



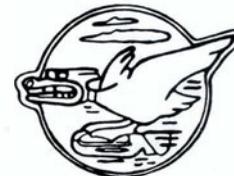
602



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

VOL. 9 NO. 1

FLAK NEWS

JANUARY 1994

*High she reared, mortally struck,
Shuddering in agony while her
Thrashing props clawed madly
At the cold, indifferent air,
Seeking a grip no long there;
Slowly and gracefully
Over she heeled,
And plunged to her death
From the air battlefield.*

—TED PREVOST, 601st Squadron
Written at Stalag Luft I, Barth, 1944

Day Of Drama:

Templeton Recalls Trip To Derben

"The field was like a circus with ambulances speeding about. They say the war is practically over. Not as far as I'm concerned."

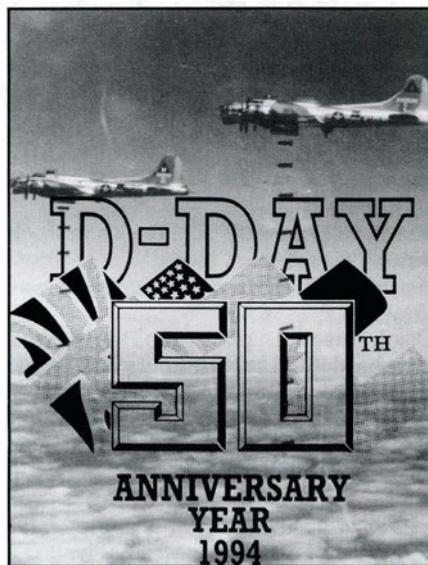
So wrote one airman after returning home to Station 131 following a harrowing mission to a German fuel dump at Derben on April 8, 1945.

The lead ship from the 600th was on its nose just off the runway, its shattered tail pointing grotesquely to the sky. Surely the tail gunner from this B-17 couldn't have lived through this. His name was Wallace Kasch, and he didn't.

A 603 pilot, Ed Stewart, lay in the nose of his aircraft, enjoying the painless fantasies related to mass doses of morphine. He would spend months recovering from a flak attack that nearly severed his lower leg. (See FLAK NEWS Vol. 6 No. 3.)

Another lost a finger. Others were bleeding as result of stopping pieces of iron tossed up by tracking German flak gunners. B-17's limped back to their respective hardstands nursing multiple wounds.

Continued On Page 6



Members Poised For Tour To England

The 398th will be a part of the 50th anniversary of D-Day, the event to be celebrated in England and on the continent next summer. While most of the ceremonies will be held at such places as Omaha Beach, Ste. Mere Eglise, Pointe Du Hoc, Caen and other memorable battle sites in France, the 398th will remember in the form of a tour to England, June 15-30, 1994.

While the tour will not include a visit to the continent this time, members will have an opportunity to see many D-Day museum attractions in the Southampton area.

From here, the tour becomes a "398th Special," featuring a return to Nuthampstead and visits to sites especially meaningful to those who served at Station 131 in 1944-45.

Tour information was included in the October issue of FLAK NEWS. For additional information, call (toll free) 1-800-423-5454. Ask for Barbara Fish, Travel House, Inc. The 398th tour coordinator is Allen Ostrom.

Final payments for the tour must be made by March 15, 1994.

398th Will 'Finish The Job'

When the 398th goes after a target, consider it hit!

This time, the membership of the "Triangle W" took aim on a \$12,000 goal to do some special reconditioning work on "our" EAA B-17, Aluminum Overcast.

And as of FLAK NEWS press time, the mark was within sight.

Already the contributor of almost \$22,000 in 1989 to repaint the exterior of the B-17, the 398th again answered the call for additional funds for interior corrosion control. The proposal was presented at the Buffalo, New York, reunion last September and the membership unanimously voted to "go for it."

A special fund-raising mailing was engineered by Hal Weekley last December and the response was immediate and positive. Weekley's promotional theme of "Let's Finish The Job" became the "Ditto" for many of the contributors as they sent in their contributions under four different categories —

BENEFACTOR	(\$1,000 and above)
PATRON	(\$500 and above)
SPONSOR	(\$100 and above)
DONOR	(\$10 and above)

This special effort on "corrosion control" for the Aluminum Overcast is part of a major project by the EAA of Oshkosh to make their Fortress completely air worthy for a nationwide tour commencing on March 23 in Marietta, Georgia.

This will be the beginning of a 46-stop tour in Georgia, South Carolina, Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, Arkansas, Missouri, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana and Wisconsin.

Continued On Page 3

“Clearing & Colder”

How the 398th Acquired Logo For FLAK NEWS

There is nearly always a “story behind the story.”

And just as often a “story behind the picture.”

In this case it has to do with a picture that has become the trademark of the 398th Bomb Group.

“Clearing & Colder” is seen in FLAK NEWS, on our letterhead stationery, and is featured in the book “398th Bomb Group Remembrances.” Some members even have this famous picture on their business cards.

Back in 1985 when plans were being drawn for the 50th anniversary celebration of the B-17 Flying Fortress to be held in Seattle, The Boeing Company commissioned a dozen of its staff artists to draw one segment each of the Fort’s distinguished history. These were accomplished and in due course were donated to the Museum of Flight in Seattle.

However, copies were made of the varied drawings, to be sold by the Museum.

How To Order Print

Large color prints of “Clearing & Colder” may be purchased from the Museum of Flight, 9404 E Marginal Way S, Seattle, WA 98108. Cost is \$22.00 postpaid.

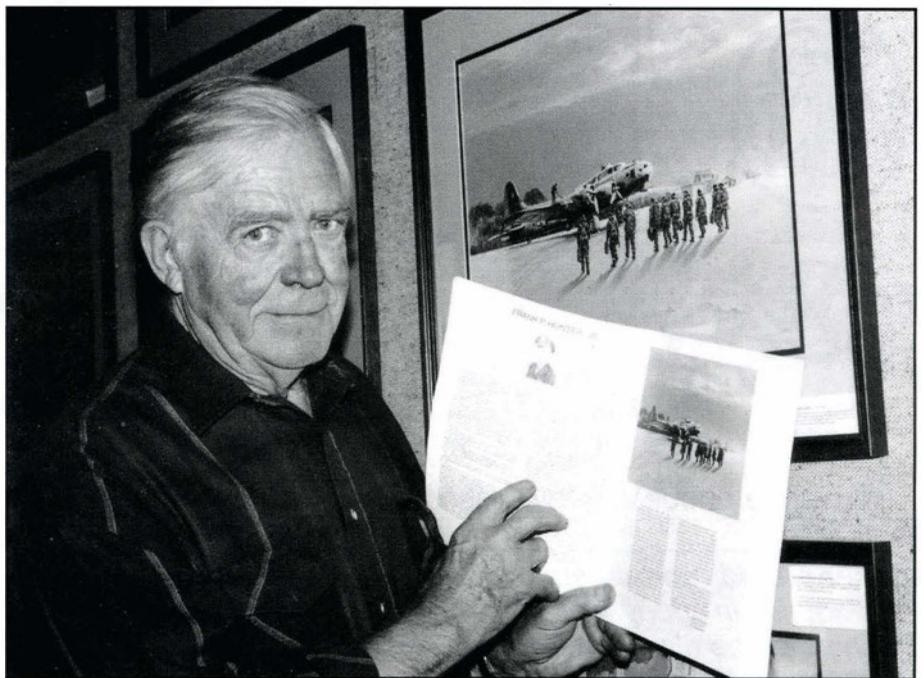
TIME FOR DUES

<i>North Carolina</i>	<i>South Carolina</i>
<i>Florida</i>	<i>Georgia</i>
<i>Alabama</i>	<i>Mississippi</i>
<i>Kentucky</i>	<i>Tennessee</i>
<i>Missouri</i>	<i>Arkansas</i>
<i>Louisiana</i>	<i>Nebraska</i>
<i>South Dakota</i>	<i>North Dakota</i>
<i>Kansas</i>	<i>Oklahoma</i>
<i>Iowa</i>	

If you live in one of the above states you should find a 398th dues card for 1994 in your FLAK NEWS. You are invited to send in your \$5.00 for the annual dues and, if you so choose, add some for FLAK NEWS and the Memorial Fund.

Please note any address change and, if possible, add your new “ZIP+4” Post Office number. One day soon we will have to use the “ZIP+4” number for our mailing. Like the one for our treasurer —

*Ralph Hall, treasurer
398th Bomb Group
New Bedford, MA 02740-1915.*



**BOEING ARTIST JACK OLSON
He Was The Creator Of Famous 398th Painting**

None received more acclaim than Jack Olson’s “Clearing & Colder.”

And for the 398th Bomb Group, it was a “natural.”

Olson selected a photo of a B-17 parked on the hardstand at Nuthampstead for his contribution. It depicted a typical winter day at Station 131, complete with a ground crewman sweeping snow from the wings.

Olson, admitting to some “artistic license,” said he added the control tower in the background to give it identity. He also added the 10 air crewmen walking toward the plane.

And for those who own one of the large color prints, they can look for an Olson artistic “trademark.” In this case (if you look real close) you can see a tiny field mouse in the snow.

Ted Johnston, who now happens to be the 398th Bomb Group vice-president, just happened to be the Boeing Company’s organizer for the 1985 celebration that attracted over 7,000 B-17 visitors.

Another “story behind the story” —

Jack Olson was a B-24 pilot in World War II!



JACK OLSON (left) and 398th vice-president Ted Johnston show off “Clearing & Colder” in front of vintage Boeing seaplane at Seattle’s Museum of Flight.



398th Colors To Flash Again As "Aluminum Overcast" Readied For Nationwide Tour

Continued From Page 1

Additional tours will be announced later this spring by Greg Anderson, executive vice president of the EAA. The next lineup of stops will be published in the April issue of FLAK NEWS.

Local chapters of the EAA are cooperating at the various cities, according to Anderson.

"We are delighted to be able to fly into so many towns," he said. "I hope many of your members will take the opportunity to come and enjoy the plane that carries your 398th colors.

"The corrosion control funds you contributed represent the principal reason we were able to take on such an ambitious tour.

"Your group can well be proud of this effort."

How did the EAA and 398th come to decide on \$12,000 as the goal for the fund raising effort?

"It was a simple matter of man hours," said president Bill Comstock. "The EAA estimated that 800 man hours would be required to take apart much of the plane to remove and treat the corrosion that had accumulated the past 52 years since it was built.

"At \$15.00 per hour this came to \$12,000.

"Our guys caught this vision and responded like we knew we would," concluded the president.

Contributors' names are published in alphabetical order according to the four categories. Contributions (tax deductible)

may still be sent to 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association, %Ralph Hall, New Bedford, MA 02740-1915.

Hall pointed out that many of the contributions had come from widows and children of members who had been killed in

action or who had passed on in more recent years. A special "In Memory Of ..." certificate will be sent to these contributors.

Additional contributors' names and stories of the fund raising project will appear in subsequent issues of FLAK NEWS.

THEY HELPED "FINISH THE JOB"

PATRONS

Lowell Culver
Wayne Doerstler
Rev. James T. Duvall
Robert T. Hart
Edward D. Jones
Albert D. Turney

SPONSORS

Charles J. Anderson
Keith W. Anderson
Robert W. Arnold
Richard Austin
William E. Auten
Earl J. Berryhill
Robert M. Blacker
Wally Blackwell
Edward W. Brass
David Broderick
Nicholas Bur
William H. Carter
Martin Chavez
Barbara J. Clark
(In memory of
Benj. L. Clark)
William G. Comstock
(In memory of
Joseph Schapiro)
Ben Core
Dorothy M. Crouch
William E. Faas
Charles R. Flickinger
Carl L. Foster
Dr. George C. Graham
Wallace M. Hall

James A. Hanauer
George Hershberger
Leo J. Hicks
John O. Hobbs
Raymond E. Hosback
Richard S. Hosman
Robert J. Houston
Jerome T. Jans
Don W. Jillie
D. Robert Kelly
Leo Killen
George A. Klix
Mrs. Jeanne LaCoste
(In memory of
Ernie LaCoste)
Norma Leonard
Jay Loveless
William E. Markham
Walter E. Marsh
William W. Martin
Donald B. McIntyre
Herbert S. Meeker
George Meketa
J. Herbert Miller
George Mitchell, Jr.
(In memory of
George Mitchell)
Jerry & Polly Monagin
Edward T. Morneau
Justin P. Mullaney
Mrs. Gertrude Neff
(In memory of
William Wells)
Elliott Novak
William O'Malley

Francis J. O'Sullivan
Archie Paris
William O. Parker
M.L. Prather
Max Rahe
Howard L. Randall
Russell F. Reed
Theo Regello
Joseph P. Roberge
LeRoy B. Roper
Frank C. Scofield, Jr.
John T. Shafer
Hank Sorney
R.E. (Bob) Steele
Louis J. Stoffer
Wilber D. Timm
Leo J. Welder
Melvin A. Wolf
James S. Yip

DONORS

Robert C. Abresch
Joseph Aceto
Walter H. Adam
Richard S. Adler
Kenneth L. Akins
Bobby Allen
Randolph D. Anderson
Doyle H. Atwood
Arnt N. Aune
Adrian S. Bacon
Louis Baffaro
James W. Bankert

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MEMBERS RALLY TO "LET'S FINISH THE JOB"

Continued From Page 3

Robert Barnett
Elizabeth V. Basco
Morris Baxter, Jr.
Burl B. Bean
Edgar T. Bearden
Bill Bell
William I. Bence
Vincent P. Berardi
Maurice M. Berger
John R. Bernard
Marvin S. Berry
Phyllis A. Berry
Bruce Binger
Mrs. Elizabeth C. Blanda
Herman Bodenheimer
Jack Bohn
Walter E. Boland
John W. Bornstedt
John Brandstatter
Ernest H. Brass, Jr.
Harold L. Brown
Robert J. Burkart
Carl C. Cameron
Edward A. Campbell
Alfred E. Campdon
Robert Cantwell
Robert W. Carver
William E. Cella
Albert L. Chamrad
Keith E. Coleman
Winsor Coleman
Russell C. Conrow
John W. Conway
G. Harry Cooper

Mrs. D.G. Cooper
Charles E. Corcoran
William H. Costanzo
John R. Courneen
Howard W. Cox
Warren H. Currie
Philip P. D'Addio
Paul Dandrea
Warren R. Davidson
Mason L. Dicks
Mrs. Claude E. Dierolf
A. Gerard DiGuseppe
Stan Diner
John Doherty
James B. Dollar
Thomas E. Dougherty
William S. Duncan
Milton L. Dunlap, Jr.
Donald D. Dunn
William Durst
Joseph C. Ellis
Robert J. Ellis
M.R. Erickson
Jerry Erxleben
Virginia C. Faber
Charles Fellows
Garwood Ferris
L.L. Fischer
Harry Fisher
William R. Fleming
W.H. Folmer, Jr.
Leonard France
Ozie C. French
Armand Fugge

George H. Gagne
Mrs. Morgan Shott Gibson
(In memory of Ned Shott)
W. Bruce Gillis
Herschel M. Glasgow
Sydney A. Gosian
Harold W. Grace, Jr.
Donald E. Griffin
Theodore S. Guylas
Forest L. Hagedorn
Robert D. Hale
Mrs. Danica Hancock
Herman Hansen
John W. Harbauer
Mary L. Harrington
Roger Harvey
Joseph F. Hauldren
William C. Heathcote
Harry Heintzelman 3rd
Woodrow Heitland
Carl A. Herbst
Jacob D. Herman
James S. Hester
John A. Hiller, Jr.
William Hineman
Merwyn E. Hornshuh
Roger A. Hovden
C. Patrick Hreachmack
Robert D. Huey
James A. Humbert
Daniel T. Hurley
George M. Ilko
Carroll E. Irvine

Robert L. Jacobs
Edward V. Jerominski
Dennis N. Johanson
Chilton M. Jorgenson
Mrs. Dorothy Junker
(In memory of Clarence Ehret)
Dr. Wm. Kavanaugh
Steve Kernitz
Charles Q. King
Glenn R. Knight
Robert L. Knowles
Thomas V. Kozak
Dr. Robert Kraft
Archie G. Kritchman
Robert J. Kuchta
Rudolph J. Kurish
Angela Lachman
Robert F. Lamons
Ruby R. Lanich
(In memory of Edward Lanich)
Mrs. Jean Latrenta
Arthur W. Laughlin
Clement A. Lescale
T.J. Lewandowski
Alexander J. Link
Melvin F. Loftus
Leo W. Lorenzo
Thomas C. Loveland
Mrs. Wanda Lusk
Albert Luukinen
Jack Madlung
James D. Mairs

Joe K. Mansell
Janssens Marcel (Belgium)
Bill Markley
Dana B. Maryott
John Matecki
Fred Maurer
John F. Maxfield
John J. McCann
C.D. McHorse
W.E. Meinzen
Arthur Merkin
Charles D. Metz, Jr.
Glenn G. Meyer
L.F. Miller
Samuel B. Miller
Robert B. Morrison
Boyce E. Needham
Harry Nelson, Jr.
Kenneth L. Newbrough
Robert Nolan
Edward Norris
Lloyd G. Norton
Harry S. Overbaugh, Jr.
Mrs. V.G. Pappas
Fred H. Parker
Thomas E. Paugh, Sr.
Claude L. Peachey
Edmund D. Penneylegion
Tracy J. Peterson
J. Donald Pettus
Richard Pezner
Louis A. Polidoro

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Aluminum Overcast Tour Schedule

The EAA's Aluminum Overcast, now being prepped for a major nationwide tour, already has an ambitious schedule drawn up for its spring debut. The schedule was released by Greg Anderson, executive vice-president of the EAA of Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

Anderson pointed out that this schedule is "tentative" for some locations, thus a check should be made with the local airport or EAA representative to double-check the dates. Additional tour schedules will be announced in the July issue of FLAKNEWS.

Marietta, Georgia
March 23 - March 25

Columbia, South Carolina
March 25 - March 28

Statesboro, Georgia
March 28 - March 30

St. Simons Is., Georgia
March 30 - April 1

Fernandia Beach, Florida
April 1 - April 4

Lake City, Florida
April 4 - April 7

Titusville, Florida
April 7 - April 9

Lakeland, Florida
April 9 - April 19

Tampa, Florida
April 19 - April 22

Sarasota, Florida
April 22 - April 25

Punta Gorda, Florida
April 25 - April 27

Fort Meyers, Florida
April 27 - April 29

Opa Locka, Florida
April 29 - May 2

Stuart, Florida
May 2 - May 4

Vero Beach, Florida
May 4 - May 6

Ocala, Florida
May 6 - May 9

Tallahassee, Florida
May 9 - May 11

Columbus, Georgia
May 11 - May 13

Birmingham, Alabama
May 13 - May 16

Huntsville, Alabama
May 16 - May 18

Chatanooga, Tennessee
May 18 - May 20

Nashville, Tennessee
May 20 - May 25

Florence, Alabama
May 25 - May 27

Memphis, Tennessee
May 27 - May 30

Jonesboro, Arkansas
May 30 - June 1

Springfield, Missouri
June 1 - June 3

St. Louis, Missouri
June 3 - June 6

East St. Louis, Missouri
June 6 - June 8

Carbondale, Illinois
June 8 - June 10

Kalamazoo, Michigan
June 10 - June 13

Terra Haute, Indiana
June 13 - June 15

Evansville, Indiana
June 15 - June 17

Indianapolis, Indiana
June 17 - June 20

Anderson, Indiana
June 20 - June 22

Champaign, Illinois
June 22 - June 23

Decatur, Illinois
June 23 - June 24

Springfield, Illinois
June 24 - June 27

Bloomington, Illinois
June 27 - June 29

Peoria, Illinois
June 29 - July 1

Rockford, Illinois
July 1 - July 4

Dubuque, Illinois
July 6 - July 8

Waukegan, Illinois
July 8 - July 13

To Be Announced
July 13 - July 15

Aurora, Illinois
July 15 - July 18

Sheboygan, Wisconsin
July 18 - July 20

Racine, Wisconsin
July 20 - July 22

Kenosha, Wisconsin
July 22 - July 24

Oshkosh, Wisconsin
July 24 - Home For EAA Fly-In



Continued From Page 4

T.L. Prevost
Reginald L. Proctor
Jesse E. Prugh
John P. Quinn
Robert Rasmussen
Charles A. Rau
Joseph Raveman
A.J. Richards
Paul W. Roderick
Robert S. Rowland
James Runnion
Edward J. Russ
Carmine R. Salsano
George E. Schatz
Loren J. Schipull
Walter Schmidt
Arnold A. Schneider
Gladys Schoener
*(In memory of
George Schoener)*
Allyn Schroeder
Robert Schuh
William J. Schwan
Franklin B. Scribner
Eldon B. Severson
Herman Sharp
Richard C. Shaw
D.J. Skjod
Aaron Slaviv
Mrs. Georgia Smith
Phillip G. Sorensen
Lindsay Sowby
Elmer S. Spaw
Joe Spechuilli
Odo J. Stenstrom
Jack L. Stiles

A.J. Stockman
Mrs. Pearl Strombaugh
*(In memory of
Charles Strombaugh)*
Lewis E. Sullivan
Charles K. Sutton
Phillip R. Swan
William P. Taylor
Herbert Teague
Roland G. Thibault
Joseph S. Tolbert
Howard L. Traeder
Sidney Trigher
Ralph D. Trout
Joe Vaniman
Lester Veley
Warren F. Vollhaber
Joseph E. Vollmar Jr.
M.C. Wagner, Jr.
Wayne E. Wallin
Paulette Wasserman
Leland Watson
Dr. Arthur C. Watson, Jr.
Harry Webb
John J. Webb
Robert Weidig
Robert Welty
William J. Wheeler
Bernard White
Mrs. Leona D. Wiley
Raymond R. Wilson
Albert F. Wooten
Geroge E. Wralstad
William A. Wright
Louis Zeller
Samuel I. Zins

Yes, Frank, You Went To Pilsen On Last Mission

It was the kind of letter that editors don't like to receive —

"I was disappointed to note that somehow my name was not included on the loading list of the crews that went to Pilsen, Czechoslovakia, on April 25, 1945. The story was printed in FLAK NEWS in April 1993.

"I was proud to have participated in what now must go down in 8th Air Force history as The Last Mission."

Sure enough, the name of Frank Weckerle, radio operator on the Clarence Hultman 600 Squadron crew, had been omitted.

A thousand apologies, Frank. Your FLAK NEWS editor is guilty of inadequate proof reading and offers his apology. Let it be known to one and all that Frank Weckerle, Jr., was the radio operator on the Hultman crew on The Last Mission.

In Czech Republic: Ferguson Crew To Be Honored

FLAK NEWS editor Allen Ostrom, who researched the Last Mission story for the April 1993 issue, and wrote of the murder of the 602 Ferguson crew members, will lay a wreath of remembrance on behalf of the the 398th Bomb Group next summer at Litice, Czech Republic.

He and his wife will visit the Czech Republic following the group tour to England, June 15-30.

The Allen Ferguson crew was shot down over Pilsen during the 8th Air Force's final bombing mission of the war on April 25, 1944. They crashed near Litice, where six of the eight members were captured and later killed by a German artillery officer. They were buried in a common grave along with a member of the 447th Bomb Group, Harold Cramer. His plane came down on April 19, 1944, the last American bomber to be shot down by a German fighter.

There were five others, all unidentified, in the common grave. The bodies of two Australian flyers also were discovered in a nearby unmarked grave.

The Ostroms will be guided to the memorial erected at Litice and also to the actual crash site at nearby Lahota by Jaromir Kohout and his WW II air crash research group called SLET.

Members interested in making this special trip to the Czech Republic, or joining the England tour, may call Barbara Fish (toll free) 1-800-423-5454.

Free Copy of Mazur Book Is Available

Harry Mazur, one of the two survivors of the 602 Ferguson crew that went down on the last mission (Pilsen, April 25, 1944) was at the Buffalo reunion last September and passed out some 100 copies of a book he had written called "The Last Mission."

Unfortunately, his supply ran out before everyone received an autographed copy.

"I will send a free copy to any 398th member who wants one," said Harry. "Write me at Jamesville, NY 13078."

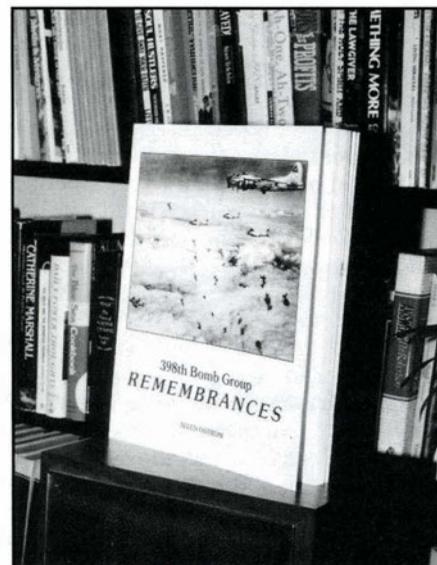
BOMBARDIERS REUNION

The ninth annual reunion of Bombardiers, Inc., will be held February 27 to March 4, 1994, at Mobile Bay, Alabama. Contact Ned Humphreys, Jr., Daphne, AL 36526.

"The Sky Keeps No Memories"

The 398th Bomb Group and its B-17 Flying Fortresses played a very significant role in the Eighth Air Force combat theater in Europe during World War II. These Remembrances should be meaningful to those of us who actually experienced them, just as they would be meaningful to those who ponder them in the future. This book presents vignettes of life and death during that tumultuous period of our history. Because the sky keeps no memories, it is our hope that Remembrances will serve to tell future generations of the monumental drama that took place in those skies. Even though they are now washed clean.

WILLIAM G. COMSTOCK
President, 398th Bomb Group
Memorial Association



Last Call For "Remembrances"

The above book photo and accompanying article by president Bill Comstock appeared in a promotional brochure sent to various book stores and aviation museums around the United States and UK.

This was to promote the sales of "398th Bomb Group REMEMBRANCES," written by FLAK NEWS editor Allen Ostrom in 1989.

The original printing was sold out in two years' time and a second printing was authorized in 1992. The stock of this last printing is currently down to less than 100 books. It is unlikely that additional REMEMBRANCES will be produced.

Thus, for those members who may not have as yet secured their copy, or for those who wish to order copies for sons, daughters, grandchildren, etc., the time is now.

Cost of the book is \$22.00. Send your check to 398th Bomb Group Book, %Ralph Hall, New Bedford, MA 02740-1915.

DERBEN: A DAY OF DRAMA FOR MANY

"War Over? Not As Far As I'm Concerned"

Continued From Page 1

The lead 603 Fortress, with Jim Hanauer and T.L. Guice in the cockpit, had their controls shot out and were directed to an emergency landing field at Woodbridge.

But these were only the planes and people who made it home. Most recovered to fly again before the war's last mission on April 25, 1945.

The William Wells Fort of the 600th took a hit in the tail, killing tail gunner Jack Roush. A second explosion sent the starboard wing straight up in the air and the ship keeled over on its back and then straight down. Bits and pieces of airplane sullied the sky as explosions ripped the plane in two.

"Never had a chance," the witnesses reported. These would include Roush, Wells, Thomas Clark, George Munroe, Clement LeScale, Jr., Bill Wickens, Marion Hamilton, Lamar Coleman and Sherman Klein.

Klein, a 602 photographer, was last seen shooting bomb drop photos from the camera well in the radio room. Until the bomb run, he had been on photo assignment in the waist.

His partner/gunner in the waist was Robert Templeton. And he would become the lone survivor of this 10-man crew.

The group was led by the 602nd, with Col. Lewis Ensign and John Shafer. They were followed by the 600th, with Bruce Daily and John Hahn and the 603rd with Hanauer and Guice. The group descended from 20,000 feet to a bombing altitude of 12,000 feet only to find the target hidden by cloud cover.

A second run after a 360 provided the visibility for the lead 602nd to drop, but the tight turn left the other two squadrons still without a decent sight on the oil dump target. Another 360 was ordered and the 600th and 603rd dropped successfully.

Almost immediately the flak appeared. Sparingly but accurate. One 88 ripped most of the tail section from the Daily-Hahn plane, sending Kasch to his death. Kasch had been on the same Don Pettus crew with Wickens and both were flying as spares this day. Another Pettus gunner on this mission, Ernie LaCoste, was the only one of the three spares to survive the day's travail.

Seconds later the Wells B-17 was picked off and nine of its men would perish. All on board except Templeton.

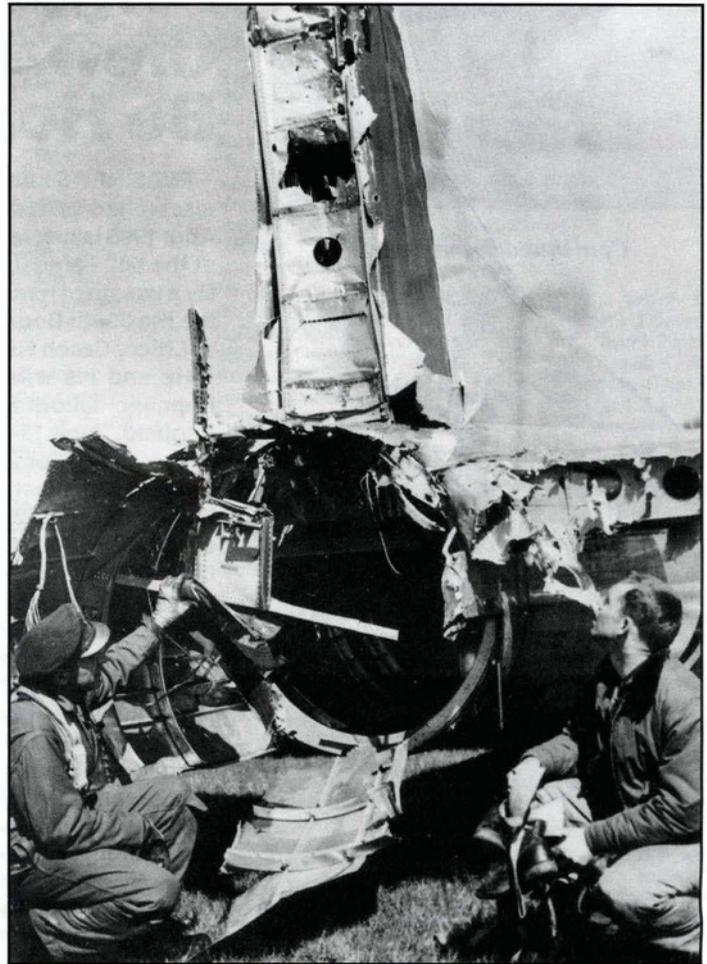
Templeton was still alive in the waist, but was clinging precariously to life as the Fort plunged earthward. He used the ribs in the waist wall to climb vertically to the waist door. He kicked out the door and was immediately sucked out.

"I don't know what I hit as I fell out," he said. "But whatever it was the impact knocked me out.

"When I woke up I was in an irrigation ditch and I couldn't move. Obviously I had pulled the cord to my chute, but I have no memory of this."

Continued On Page 10

And It Came Back!



JOHN HAHN AND BRUCE DAILY



ROBERT TEMPLETON
He Survived



WALLACE KASCH
Blown From Tail

FORMATIONS FOR APRIL 8, 1945 MISSION

Lead Squadron — 602

ENSIGN
Shafer

Lamiell HAYS
 Thompson

Saferite Heathcote

 Miller

Elwell Petska

Ferguson Coffee

Low Squadron — 600

DAILY
Hahn

Woodmansee Nolan

Watson Wells

 Runnion

 Eisele Hill

 McAfee Shimek

 Hoelzel

High Squadron — 603

HANAUER
Guice

Douglass Stewart

Branyon Alwood

 Overton

 Rosenberg Lollar

Greenwalt Gieryn

Movie Camera, Diary Recorded Eventful Mission To Derben

It was one of those rare occasions in life where a family gift — in this case a diary — was not only gratefully accepted, but used.

And then see the results of those diary entries come to life a half century later.

Len Streitfeld entered the Air Force in 1943 and ultimately became a bombardier on the Al Shimek crew of the 600th Squadron. During his 31 missions he faithfully made entries in his diary, especially the details of his combat missions.

Many others, perhaps also made use of diaries during those months overseas with the 398th Bomb Group. But add one more feature to the Streitfeld scenario —

He also took along a 16 mm Bell & Howell movie camera.

Said Streitfeld —

“Fifty years have passed since I received that diary and now when I read it, I realize how valuable it is in that I can relive those exciting years and all those fateful moments in combat where our lives quite often seemed to hang by a thread.”

And it is not only from his diary that he can recount those memories. He took along his movie camera (with color film, yet) on many of his missions.

“Being the bombardier on our crew I had a great vantage point from which to take movie film,” he said. “I captured some unforgettable scenes, especially on the mission to Derben, Germany, on April 8, 1945.”

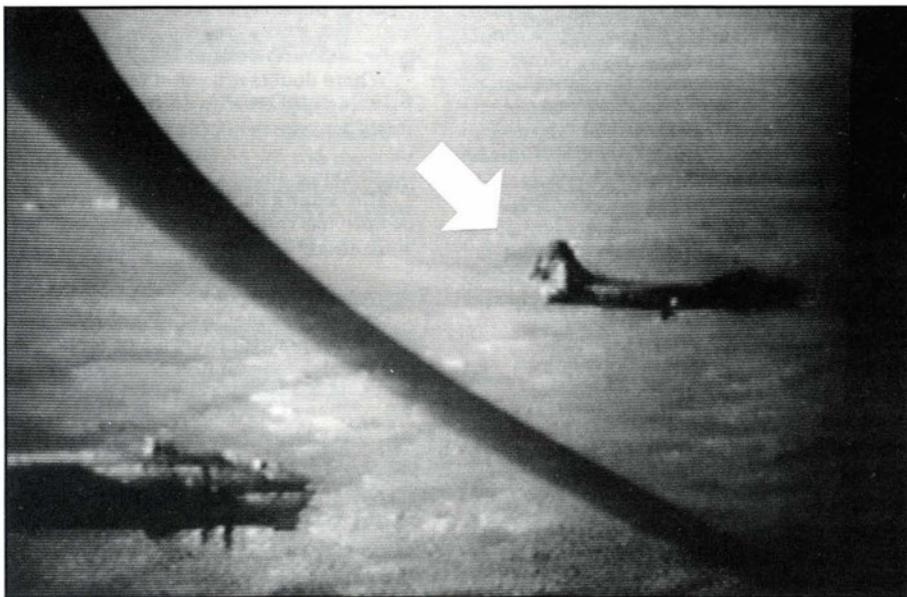
When Streitfeld returned from this mission, he sent his film packet to Kodak in London for processing. It was two, long agonizing weeks before he was able to retrieve it.

It was worth the wait, even if it was 47 years later before he was really able to share the dramatic contents with many of the men who also were along on that dramatic mission.

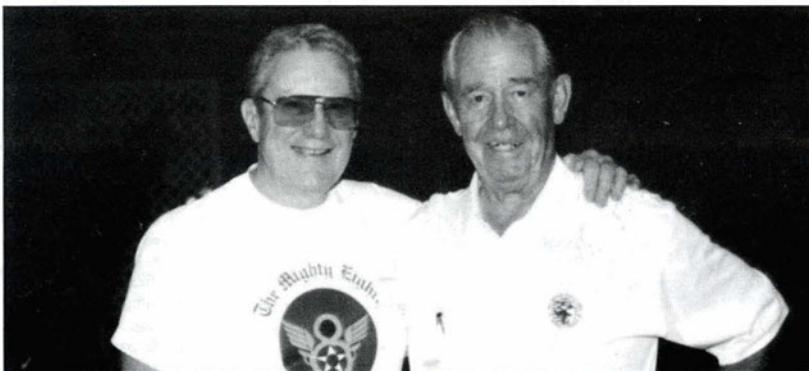
It was not until the 1992 reunion in Nashville when he met Bruce Daily, 600th commanding officer, and invited him to view his film, which had been converted to VHS video. There they saw not only scenes from the April 8, 1945, mission, complete with B-17 formations, contrails, flak barrages, smoke bomb releases, etc., but an actual film sequence of Daily's lead Fortress seconds after a German 88 had ripped off the major portion of his plane's tail section.

A still photo, taken from one of the frames of the original 16 mm movie film, shows the rudder almost completely gone. The tail gunner, Wallace Kasch, had just been blown out of his position in the tail. Witnesses say his falling body just missed hitting another aircraft.

“The last moments must have been horrible for him,” said Streitfeld. “I shudder when I think of what happened to him.”



ARROW POINTS to the tail section of the Bruce Daily-John Hahn B-17, the photo taken on color movie film seconds after taking a direct hit from a German 88.



LEN STREITFELD AND BRUCE DAILY AT NASHVILLE REUNION

With pieces continuing to fall from the crippled aircraft, Streitfeld continued shooting with his camera until the plane dropped from view. He assumed that Daily would certainly crash, having been inflicted with such severe damage.

Others aboard were John Hahn, pilot; Bob Kuchta, navigator; Chris Clememts, bombardier; E. Agnew, mickey; Norman

Kogen, radio; Harry McDaniel, engineer; John McFarlane, waist; and Kasch.

The Flak burst that killed Kasch and sent the Daily Fortress to what appeared sure destruction, was a brief but violent tracking barrage that also took its toll on others in the group. (See additional story on the Derben mission.)

“We eventually flew out of the Flak area,” continued Streitfeld. “We headed back to the base thinking how lucky we were to get out with our lives, and at the same time wondering how it went with Daily and Hahn and their crew.

“We were all astonished to find that they had flown that plane back to Nuthampstead and landed it, even if it did end up on its nose.”

For Fortress No. C-8811 it was her first and last flight.

Forty-seven years after Streitfeld's high-altitude movie production, he walked up to Daily at the Nashville reunion and said —

“Colonel, I have a movie here that you might just want to see.”

VHS Video Available

Len Streitfeld's VHS video, which runs for 45 minutes, is available to our members for \$25.00 postpaid.

In addition to the scenes from the Derben mission, the film also includes sequences from other missions and footage taken at the Nuthampstead base.

Streitfeld said that \$20.00 of this cost will be donated to the 398th Bomb Group. (Members may include a more generous amount if they desire.) His address is Hammonton, NJ 08037.

"Lord, Lead Me On To Higher Ground"

Adleman, Milo
 Agnew, Harry
 Agnew, Robert
 Alexander, Claude
 Alves, Alfred
 Anderson, Emil
 Anderson, Roy L.
 Anderson, William G.
 Andrews, Kenneth E.
 Arlin, Allen A.
 Armstrong, Sidney A.
 Armstrong, Walter G.
 Ashworth, Dean H.
 Atkins, James R.
 Audet, Paul E.
 Aukerman, John V.
 Austad, Kermit
 Baer, Howard F.
 Bagley, Bernard
 Bailey, Ray E.
 Baird, Harold
 Baker, Albert A.
 Bancroft, Joseph (Dave)
 Baptist, Claude A.
 Barkovich, Fred
 Barnes, Lynn W.
 Barnhard, Joseph E.
 Bartimus, Neil R.
 Basco, John J.
 Bash, Claire C.
 Basham, James
 Baughman, John
 Baxter, Richard
 Beattie, Hugh Don
 Beaty, Oscar L.
 Beavers, Cecil
 Becker, John J.
 Beckley, Robert J.
 Belcher, Jess
 Bell, Marvin
 Bell, Robert
 Benefiel, Phillip L.
 Bennett, Norville
 Bernier, Loyola A.
 Berry, Kearie L.
 Berthoud, Charles
 Bewley, James A.
 Biancardi, Andrew
 Bingle, Henry
 Bird, John C.
 Blancett, Marvin
 Blanda, Guido
 Blankenship, G.W.
 Bley, Winston
 Bobbitt, James M.S.
 Bogdnanski, Edward J.
 Boltz, Phillip T.
 Bonjani, Bruno
 Bosshart, Herbert
 Bottoms, Millard S.
 Bourke, Joseph E.
 Bowcock, Jr., H. Guy
 Bowman, Leonard L.
 Braddock, Heyward M.
 Brady, Jack
 Breault, Al
 Brewer, Darrell F.
 Breymer, Royal
 Bridges, Clarence W.
 Briody, J.
 Brown, E. Logan
 Brown, Lawrence
 Brown, Samuel M.
 Brown, Sidney
 Brubaker, Wayne
 Brunke, Earl
 Buck, Chester S.
 Burke, Al
 Busciani, John P.
 Bushle, Louis
 Butler, John
 Buvinger, David
 Buzza, Kenneth
 Byrne, Felix E.
 Callahan, Noel
 Campbell, Tom
 Campbell, Van B.
 Carter, Nigel
 Carter, Robert C.

Cason, Alfred
 Castro, Edward
 Charbonneau, Francis
 Chase, Lewis D.
 Chesshir, Kenneth
 Chimelewski, Raymond J.
 Christofer, George
 Church, Fred M.
 Churchill, Wesley H.
 Civitarese, William A.
 Clafford, Lloyd
 Clark, Benjamin L.
 Clark, Francis C.
 Clarke, Walter F.
 Clifton, Ernest
 Cochran, Curtis
 Coene, William
 Colantoni, George
 Colburn, Warren
 Cole, Harold
 Coleman, George F.
 Colvin, Charles E.
 Colwell, John
 Coombs, William F.
 Coomes, Ralph E.
 Cooper, D.G. (Bud)
 Coopet, Joseph L.
 Corcoran, Joseph W.
 Corry, Fr. George
 Corsuti, Anthony
 Cote, Arthur
 Coupart, Bernard
 Cowen, Harry
 Cowley, Jr., John J.
 Cox, Norman
 Crouch, James
 Cummings, D.L.
 Cutcher, James L.
 Dacon, Charles H.
 Dalton, Hal
 Dames, John J.
 Darner, Leroy
 David, Paul M.
 Davidoff, Herman
 Davidson, Wm. H.
 Davis, Jack
 Delbart, Raymond S.
 Delorier, Joseph
 Demander, John L.
 Devan, Samuel
 Devlin, Steve
 Dexter, Robert L.
 Dickhart, Clarence
 Dierolf, Claude E.
 Dippel, Francis
 Dixon, Gerald
 Douglas, Gene
 Downing, Robert A.
 Dreyer, Charles G.
 Duncan, John W.
 Dunne, Bill
 Durbin, Francis
 Dutrow, Gordon P.
 Dwyer, Jr., William J.
 Edgell, Harry
 Edgington, Gilbert
 Edwards, John H.
 Ehil, Edward
 Ehret, Clarence
 Eisele, Francis C.
 Elsrod, Orville
 Elwood, Kenneth
 Emmons, James W.
 Engard, Robert
 Faber, Herbert G.
 Farenthold, Francis L.
 Farley, Robert
 Farmer, Edward
 Farrell, William A.
 Faughn, Joe
 Fernandez, Frank
 Fleming, Horace
 Fletcher, Richard E.
 Folger, Robert
 Foraker, Kenneth H.
 Foster, Paul
 Franceschini, Gino
 Freel, Lawrence A.
 Frew, George

I'm pressing on the upward way,
 New heights I'm gaining every day;
 Still praying as I'm onward bound,
 Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.

My heart has no desire to stay
 Where doubts arise and fears dismay;
 Tho' some may dwell where these abound,
 My prayer, my aim, is higher ground.

I want to live above the world,
 Tho' satan's darts at me are hurled;
 For faith has caught the joyful sound,
 The song of saints on higher ground.

I want to scale the utmost height
 And catch a gleam of glory bright;
 But still I'll pray till Heav'n I've found,
 Lord, lead me on to higher ground.

Fritog, Arthur
 Fritz, Jack
 Froelich, James S.
 Gagnon, Glen S.
 Garland, Jack S.
 Gary, B.
 Gerber, Tom
 Gerloff, Harry
 Gibb, Robert
 Gibson, Charles F.
 Gillenwater, Joseph A.
 Ginsburg, Joe
 Gloor, John
 Godfrey, John
 Goldbach, Ernest
 Goldman, Gil
 Gonzales, Benito
 Grant, Sam
 Green, Norbert
 Greenberg, Abraham
 Gresh, Steve
 Griffo, Arthur
 Grossman, M.
 Grothues, Al
 Gruber, Fred
 Gulleddge, Thomas G.
 Hafer, George C.
 Hafer, Herman L.
 Hakomaki, Floyd
 Hall, Joe
 Hancock, William C.
 Haggood, Alfred
 Hardy, Arnold
 Harmon, Carl H.
 Harrington, Cornelius
 Hartwell, George W.
 Hatch, Dwight
 Hatcher, Robert
 Hatten, Harold R.
 Haworth, William A.
 Hayward, Harold D.
 Hedeem, Melvin
 Heitman, Paul F.
 Hendrickson, William
 Hennrikus, George
 Herbert, Earl
 Herbert, Robert G.
 Hernden, Raymond A.
 Herrera, Pedro
 Hesterly, Kenneth
 Hicinbothem, Franklin
 Hickey, Charles
 Hinkle, Dwight
 Hogrefe, Carl H.
 Holloway, Edwin C.
 Holloway, James B.
 Holstead, James
 Hopp, Frank J.
 Houchins, Harry
 Howard, Grant
 Hreachmack, Joseph
 Hudson, Herman D.
 Hunnicutt, Elzie
 Hunsaker, Edwin F.
 Hunter, Dr. Lewis G.

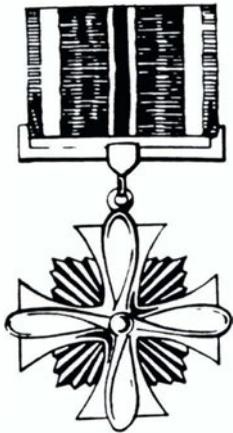
Huntington, Sam
 (Associate)
 Hutchinson, John L.
 Hyland, Gervase (Gerry)
 Inman, Willie H.
 Isdahl, Chester R.
 Iwamoto, George
 Jackson, Leroy K.
 Jackson, Paul K.
 Jarman, Gordon
 Jellen, Anthony J.
 Jellison, Elwell S.
 Jendrezweski, Ray
 Johnson, Gene
 Johnson, Warren
 Jones, Andrew
 Jones, Ira
 Jones, William H.
 (Olympia)
 Jordan, Edward
 Jordan, William F.
 Kaminski, Joseph
 Kay, Allen
 Kearney, Earl
 Keene, Raymond
 Kelly, Jerome F.
 Kilby, William C.
 King, Charles E.
 Kiser, Kenneth
 Klimaszewski, Victor (Klemens)
 Klingshoffer, John
 Kline, Percy
 (Honorary Member)
 Knight, George N.
 Kolafa, John
 Kolb, Kenneth
 Kotte, Norman E.
 Kovic, Ernie
 Kramer, Harvey
 Krause, John J.
 Kroh, Charles H.
 Kuck, Homer R.
 Labat, Lionel L.
 Lachman, Russell
 LaCoste, Ernie
 Lamar, John W.
 Land, Don
 Lang, Fredrick
 Langford, Ray
 Lassegard, Leroy
 Latrenta, Peter
 Latson, Harvey
 LeDoux, Ray J.
 Leemon, Don
 Leonard, Gene
 Levy, David L.
 Like, Waldean
 Lindo, Fred
 Linke, Walter J.
 Long, Douglas
 Loveless, Harold
 Lowe, Donald B.
 Lowe, Lloyd F.
 Lundy, Charles M.
 Lutz, Joseph

Madden, Edward F.
 Maher, Jere L.
 Mahlum, Clayton
 Mann, Douglas
 Marchbanks, Tom
 Marfilius, Elmer H.
 Martin, George A.
 Martorella, Angelo
 Massey, Frank
 Masters, Marvert
 Mates, Stanley
 Matheson, Burton
 Matthews, Tom
 May, John M.
 Mayers, Joseph W.
 McCoy, Wayne
 McCurdy, Robert G.
 McDougall, Harry T.
 McGlaun, Raymond
 McGovern, Raymond
 McLaughlin, Garvin
 McLaughlin, Robert J.
 McLughlin, Ken E. (Bud)
 McMennamin, John A.
 McMurray, Quentin
 Melis, Charles
 Melson, Rufus
 Meyers, Revel J.
 Meyers, Russ
 Miller, Lewis M.
 Miller, Paul
 Mills, Richard (Rocker)
 Mitchell, George
 Moore, Donald
 Moore, Vincent
 Moretti, Raymond J.
 Morris, Jr., Stacey
 Moss, Latrelle R.
 Motsenbocker, H.D.
 Motter, William F.
 Mummert, William S.
 Namey, John
 Naragon, Daniel J.
 Nash, George N.
 Neidringhaus, M.A. (Bud)
 Nejaski, Leroy
 Nelson, Gene
 Nelson, J.C.
 Nelson, Orville
 Newman, Elvis M.
 Noble, Earl
 Norby, William
 Notropole, Robert J.
 O'Brien, Robert J.
 Offutt, Marion
 Ongley, Bert
 Osborn, John W.
 Overton, Vernon
 Owens, Blaine
 Painschab, Joseph H.
 Pappas, Venizelos G.
 Parrish, Lewis E.
 Parsons, B.H.
 Payne, Claude N.
 Peach, Tom
 Peek, Kenneth R.
 Perry, Arthur M.
 Peterson, Christian
 Peterson, Raymond
 Petska, Albert M.
 Pierson, Donald
 Pierzchala, Benjamin J.
 Pintek, Joe
 Poston, Brian A.
 Poston, Carl W.
 Powell, Sam
 Prettyman, William B.
 Puthoff, Lewis A.
 Pyles, Robert F.
 Pysson, Albert
 Radnedge, William B.
 Redican, Francis M.
 Reid, Perry
 Rex, John H.
 Riccio, Michael
 Rich, James T.
 Rickabaugh, Ronald
 Riley, Erwin J.

Riley, Howard K.
 Roberts, Jack
 Robinson, Robert
 Rockstroh, Kenneth J.
 Rogers, Linn R.
 Rolfes, George
 Rooney, Pete
 Rose, Arthur
 Rosenzweig, Harold
 Ross, Gaylord
 Rossi, James H.
 Ryan, Michael O.
 Sachs, Stanley
 Sawyer, Hiram N.
 Schallert, Maurice
 Schapiro, Joseph S.
 Schmidt, Richard H.
 Schneider, John
 Schneier, George W.
 Schofield, James
 Schwerer, George J.
 Scott, Ernest D.
 Scott, Jr., Talma A.
 Seaver, Warren
 Seibert, Earl W.
 Selevan, Arthur
 Selgrath, John
 Shadroui, Alfred
 Shaffer, W.A.
 Shaw, Donald
 Sheely, Roy M.
 Shimek, Albert J.
 Shirik, Charles W.
 Shott, Edwin E.
 Sigsworth, John R.
 Simeral, Robert
 Skarda, Joseph
 Skellinger, Walt
 Slawson, Thomas G.
 Smith, Clarence
 Smith, Coy
 Smith, Frank
 Naragon, Daniel J.
 Smith, Harold
 Smith, Herbert E.
 Smith, John E.
 Smith, Ralph D.
 Snyder, Frank A.
 Snyder, Harold E.
 Sorrell, Glenn M.
 Southwick, Earl J.
 Spain, Edwin F.
 Sponholtz, Milo
 Stallings, Harold
 Stanbrough, Claude
 Stankiewicz, Charles
 Staskiel, Stanley
 Stephens, James
 Sternadel, Robert L.
 Stetter, Paul J.
 Stickel, Robert F.
 Stombaugh, C.E.
 Stone, Warren
 Stout, Plato
 Strickrott, Carl J.
 Stripling, Aaron M.
 Strnad, Frank
 Strohschein, Wallace
 Struckmeyer, Tom
 Studor, Howard P.
 Suggest, Walter
 Sullivan, The Rev. Walter B.
 (Catholic Chaplain)
 Swan, Jr., Neil
 Sweet, Dr. Robert
 Taylor, Franklin
 Terbierten, Dr. Urban
 Terrion, Leo W.
 Thacker, Ike
 Thomas, Henry
 Thompson, Oakley J.
 Thompson, Robert
 Tillman, Wally
 Tomaino, Antonio J.
 Tone, Emmett W.
 Townsley, Kenneth
 Tracey, Claude W.

*Continued
 On Page 9*

New Group Seeks Winners Of DFC



A new veterans organization, with a goal of world-wide participation, is now in the planning stage. It's the —

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS SOCIETY

"I feel that it is long overdue that we have a group made up of those who were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross," said organizer and promoter of the fledgling unit.

"Starting this Society will require a lot of preflight," he said. "But I feel it can get off the ground and be a successful organization. One that all members will be proud of.

"Hopefully, we will be recognized throughout the world."

For additional information on joining the Distinguished Flying Cross Society, contact —

ANDREW D. CIURCZAK

Capistrano Beach, CA 92624-1232

"Higher Ground"

Continued From Page 8

Travers, John T.	Wells, Burton B.
Triebwasser, Sidney	Wells, David
Troost, H. M.	(Honorary Member)
Trotter, Joseph H.	White, Victor H.
Tryon, William V.	Whitehead, Fred A.
Tucker, Frank	Wickam, James E.
Turner, Mark	Wickman, Walter
Unkel, Rudolph E.	Wierney, Joseph
Upmeier, Tom	Wight, Bill V.
Vale, William G.	Wilde, George J.
Vanderlick, William	Williams, Frank J.
Vela, George E.	Williamson, Rufus S.
Vernet, Jr., Waldemar	Wilson, William R.
Vicha, Raymond A.	Wolfe, Leonard
Vjnes, John H.	Woodcock, William
Waarama, Arthur	Woodham, Warren
Waldbauer, Charles A.	Woodmansee, D. A.
Waldman, Benjamin I.	Woodring, Dave
Walkup, Jr., Charles A.	Woodruff, Clinton L.
Wallrath, Raymond	Woodson, Harold
Walter, R.N.	Woodson, Woodrow
Walthall, Ernest	Wright, Ellsworth S.
Ward, John	Wymer, Kenneth M.
Waring, Leonard H.	Zagelow, Larry
Warren, Alfred	Zampetti, Dr. Herman
Wasserman, Charles	

BRIEF-Things

Gathering up all the little bits and pieces for the story on the Derben mission required more than a little help from many, so here are FLAK NEWS thanks to **Bob Burkart**, **Bob Kuchta**, **Sanford Warren**, **Willie Ivy**, **Guy Perkins** and **Ed Stewart**; plus **Len Streitfeld**, who stirred up the initial interest with his own story and movies ... sadly, we have not been able to locate pilot **John Hahn**, whose flying skill along with that of **Bruce Daily**, brought their tail-less aircraft home ... when the cockpit asked for a damage report, waist gunner **John McFarlane** responded, "There's a big hole where the tail used to be" ... that many of the 398th widows have chosen to remain active with the Association is a tribute to secretary **Wally Blackwell**; he offers free lifetime membership to all spouses who lose their mates ... as **Jack Lee** was taught as a rookie B-17 pilot: "if you can't correct a problem in any other way, reach down and unlock the tail wheel" ... one time, in desperation, he tried it (and it worked) ... and then there comes the story about **Col. Hunter**, who reminded an airman about failing to salute an officer; the airman's response — "This is my day off" ... FLAK NEWS continues to enjoy a very small percentage of Post Office returns due to old and incorrect addresses, but the relatively small \$16.90 PO charge from the October mailing is still not "acceptable" ... send us your address changes, please ... among the many special people we will meet on the England tour next summer is Air Vice Marshall **Johnnie Johnson**, the RAF's leading Spitfire ace in WW II ... speaking for the five Friends of the 398th who came to the Buffalo reunion from England, **Elaine Tyler** penned this note — "Our thanks for all your kindness and hospitality. We now send you warm greetings from Nuthampstead and look forward to welcoming many of you back to the old base next June" ... others who attended the Buffalo reunion were **Peggy Wells**, **Ron Setter**, **Gordon Aldridge** and **Jim Espezel** ... the Buffalo reunion was a great success, as 497 folks will attest, but chairman **Larry Paul** is still ticked at the Sheraton Hotel management for turning away 23 of our members due to "overbooking" and choosing to do a kitchen renovation during our reunion week ... we have a new Friend in Holland, **Henny Kwik**, who heads up an organization called, "BULLETIN AIRWAR-1939-1945" ... most of his "Uitgave nummer 165" is devoted to the history of the 398th Bomb Group ... they have some 250 members and are always looking for new members who are "thinkers, talkers and researchers, not sleepers" ... VP **Ted Johnston** is heading up a committee of Board members for the purpose of updating the 398th Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws, particularly looking to "infuse" the Association Board of Directors with second generation members, and to reorganize with an "auxiliary" element ... the 94th Bomb Group announced that they will cease to exist following their 1999 reunion ... the 398th mailing list and production of the mailing labels was moved from Farmington, MO, to Seattle, WA, to be in closer touch with the FLAK NEWS printing and news office, but let us not forget to send our thanks to **Harry Gray** who carried on this task from the very beginning ... treasurer **Ralph Hall** just can't convince a lifetime member from New York that he does not have to send in his annual dues any longer; this fellow just keeps sending in \$100 EVERY year; all the man asks is, "again, as usual, please put this to good use" ... frankly, it's folks like this who make it possible for the group dues to be held to \$5.00 per year ... it took the sharp eye of **Ron Spicer**, a former English army officer, to note that the Union Jack flag depicted in the last FLAK NEWS under the heading, "50 Years On" was displayed incorrectly; the top, wide, white bar should have been on the staff side; sorry about that, UK Friends ... **Bill Comstock** and all his Board officers would like to send along their thanks to all the folks who remembered them with greetings this past Christmas ... **Ted Prevoost**, who was a guest at Stalag Luft I at Barth, wonders if other PW's discovered that their escape kits contained nothing but tissue paper, as he found out; could this be true? ... and this offer to any of you who might wish to read **Virgil Kramer's** great diary of the 398th tour to Germany, Holland, Belgium and England in 1992; just write FLAK NEWS for a copy ... England's premier historian of the 8th Air Force, **Roger Freeman**, is still seeking information on an original 602 B-17 (42-107205) that flew so poorly that it was finally shoved off on the 91st after about 10 missions; if you know about this particular Fortress contact FLAK NEWS ... next summer's England tour party will be led to the deCleene crash site by **Kevin Whittaker** of the Macclesfield Historical Aviation Society, after which the group will tour the Society's aviation museum ... that gorgeous "In Memory Of" certificate is still available free of charge to those folks who wish to remember someone special when they contribute to the 398th; include the name and send to treasurer **Ralph Hall**, either separately or with your 1994 dues .

Death Calls Jack Davis

One of the charter members of the 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association, Jack Davis, died this past January. He was engineer-gunner on the Bill Comstock crew and served as the association's first secretary-treasurer. Association president Comstock, Davis' 602 pilot, attended the funeral.

What Was Going Through Your Mind?

At the Buffalo reunion last September the attendees were asked to contribute memories from their 398th Bomb Group experiences. They were asked to respond as though a present day television reporter had put a microphone in their face and asked the classic present day television question, "What was going through your mind when ...?" The following stories are the result of this request.

"It happened when I was free-falling after being shot down on August 9, 1944. I didn't open my chute until the last minute for fear of being shot at from the ground (this did happen.) Suddenly I recalled seeing my Muzette Bag hanging from overhead in our hut. It was filled with goodies, including some large (25 cent) Hershey bars. My father was a field artillery officer at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and my mother worked at the PX. They kept me well supplied. Suddenly, as I was falling, I thought, 'Now those other guys in the hut will get my candy.' (They did.)"

Harold Weekley, pilot, 601st Squadron

"I had just about given up hope of saving my life. Four of us were in the Leipzig railway station after being shot down and captured on July 7, 1944. Our Luftwaffe guards could not control the angry crowd, which was yelling things like, 'kill them!' and 'luft gangster.' I just knew I was about to be lynched when a couple of toughs pulled me away. I was really praying hard and trying to pull away from them. Then suddenly our guards smacked one of the toughs with his rifle butt and yelled, 'nichts, nichts.' The toughs backed off and we finally were on our way to Dulagluft.

"That sense of thankfulness remains with me today. Those guards showed extreme courage in protecting us from what surely would have been a death situation."

John P. Quinn, radio operator/gunner, 600th Squadron, Folger crew.

"This has to do with a small plane flight I went on over the field at Nuthampstead while on the 1992 England tour. The pilot was Derek Willard and he gave us a real look at the runways we knew so well 48 years before. It was a great flight, and when we landed I had the strange sensation of the last piece of the puzzle finally fitting together. You see, my last mission from there ended on the ground near Merseburg on November 2, 1944. I had finally landed back at Station 131!"

Russ Read, pilot, 603rd Squadron

"I am an officer in the U.S.A. Medical Services attending New York State University-Buffalo. I am working on my doctorate in Audiology. I had the honor of attending the Welcome Dinner at the Buffalo reunion with my mother and father, Jeanne and John (Herb) Wilson. Dad was a radio/gunner on the John Godwin crew of the 602nd Squadron. As we entered the banquet hall and mingled with the members, I said to my mother, 'There are sure a lot of 'My Dads' here.' These Fly Boys were great in the early 40's and are in a class of their own in the 90's."

Maj. Lynn Wilson Henselman, U.S.A./M.S.C.

The following 398th recall came from Gordon Blythe. His thoughts came not from WW II days, but rather from the reunion at Buffalo, New York, where he was asked to offer a prayer at one of the banquets —

"I will never forget the feeling I had when I stood up there and looked out over that group of warriors. They were all heroes to me, and the grace of God is so manifest to think after all we went through so many are still here to remember each other. Thank you again."

J. Gordon Blythe, pilot, 603st Squadron

Templeton A Survivor

Soon a German civilian approached him, gun in hand. He asked me if I could walk. "I can't move my legs," I told him. It turned out that his back had been broken during his exit collision.

"This German turned out to be a teacher, a former soldier on the Russian front. That man carried me in his arms for over three miles to a hospital."

After a brief stay in a PW hospital at Stendal, Templeton was soon on his way home after being repatriated by the 5th Armored Division. A back fusion surgery in New York was necessary before returning to his home in Montana.

Templeton recovered enough to pursue a career as a rodeo rider "from Canada to Mexico," followed by a career "in the woods." In 1971 he fell victim to diabetes. Ultimately it rendered him blind.

He lives in Missoula, MT 59802.

398th PX

CAPS — \$8.00. Specify squadron. One size fits all.

JACKETS — \$25.00. White, Light Blue, Royal Blue. S M L XL. B-17 on front. (Limited supply of colors.)

T-SHIRTS — \$8.00. White, Royal Blue, Light Blue. S M L XL. B-17 on front. (Limited supply of colors.)

T-SHIRTS — \$8.00. White. Children's sizes 6-8, 10-12, 14-16.

SWEAT SHIRTS — \$15.00. White, Light Blue. S M L XL. B-17 on front. (Limited supply of colors.)

SWEAT SHIRTS — \$10.00. White, Blue. Children's sizes.

SQUADRON PATCHES — \$7.00. Specify squadron.

GROUP PATCH — \$6.00. Hell from Heaven.

JACKET PATCHES — \$4.00. Rectangle. B-17.

SQUADRON LAPEL PINS — \$5.00. Specify squadron.

GROUP LAPEL PINS — \$6.00. Special design.

BUMPER STICKERS — \$1.00.

CANVAS TOTE BAG — \$4.00. Group logo.

SUN VISORS — \$3.00. White. Group logo. Great for Golfers.

MEMBERSHIP PLAQUE — \$25.00. Specify Regular or Lifetime.

BELT BUCKLE — \$8.00. Group logo.

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TUCSON REUNION

The next issue of FLAK NEWS, April 1994, will contain all the informational material on the September 21-24, 1994, reunion in Tucson, Arizona. This will include the registration form showing all the activities, costs, etc., plus the Double Tree Hotel reservation form. The Tucson reunion chairman will be Clyde Sebastian, Tucson, AZ 85730-1774.

A WIFE'S TRIBUTE

I would like to share this poem with all members of the 398th and their wives, for it is so reminiscent of our thoughts and emotions during that dark period of 1944. It was sent to me at that time by my husband, Lt. Max N. Rahe, a pilot with the 602nd squadron, from somewhere in England.

I stood on the flight line in Grand Island, Nebraska, as the 398th roared down the runway enroute to England, soon lost to sight in the low fog, wondering what lies ahead for him, when or if will we meet again. To all those men and their wives and sweethearts this poem will have special meaning.

— PHYLLIS RAHE
Crescent, Oklahoma

WAIT FOR ME

BY KONSTANTIN SIMONOV

Wait for me — I will come back.
Only wait — and wait.

Wait though rainclouds louring black
Make you desolate;

Wait though winter snowstorms whirl,
Wait though summer's hot;

Wait though no one else will wait
And the past forgot;

Wait though from the distant front
Not one letter comes;

Wait though everyone who waits
Sick of it becomes.

Wait for me — I will come back.
Pay no heed to those

Who'll so glibly tell you that
It is in vain to wait.

Though my mother and my son
Think that I am gone,

Though my friends abandon hope
And back there at home

Rise and toast my memory,
Wrapped in silence pained,

Wait. And when they drink that toast
Leave your glass undrained.

Wait for me — I will come back
Though from death's own jaws,

Let the friends who did not wait
Think it chance, no more.

They will never understand
Those who did not wait

How it was your waiting that
Saved me from the war.

And the reason I've come through
We shall know, we two:

Simply this: You waited as
No one else could do.

Konstantin Simonov wrote his first book of poetry at age 20. He served as war correspondent along all parts of the front. This poem was first published in 1942 in Pravda and immediately went to the hearts of all men and women. He was married to the beautiful actress Valentine Scorva, and this, and all his love poems, have been inspired by her.



THERE WAS a mini-reunion of the 398th at the USAF Museum at Dayton, Ohio, last November — Veterans Day. All the Air Force organizations who had memorial plaques or benches at the Memorial Park were invited to attend the 75th anniversary of Veterans Day. The 398th placed its plaque and oak tree there in 1989. Bob Hart proceeded to round up nine others and their wives for the ceremony. From left to right are Jack Hunter, Don Vowell, Jesse Prugh, Ernie Spitzer, Hart, George Hilliard, Richard Marshall, Jim Hanauer and Carroll Irvine. Missing from the photo was William Brock. The group then toured the Museum, undoubtedly stopping for a long, nostalgic look at the Museum's B-17.

“ROUND THE CLOCK”

“Those who flew the bombing missions of the USAAF and RAF from English airfields in World War II lived in an utterly unique time and experience, incomparable to any before or since. That experience, both in and out of combat, in its style and form, is the essence of ROUND THE CLOCK.”

These are the words found on the jacket cover of a new book on the 8th Air Force entitled, “Round The Clock.” This would be the theme of this new pictorial/text jointly written by American Phil Kaplan and former RAF pilot Jack Currie.

Photos by the dozens dot the pages telling of “those” days of World War II, both on the ground and in the air. Kaplan found many former air crewmen to help him tell the American bombing story, including Bill Ganz, a 600th Squadron co-pilot on the Norm Rudrud crew.

There is a photo of the Woodman Inn at Nuthampstead and a photo of 398th radio operator Lloyd Stovall of the 602 John Ryan crew. And hidden among the many shots of artistically-decorated A-2 jackets is the jacket that once belonged to Jim Runnion of the 600th Squadron.

Runnion was most surprised to learn that his old A-2 jacket still existed. “The last time I saw that jacket was when I was stationed at Elmendorf Field in Alaska a few years after the war.”

It is now in the hands of an unnamed collector.

Jack Currie provides an excellent descriptive of a mission to Peenemunde in his RAF Lancaster. A night mission, as opposed to the day mission of the USAAF. The blending of this day-night cooperative between the British and Americans is the theme of “Round The Clock.”

The book is published by Random House, Inc. Price: \$50.00.