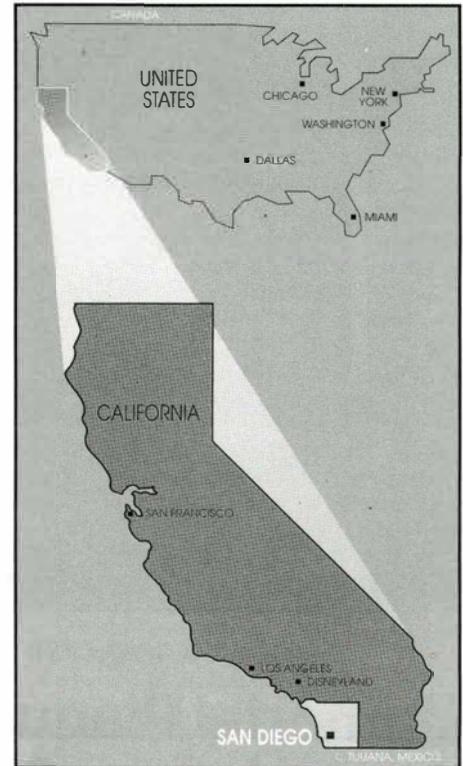
You will give the weather on the order given by the code word.

  - (1) Meaning of the weather symbols:
    - V - Visibility in miles at assembly altitude.
    - A - Amounts of clouds in tenths.
    - B - Base of clouds in thousands of feet.
    - I - Icing level and degree.
    - T - Tops of clouds in thousands of feet.
  - (2) You do not transmit letters of the code word over VHF. Only figures given in the proper sequence for the code word of the day are transmitted.
  - (3) Unlimited visibility is reported as 10.
  - (4) If there is no clouds, report it as none.
  - (5) If no clouds, report tops and bottom as none.
  - (6) If no icing, report as none.
  - (7) If two layers of clouds, report two figures for both B and T. The first figure pertains to the lower layer of clouds and the the second figure the higher layer.
5. You transmit the above report at frequent and irregular intervals. The time of transmission depends upon the time you are over the proper assembly area.
6. If VHF communication is impossible, have your radio operator transmit the report by W/T to Bassingbourn HF/DF. (He is briefed on this).
7. Points on the assembly route.

1. POINT A DEBDEN	5. POINT E SUDBURY
2. " B NUTHAMPSTEAD	6. " F FELIXSTOWE
3. " C CAMBRIDGE	7. _____
4. " D NEWMARKET	8. _____

8. Contact "Figleaf" and ask if you may return to Base when weather report completed.
9. SHOULD THE CODE WORD FOR A PARTICULAR OPERATION BE "BITAV", THE PILOTS REPORT WILL BE IN THE FORM:  
02,05,light,12,08,03. WHEN DECODED THIS SEQUENCE READS:  
CLOUD BASE 2000 FEET, LIGHT ICE AT 5000 FEET, CLOUD TOPS 12000 FEET, AMOUNT OF CLOUDS 8/10, VISIBILITY THREE MILES.

**san diego**  
CALIFORNIA



#### Continued From Page 1

at this later date this year it was decided to hold off until mid-summer.

The official T&C hotel reservation forms also will be included in the July FLAK NEWS.

Hopkins said he wishes to assure everyone that plenty of T&C hotel rooms have been reserved for our members. But he encouraged everyone to begin soon to establish travel reservations.

The major tour attractions for the 398th at San Diego have been set for Friday, November 8. On this day members will have their choice of selecting the San Diego Zoo, Wild Animal Park or Sea World.

Golfers will have 8 a.m. starting times on Wednesday and Thursday, November 6 and 7 at the Miramar Memorial Golf Course at the Miramar Naval Air Station. Five starting times have been reserved, accommodating 25 golfers.

Reunion registrations may be made at the 398th Memory Room at the hotel starting at 12 noon, Wednesday, November 6. The first official group gathering will be the business meeting 3 p.m. Thursday, November 7.

Additional scheduling and costs will be announced in the July FLAK NEWS.

For those who need specific information "right now" you may contact Hopkins in San Diego, CA 92111.

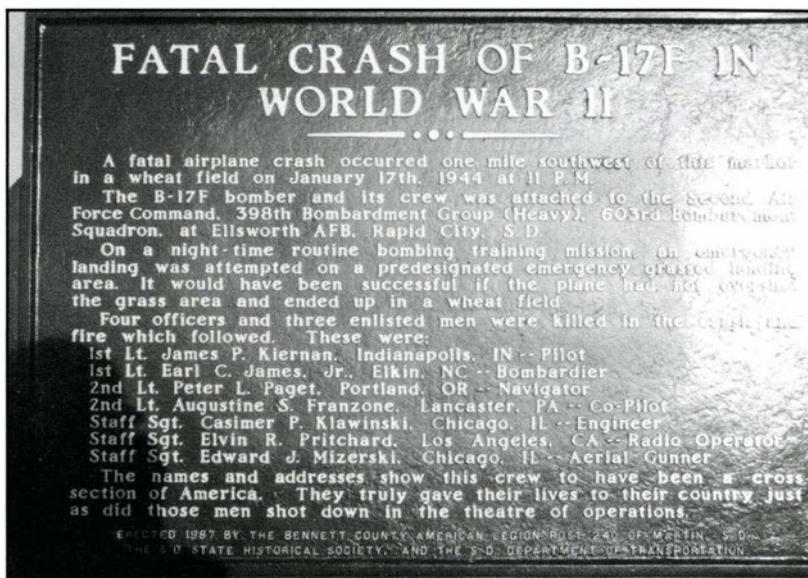
## Travel Help Available To San Diego

Now is the time to begin making arrangements for the trip to San Diego and the 1991 reunion of the 398th Bomb Group. It will be the 8th annual reunion, following meetings in Rapid City, Seattle, Colorado Springs, San Antonio, Richmond, Dayton and Oshkosh.

Members requiring assistance with ticketing and schedules are invited to call VIP Travel, 100 No. Royal St., Alexandria, VA 22314. Their toll-free telephone is 1-800-451-5439. Ask for Ellie Turner.



FLAGS MARK CRASH SITE



PLAQUE NEAR MARTIN, SD

## “Grateful Hearts”

# Memorial Plaque On Lonely Road In South Dakota Honors 398th Bomb Group Air Crew

*“They truly gave their lives to their country just as did those men shot down in the theater of operations.”*

These are the words etched on a beautiful memorial plaque standing beside a lonely road running through the vast wheat fields of southwest South Dakota.

Other words tell of why the plaque was there, who put it there, and in whose honor:

Jim Kiernan, Earl James, Peter Paget, Augustine Franzone, Casimer Klawinski, Elvin Pritchard and Edward Mizerski. These are the names on the plaque, the men who perished in the crash of their B-17 on the night of January 17, 1944. They were members of the 603rd Squadron, 398th Bomb Group out of Rapid City Army Air Force base.

An emergency landing was unsuccessful and all aboard the training flight perished.

The American Legion Post 240 of Martin, SD, sponsored the memorial, encouraged by the research of Kiernan's nephew, Tom Kiernan of Suisun, CA. One mile southwest of the plaque on highway 18 near Martin lies another small marker with seven American flags. The actual site of the crash.

There isn't much to see except wheat fields in this part of the United States, but a roadside plaque and a tiny marker attest to the presence of grateful South Dakota hearts.

## 8th AF Society Open To All

For the benefit of the many newcomers to the 398th, FLAK NEWS would like to present an opportunity to join the 8th Air Force Historical Society. This is the “umbrella” organization for the 398th Memorial Association and all the other similar 8th Air Force groups.

The Society was founded in 1975 to perpetuate the history of the largest Air Force in World War II. It is open for membership to all persons assigned or attached to the 8th AF from its inception in 1942 to the

present. The Society is open to spouses of members and all others interested in furthering the aims of the the Society.

Four issues of 8th AIRFORCE NEWS are published annually and sent to members. An annual convention is held each year. Dues are \$10 annually.

Send dues to 8th Air Force Historical Society, PO Box 7215, St. Paul, MN 55107. List your name, address, 8th AF unit and dates of service (if applicable).

## Purple Heart Time For Harry Gray; Table Saw Attack

Your April issue of FLAK NEWS comes to you courtesy of a “maximum effort” by 398th officer Harry Gray, the gentleman who maintains the membership roster and prints the FLAK NEWS labels.

Harry cut his thumb and two fingers on his table saw recently, creating a serious printing problem. But as you see, he toughed it out and the newsletter was not delayed.

Thanks, Harry. And do be careful the next time!

# England-Germany Tour Plans Set

**A special, group-wide mailing will be made in June containing all the information on the 1992 England-Germany tour. This will include costs, airline schedules and complete itinerary for the week in Germany and week in England. This will be done in cooperation with Travel House, Inc., Seattle, and SAS Airlines.**

If there be only two locations in this world that had to represent "World War II" for members of the 398th Bomb Group, these two locations probably would be —

*Nuthampstead, England.  
Merseburg, Germany.*

The first would be the site of Station 131 in England, the group's 8th Air Force home during its 195-mission tour of combat duty.

The second would be the city in eastern Germany that the 398th attacked eight times, with memorable results.

Both will be included in the group tour next year. A week in Germany from June 17 to 23 and a week in England from June 24 to July 2, 1992.

Our "Friends of the 398th" at Nuthampstead, under chairman Wilfred Dimsdale, are developing a most unusual "home stay" arrangement for the Yank visitors.

"Instead of staying at a large hotel in Cambridge, as you have done on previous visits, we plan to put you up at our members' homes on a 'bed and breakfast' basis," said Dimsdale.

"This way, we will get to know you all better," he added. "Each host family will provide the necessary transport to the various functions. It will be a bit more leisurely and not so touristy."

Dimsdale and his committee, along with England tour director Linda Ellis, will develop the programs and activities. These will be announced in upcoming issues of FLAK NEWS.

Ellis, who accompanied the group to Scotland and England last year, and wrote a poem expressing her admiration of the 398th, will pick up the Yank visitors as they debark at Dover on June 24.

The German leg will begin in Frankfurt on June 18 following flights from the U.S. to Copenhagen on June 17. Gateway cities will include New York, Miami, Chicago, Los Angeles and Seattle.

The flights will be via SAS and the entire tour will be under the supervision of Travel House, Inc., 5042 Roosevelt Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105. (206) 526-8800. FAX (206) 526-0922.

Contact with the city of Merseburg, inquiring about the possibility of a visit to this well-remembered target city, began last year. And then, in mid-March, came the reply.

Thus, another chapter of post war 398th-German relations begins to unfold. It was in 1988 that a visit to Neuss resulted in a heart-warming experience of warmth and

**Continued On Page 10**

## RAT DER STADT MERSEBURG

KREIS MERSEBURG

Betr.-Nr. 09479008

Postanschrift 4200 Merseburg 1 Postschliessfach 189	Fernruf 26 50	Bankkonto: Staatsbank der DDR, Merseburg, N4. 3741-21-80021 Bei Postschecküberweisungen zu zahlen an: Staats bank der DDR, Zweigstelle Merseburg, Postscheckamt Leipzig, Postscheckkonto Nr. 2909, Zu Gunsten: Rat der Stadt Merseburg, Konto-Nr. 3741-21-80021
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Eingangs- und Bearbeitungsvermerke

398th Bomb Group Flak News

c/o Allen Ostrom  
10734 2nd. Ave. N.W.

Seattle, WA 98177

(TRANSLATION)

"I want to thank you for your letter of December 3, 1990 and your request which will find my whole hearted support.

"After the changes in the democracy of our country and the acceptance into the Federal Republic of Germany found their first conclusion, I see no hinderance in your visit to our 1100-year-old city.

"Furthermore, I can assure you that your mission of peace and goodwill we be embraced by the citizens of our city. Especially, at this time of great change in Europe and the regions of crisis in this world, it is all the more important that people of different countries and the different cultures and experiences bring together their traditions and ideas to further a common understanding.

"In this respect I would like to extend an invitation to you and your comrades to visit the city of Merseburg."

Sincerely yours,

HERWIG HUBNER

Burgermeister.



MARIA HUNTER is "decorated" with a 398th Bomb Group patch by English tour director Linda Ellis during last year's tour to England and Scotland. Mrs. Hunter and Linda are both "signed up" for the England-Germany tour in June, 1992.

# Identity Of Crews Revolved

## 398th Had 359 First Pilots

Adams, Paul	601	DeLancey, Larry	601
Agnew, R.R.	602	Doerr, Lyle	602
Alhadeff, Ike	600	Dollar, James	602
Allen, Stanley	602	Donovan, G.A.	603
Alwood, Joe	603	Douglas, Gene	600
Anderson, Keith	600	Douglas, J.D. Jr.	603
Andrako, Andy	602	Driscoll, John	602
Andrews, Earnest	601	Dunlap, Fred	602
Aniello, John	603	Durtschi, William	603
Arlin, Allen	601	Dwyer, Wilbur	602
Armor, Ray	600	Eisele, F.C.	600
Ashworth, Dean	602	Ellis, Richard	603
Atkinson, Herman	601	Engle, William	603
Austin, Richard	602	Ensign, Lewis	HQ
Baker, John	600	Erickson, Mahlon	602
Baldwin, Mondo	600	Erler, Don	602
Ballard, Charles	600	Evans, William	602
Beam, Burl	602	Evers, Hilary	603
Beatty, Hubert	600	Fairbanks, E.J.L.	602
Beck, A.R.	602	Falkenbach, John	601
Beckstrom, Ken	603	Farenthold, Francis	603
Berry, Kearie	603	Farmer, John	602
Bestervelt, Harold	600	Farnsworth, Dexter	603
Binger, Bruce	601	Ferguson, Allan	602
Bischoff, Albert	600	Fields, James	602
Bishop, Dave	603	Fisher, Wilbur	603
Blackwell, Wally	601	Folger, Robert	600
Blythe, J. Gordon	603	Ford, Earle	600
Boehme, A.H.	602	Foster, Dean L.	603
Bornstedt, John	601	Foster, Thomas K.	603
Boswell, Marion	602	Frazier, J. Richard	602
Bowen, Robert	602	Frazier, Willis	601
Brandstatter, John	603	Fritog, Arthur	600
Branyon, Royce	603	Gallagher, Raymond	603
Brodin, Unite	603	Ganz, Bill	602
Brown, Arnold	602	Genereaux, Harry	601
Brown, Robert	601	Genung, Merwyn	601
Brown, Sidney M.	602	Gieryn, Robert L.	603
Brown, Thomas	602	Godfrey, John	602
Buzza, Ken	603	Godwin, John	602
Cady, R.	602	Gonzales, Federico	603
Campbell, Robert	601	Gray, J.O.	602
Carter, Nigel	601	Gray, Judson	603
Chase, Lewis	600	Green, Earl S.	601
Christensen, Donald	603	Greenwalt, R.F.	603
Clark, Frank	602	Griffin, Don	601
Claude, Charles	602	Griffin, Richard	602
Cobb, Charles	602	Grinter, Don	600
Cochrane, Alex	602	Guice, T.L.	603
Coene, William	600	Gustaves, Selmar	601
Coffee, Marvin	602	Hadjes, Willard	601
Coleman, Winsor	603	Hahn, John	600
Colville, Paul	602	Hall, Joe	602
Comstock, William	602	Halstead, J.O.	600
Connolley, Harry	602	Halter, Ralph	601
Conrow, Russ	601	Hanauer, James	603
Costanzo, William H.	601	Hansard, V.A. Jr.	600
Cucco, Joe	601	Hart, Robert T.	600
Cullinan, Steve	603	Hastings, Kenneth	603
Cummings, D.L.	600	Hawkins, Dallas	602
Curtis, Glenn	601	Hays, Nathan	602
Cutcher, James	603	Heathcote, William	602
Daily, Bruce	600	Heintzelman, Harry	601
Dalton, Hollis	601	Hernden, Raymond	601
Darner, Leroy	601	Hershberger, George	602
Davidson, James	603	Hicks, Lee	600
Davis, Jerald	601	Hill, J.D.	601
Dean, William	600	Hobbs, John	603
DeCleene, Donald	603	Hoelzen, Harry	600

*Identification with a crew was an intrinsic part of being a member of the 398th Bomb Group in World War II. And so it remains today, even in the world high-tech warfare and journeys into space. In "those days," it was commonplace to hear such comments as, "I'm on Johnson's crew," meaning he was one of the men assigned to and flying with a first pilot, or aircraft commander of a B-17, named Johnson.*

*The operations folks assigned a real, live person — not a number — to fly a particular aircraft on a mission. And all those assigned to "Johnson" headed for that particular hardstand. And they formed a little unit called "Johnson's Crew."*

*During the group's year of combat service no less than 359 pilot/aircraft commanders were assigned to missions. This number also would include the likes of Col. Frank P. Hunter, group CO, and the many other Headquarters, Operations and Squadron officers who rode the right seat as "Command of*

Hopkins, Robert	603
Hornshuh, Merwyn	601
Hosman, Richard	601
Hough, Luther	602
Howden, Ross	603
Howell, Charles	603
Hultman, Clarence	600
Hunt, Mack	601
Hunter, Frank P.	HQ
Hyndman, Staver	603
Idso, I.R.	600
Ingram, John	601
Jacobs, William	602
Jauregui, Robert	601
Jeffers, Clinton E.	601
Johnson, J.M.	600
Johnson, Tom	600
Johnson, Warren	603
Johnston, T.J. (Ted)	600
Jones, Edward	603
Jordon, Edward	603
Kaminski, Joe	602
Kastner, Alfred	601
Kaufman, Robert W.	603
Keathley, Richard F.	601
Keenan, Paul	603
Kenyon, Donald	600
Khoruie, Charles	603
Kiernan, James	603
Killen, Leo	601
King, Charles E.	603
King, Clarence	603
Koenig, James E.	601
Krueger, Kirkland	602
Kunkel, John J.	602
Lamb, Hal	601
Lamiel, Jim	602
Landrum, Francis	601
Lassegard, LeRoy	603
Latson, Harvey	603

# Around The Name Of The Pilot

## 40 Paid The Ultimate Price

Aircraft.”

*Of this list, 40 were killed in action, including Col. Hunter, John Weibel, deputy group CO; Judson Gray, 603rd CO; and Jim Kiernan of the 603rd, who crashed on a training mission out of Rapid City. Others paying the ultimate price were John Baker, Hubert Beatty, Unite Brodin, Robert Campbell, Nigil Carter, Donald Christensen, Harry Connolly, Donald DeCleene, Lyle Doerr, Richard Ellis, Allan Ferguson, James Fields, Thomas Foster, Dallas Hawkins, Charles Howell, John Ingram, Kenneth Hastings, Charles Khouri, Robert Lehner, James McAfee, John MacArthur, William Meyran, James Mitchell, Herbert Newman, Ira O'Neal, Perry Powell, Paul Rich, Ben Rolfe, Charles Searl, Andy Thomas, Thomas Thompson, Ray Thornton, Warren Wade, William Wells, Roger Weum and George Wilson.*

*Seven of these crews went down without a single survivor — Searl, Rolfe, Meyran (Khouri), Foster, Fields, MacArthur and Doerr.*

Lehner, Robert	603	Mitchell, James	601	Shirk, Arthur	602
Leukardt, Roy	602	Moore, Vincent	603	Shott, Ned	603
Leung, G.P.	603	Morauer, Richard	602	Shuptrine, Harry	600
Lewis, D.W.	601	Morrison, Russell	601	Simeral, Robert	HQ
Link, Alex	602	Moy, Newell	603	Sistek, Anton	600
Lipnick, Lawrence	600	Mundhenke, Roland	601	Sitler, William	601
Lollar, C.L.	603	Naylor, Harold	602	Slavin, Aaron	600
Lovelace, Dana	600	Nelson, Sheldon	600	Sleaman, Harry	603
Loveless, Jay	600	Newman, Herbert	603	Smith, John	603
Lowe, Donald	600	Nicewonger, Boyd	603	Spangler, Harold	603
Lowe, J.D.	601	Nolan, Robert D.	600	Spitzer, Ernie	603
MacArthur, John	603	Novak, Jack	603	Sponholtz, Milo	600
Magnan, Mark	603	Oden, Kenneth	603	Stallcup, Harold	601
Magness, Byron	601	O'Neal, Ira	600	Stallings, Harold	601
Mann, Herbert	600	Osteen, Richard	600	Starkey, Robert	601
Marchbanks, Tom	601	Overton, Vernon	603	Steele, Robert	603
Marchner, Mike	601	Palant, Sam	601	Stockman, Al	603
Marias, Saul	601	Pappas, Venizelow	601	Stoll, Victor	603
Markham, William	602	Payne, Marshall	602	Stravinski, Maynard	603
Markley, William	600	Perkins, Guy	603	Swan, Neil	603
Martinek, Emil	601	Peters, D.W.	602	Swift, David	603
Matthews, Tom	600	Petersen, Tracy	601	Tarr, Joe	603
Matthews, G.B.	603	Petrocine, Norm	600	Tatchio, Orrin	600
Maudsley, D.R.	600	Petska, Al	602	Taylor, Arthur	601
Maurer, Fred	602	Pettus, Don	600	Taylor, Franklin	600
McAfee, James	600	Pierce, William	600	Taylor, Robert	601
McCarty, William	601	Pinner, Howard	603	Templeman, Robert	602
McCormick, John	602	Pope, Kermit	600	Thomas, Andy	603
McGeorge, George	600	Powell, Perry	603	Thompson, Thomas	600
McKinney, John W.	603	Prather, Malcolm	601	Thompson, William	602
McLaughlin, William	600	Pryor, Gaylord	602	Thornton, Ray	601
McLean, N.H.	601	Ragnedge, Bill	603	Tolochko (Tolbert), Joe	600
McMurray, Quentin	601	Reed, Russell	603	Traeder, Howard	601
Menzel, Arnold	600	Rehme, Howard	603	Treverrow, J.P.	600
Merritt, Charles	601	Rice, John	600	Trischett, W.A.	602
Meyran, William	603	Rich, Paul	603	Turner, Mark	600
Mikulas, John	602	Richardson, Calvin	602	Ullom, Robert	603
Miller, Herbert	602	Riley, Howard	600	Vallish, Edward J.	601
Miller, Jean	603	Robinson, Michael	601	Van Horn, Jack	601
Mills, David W.	601	Roderick, Paul	602	Van Opdorp, Harold	602
		Rogers, Linn	601	Vowell, Donnelly	600
		Rohrer, Richard	600	Wade, Warren	601
		Rolfe, Benjamin	601	Wagner, Meyer	603
		Rooney, Pete	602	Wagner, Paul	600
		Roper, Leroy	601	Walker, J.W.	602
		Rosenberg, R.S.	603	Wallingford, Robert	602
		Ross, Dwight	602	Watkins, Sam	601
		Rudow, Henry	602	Watson, Arthur	600
		Rudrud, Norm	603	Weekley, Harold	601
		Runnion, James	600	Weibel, John	HQ
		Rusk, V.H.	602	Welker, Clyde	600
		Russell, Houston	601	Wells, William	600
		Ryan, John	602	Weum, Roger	600
		Saferite, Wendell	602	Wheeler, William	600
		Schaffer, William	602	Wierney, Joe	601
		Schipull, Loren	602	Williams, Norman	603
		Schoen, Ernest	601	Wilson, George	601
		Schofield, Frank	601	Wintersteen, Jack	602
		Scott, Ernest	602	Wismer, Fred	603
		Scott, Ned	600	Womeldurf, James F.	601
		Scott, Talma	603	Woodmansee, D.A.	600
		Scott, William F.	602	Woodson, Harold	602
		Seal, Charles F.	600	Worley, Willard	603
		Searl, Charles	601	Wright, Parke	600
		Selby, C.H.	603	Zimmer, Charles	600
		Shappell, V.O.	602	Zimmerman, Leland	602
		Sheely, Roy	603	Zins, Sam	602
		Sheffer, Gerald	600	Zinter, Marshall	601
		Shimek, Al	600		



THIS DUTCH SWAMP was the final resting place of 398th aircraft 48199 of the 603rd Squadron. The Roy Sheely crew bailed out after flak bursts had crippled their B-17 on a mission to Munster on October 28, 1944. The location was about a half mile from the Rhine River, near the city of Zevenaar. This photo of three Dutch boys checking out a bit of the wreckage was provided by Rudi Polman, a member of the "Dutch Air War Research Group." Karl Lusink also helped in researching the Sheely crash. The two parties have been in close contact with members of the crew.

## Dutch Researchers Connect With 398th Crew



THE ROY SHEELY crew posed for the 398th cameraman at Nuthampstead during the summer of 1944. Left to right are (back row) William Bryant, co-pilot; Charles McQuitty, navigator; Roy Sheely, pilot. Middle row: Fred Cole, tail gunner; Al Richards, ball turret; Marvin Bell, waistgunner; Don Menard, radio operator. Front row: John Bawduniak, waist; "Tiger" Moore, gunnery instructor; and Earl Cornett, engineer. Bryan and Cole, who did not fly with Sheely on the Munster mission, were killed in the following month flying with another crew to Merseburg. Talma Scott (deceased), Dale Brown and George Potter joined Sheely as lead crew. All members bailed out successfully and finished the war in various POW camps.

### Young Hollanders Find Sheely B-17 Remains

BY DON MENARD

Radio Operator, Sheely Crew, 603

The date was October 28, 1944. The target was Munster, Germany.

We were squadron lead, flying in PFF aircraft N7-R, 48199.

Talma Scott was in the right seat as Command of Aircraft. The pilot and aircraft commander was Roy M. Sheely, Jr.

Others aboard were Robert Robinson, navigator; George Potter, PFF navigator; Dale Brown, lead bombardier; Earl Cornett, engineer; John Bawduniak, right waist gunner; Albert Richards, left waist; Marvin Bell, tail gunner; and myself in the radio room.

Trailing behind our lead aircraft were B-17's piloted by Federico Gonzales, Paul Rich, Staver Hyndman, Russ Reed, Ernie Spitzer, John Stevens, Al Stockman, Harold Spangler, Warren Johnson, Herb Newman, John Lee and Fred Wismer.

All the pilots were having difficulty staying in formation due to the atrocious flying weather, then as soon as our bombs were released we took a Flak hit under our right wing and we lost both No. 3 and 4 engines. We began losing altitude immediately and ordered Gonzales to take over the squadron lead.

Robinson charted a course in the direction of the nearest Allied positions, that being the British-Canadian sector across

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# HOLLAND

*Continued From Page 8*

the Rhine in the general area of Arnheim. By the time we were down to 5,000 feet and still over enemy territory we encountered heavy ground fire. One shell hit our No. 2 engine, setting it on fire and making control of the aircraft impossible.

Sheely set the ship on automatic pilot and ordered everyone to bail out. We all exited successfully and were captured immediately by an SS Panzer battalion.

We all heard rifle bullets whizzing about us as we descended. We all landed safely, only to be met by a lot of Nazis with guns pointed at us. An SS major came up to Sheely and smacked him across the face.

The vicinity where we were captured was near the village of Zevenaar, Holland. We were detained there in a small schoolhouse for a few days and then marched to the nearest German railhead, 17 miles away, to Emmerik. From there to interrogation in Oberusal/Frankfurt, to Dulag Luft transit camp at Wetzlar and then to various Stalag Luft camps across Germany and Poland.

All 10 crewmen ultimately returned home after being liberated by Gen. Patton's tank columns.

Three of our regular crew members did not fly on this day. Bombardier Charles McQuitty completed his missions with other crews. Co-pilot William Bryan and tail gunner Fred Cole were killed on the infamous November 21 mission to Merseburg, flying with the Charles Howell crew.

In 1989, 45 years after the Munster mission, Sheely received a letter from a young man named Karl Lusink of Holland. He said he was a member of an organization named "Dutch Air War Research Group — 1939-45."

The hobby of this group was to identify Allied aircraft that had been shot down in Holland during the war years, and then to contact any surviving crew members. Armed with basic information on the downed 398th aircraft, Lusink wrote to the U.S. for the Missing Air Crew Report. From this he found that the home town (1944) of pilot Sheely was Camp Hill, PA.

An obliging town clerk found that Sheely lived but a few miles from Camp Hill and forwarded Lusink's letter to his home in Mechanicsburg, PA. Sheely responded to Lusink's letter on behalf of the crew and sent the Dutch researcher some pertinent information on the mission, copies of FLAK NEWS and the 398th history book, "Remembrances."

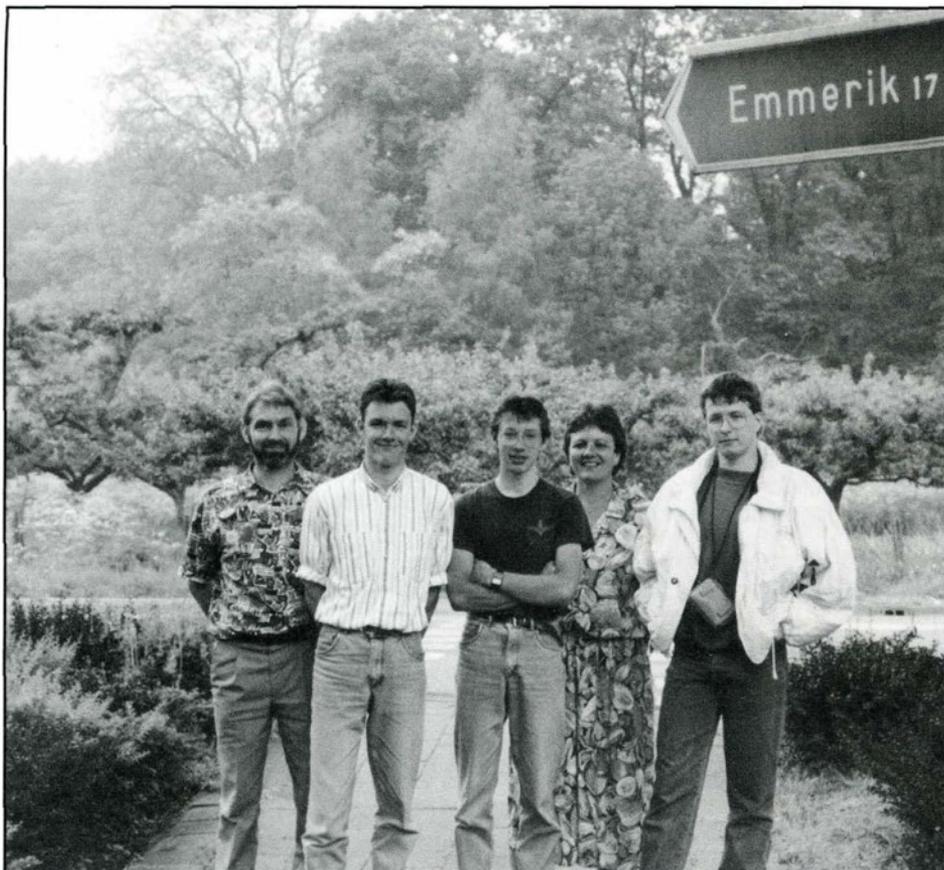
Soon, other members of the crew began communicating with Karl. And then, during the Dayton reunion in 1989, I received a letter from Rudi Polman of Zevenaar, Holland, who was engaged in a similar endeavor to Lusink. I called him by phone, and thankfully, he and his family are all fluent in English.

During the initial conversation Rudi

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DON MENARD just missed this windmill as he came down in his chute near the city of Zevenaar, Holland. He missed the windmill, but came to rest in an apple tree. He and the others on the Sheely crew were quickly captured by the Germans. Dutch researchers of such air crashes contacted members of the Sheely crew recently and have developed several personal relationships.



THESE ARE THE DUTCH people who uncovered some of the wreckage left by the crash of the Sheely B-17 in Holland. At left is Rudi Polman, sons Martin and Pieter and wife Dini. They live in Zevenaar. At right is Karl Lusink, who lives in Hummelo.

## More On Couvincourt

# Many B-17's Suffered On Low Altitude Run

Here is another version of the August 8, 1944 mission that took its toll on 398th aircraft. In the last FLAK NEWS Jerry Fields told of being blown out of his B17 and parachuting to safety. This time the writer is Willis (Bill) Frazier, and he remembers many details on the low-altitude mission to Couvincourt, near Caen, France.

BY BILL FRAZIER  
601 Squadron Operations

On this mission the aircraft bomb bay doors were opened over enemy lines to preclude bombs inadvertently dropping on Allied soldiers. Bombs would occasionally drop when the bomb doors opened. We had flown at least one mission in which the bomb doors were opened over the English Channel, so that any errant bombs would drop harmlessly into the water. However, the open doors added too much drag to be a feasible solution when there would be a long approach to the target. On this mission the long bomb run over enemy lines made us "sitting ducks."

To compound the problem of enemy fire, this mission was flown at an altitude of 13,000 to 14,000 feet, rather than at the normal 27,000 to 28,000 feet. The reason for the lower altitude was to improve target identification and bombing accuracy. The medium altitude was said to be "too low for the big guns and too high for the small guns." This reasoning was far from correct.

I was flying with Hollis Dalton. He was pilot, and I occupied a CA co-pilot's position. The mission was uneventful until we reached enemy lines and turned onto the bomb run. Flak was intense, and in all directions. We flew evasive turns to keep the flak from concentrating on us, but there was no clear daylight in any direction.

A large hole opened on the No. 3 engine cowling, oil flowed back, and the engine was bumping around. Dalton tapped me on the arm and pointed to the No. 3 engine tachometer, and noted that it was running erratically. I pointed out the problem, and he feathered the engine. Looking back at the formation showed that almost every

aircraft had an engine feathered. I do not recall seeing the group lead aircraft being hit or leaving the formation.

On return to Nuthampstead we assessed the damage. An 88 mm shell had hit the No. 3 engine, but did not burst on contact. Rifling marks from the shell were impressed on the aluminum of the cowling. On sighting through the hole where the shell entered and exited, the line of sight passed within three feet of where I was sitting. An aircrew member in another aircraft saw the shell explode directly above our aircraft, and said that it appeared that we had blown up.

## TOUR

Continued From Page 5

compassion. This occurred when the group joined hands and hearts with the people who witnessed the fall of Col. Frank P. Hunter's B-17 into their midst in January of 1945.

That crash took the lives of all aboard except pilot Federico Gonzales. He and Mrs. Gonzales were among the visitors that day in Neuss, along with the colonel's widow, Maria Hunter.

Mrs. Hunter has indicated that she will be on the 1992 tour, which will include a stop at Neuss. Also on the agenda is Ardennes American Military Cemetery, where many 398th men are buried or are listed on the Wall of the Missing.

At least one member of the Neuss host party of 1988 will be available to assist in the German travel arrangements to Merseburg.

He is Manfred Konig, an officer for Ford Motor Co. of Cologne. He arranged the final itinerary for the tour visit to Neuss.

## Diary Reveals Anxious Moments On Last Mission

Another version of the August 8, 1944 mission to the Caen area in support of the Allied troops was offered by Armand Fugge, radio operator on the Donald Lowe 600 crew. Fugge's comments came in the form of diary notes written immediately after the rugged missions.

BY ARMAND FUGGE

August 8, 1944. Got up at 0630. Briefed at 0715. Our target for today was the German troop concentration south of Caen, France. They sure got our ground forces halted. Take off was at 0945 and we bombed visually from 14,000 feet. Flak was extremely heavy and accurate. They threw everything they had from 20 mm to 105's.

I could see those big ones bursting as close as 20 feet out. Dark, red flashes and then a cloud of black smoke, then hear their low roar. I really prayed.

This mission at such low altitude wasn't far from a suicide trip. Went to communion before the mission.

Captain Baker got a direct hit and exploded. He was flying ahead of us and as he went down in flames I looked hoping someone would get out but I guess they were all killed.

(Jerry Fields and Selby Heried survived. January Flak News.)

Gee, it was tough because his wife just had a baby six weeks ago. Fields was his engineer. Thirteen of our planes came home with feathered props. We lost three. Landed OK and shot flares all the way down the taxi strip. Started a half dozen fires.

The group photographer took our picture as soon as we got out of our plane and our ground crew was happy for us, too. At the briefing room the boys tossed me into the pool with all my clothes to terminate my tour. I didn't mind that at all, although I almost drowned. Gee, but I am happy today, knowing that I'll be going home.

My last combat mission is passed safely. Thank God! Mission #32 completed.

## Squadron Formations For August 8, 1944 Mission

### HIGH SQUADRON - 600th

J.D. LOWE  
Rice  
Cummings Baker  
D.B. Lowe Elwood  
Reed Rogers Johnson Armor  
Mann  
Cobb  
Boehme Link

### LEAD SQUADRON - 603rd

WAGNER  
Hopkins  
Lehner DAVIDSON  
Kaufman  
Fisher Engel  
Moore Newman Magnan Rehme  
Rudrud  
Clark Driscoll

### LOW SQUADRON - 601st

FRAZIER  
Dalton  
Farnsworth Heintzelman  
Fairbanks J.A. Davis  
Stallcup Cucco Blackwell Brown  
Turner  
Rudow Doerr

# Letters From Here and There

"I just visited the EAA Museum in Oshkosh, WI and thought it was great! The last time I went there was when I was eight and saw the air show outside on the airfield. Now I am 13 and know a lot more about airplanes, jets, jet engines, and piston engines. So now I could understand the displays much better.

"The thing I liked the best was the B-17 Flying Fortress in the Eagle Hanger. I was surprised at how large it was and how they got it into the hanger. The great part was that you could walk inside of the plane. One thing I didn't like was you had to pay, but it was well worth it.

"Another thing I didn't expect were the blue boards on the floor. I kind of wanted to see what the floor looked like before and how you got into the belly gun.

"But I understand that the boards were there for safety reasons. The tour guide for the B-17 was great. He explained the plane to us and told us where the bomb rack was and what it was like inside of the plane while it was in flight.

"I thought the museum was excellent and I hope I can come back again some day."

**Kevin Hess, Brookfield, WI 53001**

"The last FLAK NEWS was excellent, and certainly brought back some stark memories for those of us on the August 8, 1944 mission to the Caen area. Jerry Fields certainly had a memorable day, noting his 'Blow Out' story in the newsletter. It is surprising how vivid my memory is of that mission."

**Bill Frazier, Sunnyside, CA 94087**

(Ed's Note: Frazier's impressions of the mission appear on Page 10.)

"Yes, I would be honored and delighted to accompany the 398th on their return to England next year. Try keeping me away! I will pick you up at Dover on June 24 and guide you to Nuthampstead for all the exciting activities planned for you there and elsewhere in East Anglia, and in London. I have many marvelous memories as your tour director last year and am looking forward to another 'mission' with my favourite B-17 bomb group. Tell Teedy I know some great shopping places on the way."

**Linda Ellis, Winchester, Hants SO 21 1 RF, England.**

"The story in the last FLAK NEWS on my 'Blow Out' mission resulted in my receiving several letters, some from people who never knew I got out alive. One letter came from Ben Moon, co-pilot on the Donald Lowe crew. We veered right past his window and he looked us right in the eyeballs we were so close. He said he never expected to survive that mission. See you on the golf course in San Diego."

**Jerry Fields, Kingman, AZ 86401**

"Thank you very much for the latest issue of FLAK NEWS. I al-ways look forward to receiving your newspaper as I look upon it as a symbol of our spontaneous friendship which began in 1987 and is still lasting.

"We in Germany were reminded, when the Gulf ground war began, of the words of Adolph Hitler on occasion of the landing of the Allied forces on 6 June 1944. Saddam Hussein's speeches recalled for us the words of Hitler, who said, 'we will throw them back into the sea,' and 'we are near the final victory,' and 'the heroic battle up to the last drop of blood.'

"If in the last weeks you had the impression that the mass demonstrations in Germany were against America, I can only say that this is wrong. It was a spontaneous rebellion against a useless war as such, because we Germans after more than 40 years have not forgotten our lesson.

"We are happy to learn of your proposed visit to Germany and England next year, and are looking forward to seeing you again as your travel through Dusseldorf/Neuss."

**Alfred Wilms, Dusseldorf-Heerdt, Germany.**

"I have been receiving FLAK NEWS, but under the name, 'Jacek,' rather than 'Vacek.' Perhaps you will change the spelling, and at the same time print a request for anyone in the 398th who might remember our 602 crew piloted by Lt. Normand Klare. We trained at Rapid City, but were re-assigned before going to England when one of our men became ill. We flew our tour with the 381st. I would like to hear from anyone who recalls our crew."

**Edward Vacek, Pickstown, SD 57367.**

"This is to let you know that the book I have been working on, 'Three Gold Stars,' has been completed and I hope to have it published soon. You will recall that members of the 398th provided much of the research on Bill Lewandowski, who was a co-pilot on the Richard Ellis crew that was shot down March 14, 1945. The other two 'Gold Stars' refer to Bill's two brothers, also killed in World War II. I will advise when the book is published."

**R. Joseph Rosamilia, Toms River, NJ 08753.**

## HOLLAND

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mentioned that he possessed several relics from the crash of N7-R, including the radar screen tube from the PFF. These items had been handed down to him by his father who was a teenager at the time of the crash.

During many more conversations and correspondence we were able to establish the exact site of the crash as well as the landing points of several crew members.

I had landed in an apple tree between a windmill and power line in a farm yard. Polman located several eyewitnesses who recalled my landing and subsequent commotion in unshackling from my chute.

Besides all this research, the Polmans drove a great distance from their home in Zevenaar to the American Military Cemetery at Margraten to decorate the grave of William Bryan.

Meanwhile, we continue to send both Lusink and Polman whatever information we can to assist in their ongoing research.

Last year, my son, William Bryan Menard, took the opportunity to visit the Lusinks and the Polmans at their homes in Holland. They escorted him to all the points of interest in and around the village and introduced him to eyewitnesses to the 1944 crash. He even met the couple on whose farm I landed and saw the schoolhouse where we were first detained.

As a parting gesture, Polman presented my son with a push rod from No. 1 engine of N7-R as well as a rheostat used as the ultra-violet dimmer on the instrument panel!

At the Oshkosh reunion last September calls were made to each of the Dutch families so that all five attending members of our crew could verbally exchange greetings — Sheely, Brown, Richards, Cornett and myself. In addition, we all shopped at "Jack's PX" for additional 398th souvenirs to send to our Dutch friends.

We have placed both Lusink and Polman on our "Associate" membership roster.

Lusink lives at Kipstraat 4, 6999 DB Hummelo, Gelderland, Netherlands (new address).

Polman lives at de Leemkuylweg 5, 6905 AV, Zevenaar, Netherlands.

## Another Crew Contact

Karl Lusink of the Dutch Air War Research Group, has advised FLAK NEWS that he has made still another contact with a 398th combat crew that was shot down in Holland.

This would be the Kermit Pope crew of the 600th Squadron, downed on the Misburg mission November 26, 1944.

Pope and his bombardier, Walter Poole, veterans from the 379th Bomb Group, were on their first mission with the 398th when downed near Velswijk, Holland. Others on the crew were Walter Bagot, John Jurcyk, Oliva Corbiere, Delmont Lewis, Kenneth Hawkins, Joseph Kerr and Charles Steele.

Pope lives in Annandale, VA and Poole in Jupiter, FL.