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

VOL. 10 NO. 3

FLAK NEWS

JULY 1995

# Díky Ameriko! *Thank You, America!*

398th Part Of Pilsen, Prague VE Celebrations:

## Czech Republic Opens Hearts To WW II Veterans

It was NOT just another "typical tour." It was a dramatic, emotion-filled, heart-tugging learning experience dealing with a peoples who learned what it was like to lose their freedom to the Nazis in 1936 and then get it back in 1945.

And then lose it again for 40 years to the Communists.

This was Czechoslovakia in World War II and the long post-war years until 1989. And among their most vivid memories ... passed down from grandparents to children to grandchildren ... was the entry of the American ground forces into Pilsen on May 6, 1945. Their Day of Liberation.

On that day General George S. Patton's 16th Armored Division and 2nd Infantry Division entered the city to the tumultuous acclaim of the citizens. An experience the people of Pilsen remember like it was yesterday.

This "remembrance" was severely restricted by the Communist regime which in 1948 rolled into Czech communities with their troops and tanks. Your liberators, they were told, were Russian soldiers dressed in American uniforms.

Now that the Russians are gone, the Czechs don't have to play their "little

game" and they are free to celebrate "the real truth of our liberation."

And it was held in Pilsen, Prague, and many other Czech communities, with a series of celebrations on May 5-6-7, 1995. There were some 300 ground force veterans from the United States on hand, including the 97th Infantry, plus several members of the 17th Belgian Infantry and many Czech veterans who fought as Resistance Fighters.

AND ... the only U.S. Air Force contingent, the 398th Bomb Group!

As Bill Comstock, 398th Association president, said when plans for the tour were announced -

"We were not among the soldiers entering Pilsen that day, but I think the 398th and our B-17's might just have made a difference."

Indeed they did, witness the raid on the Skoda Works in Pilsen on April 25, 1945. The Last Mission of World War II.

And having lost the last two B-17 crews of the European air war that day - Ferguson and Coville of the 602nd - it seemed reasonable that the 398th should be represented at the Liberation Day festivities. And coincidentally, Pilsen's 700th birthday.

*Continued on Page 5*



**ZDENEK PROSEK**  
Pilsen Mayor & 398th Plaque

## Mayor Was Pleased

Zdenek Prosek, Pilsen's popular mayor, received an unusual gift from the 398th Bomb Group during the VE-Day celebrations last May in the Czech Republic.

A specially designed plaque bearing the "Hell From Heaven" logo and a message from Bill Comstock, 398th president, was presented by Allen Ostrom, leader of the 21-member tour party.

Comstock's message told of the group's Last Mission on April 25, 1945 to Pilsen and how the 398th wanted to share in their Anniversary of Liberty 50 years later.

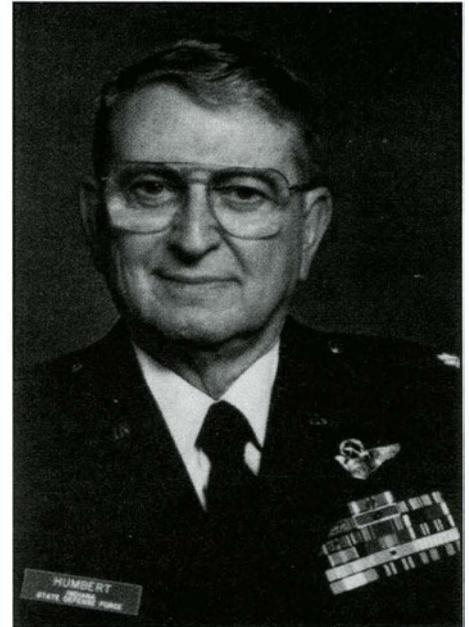
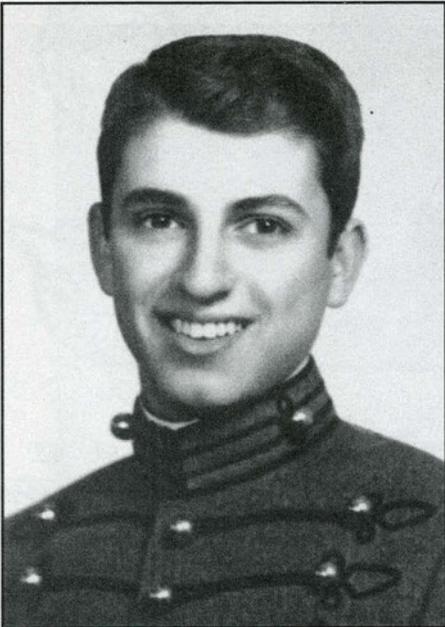
And then this message -  
"From Heaven we shared in your liberation from Hell." The Czechs understood this American "play on words."

### Inside Special Issue of **FLAK NEWS**:

- The 1995 Annual Reunion in Charleston, SC
- The 1996 398th Bomb Group England Tour
- What Happened To My Comrades?
- The 398th By-Laws To Be Aired in Charleston
- Joe and Rozanne Joseph's P-X

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## Half-Century Evolution Of A 398th Bomb Group Warrior



**JIM HUMBERT** went through all the stages of the military after beginning his career in 1942 as a Cadet at The Citadel, Charleston, SC. Later he became a gunner/toggler on the Bill Durtschi crew of the 603rd, pulling 35 missions. Today Humbert is commander

of the 112th Air Operations Squadron, Indiana National Guard, Jeffersonville, Indiana. Col. Humbert and Col. Berryhill will compare notes "in front of the Napoleon 12-pounder" at The Citadel during the 398th reunion at Charleston, SC.

## Shuler To Be Guest At 398th Reunion

Lt. Gen. E.G. (Buck) Shuler, whose 8th Air Force heritage includes the likes of Ira Eaker and Jimmy Doolittle, will visit the 398th at their reunion in Charleston, South Carolina, October 11-14, 1995.

Shuler came along some 50 years after Eaker and Doolittle as head of the "greatest Air Force the world has ever known", - the 8th.

Now retired (from the Air Force) he now heads up the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum as President and CEO.

His "orders" are to build a fitting building for all the Mighty Eighth memorabilia and to tell the story of the Air War in Europe.

Construction is now at the point where the exterior should be completed in October and the interior and layout design by May, 1996.

The 398th Bomb Group, and the "Friends of the 398th" in England, have already contributed financially to the project.

In addition, a framed silk evasion map originally given to the 398th Operations Group at Castle AFB, has been sent to the museum. The unit was inactivated and reassigned to Altus AFB, Oklahoma.

In addition to the fellowship normally associated with reunions via the banquets, tours, golf, etc.) 398th attendees will hear directly from Shuler on the progress of the Heritage Museum. And quite possibly, an encouragement to consider the Museum when looking for a repository for those priceless "relics" that might otherwise be discarded.

Harold Stallcup, reunion chairman, reports that registrations are coming in briskly, and that we should expect a 400-plus turnout. Official registration and Marriott Hotel reservation were printed in the April issue of FLAK NEWS. Write or call him for additional information. See "Reunion Facts".

A number of tours are scheduled for the four-day reunion, including a visit (with dinner) aboard the carrier, Yorktown. Then there are tours to Fort Sumter, where the Civil War began; Magnolia Gardens Plantation; and Charles Town Landing. The latter tour will include a visit to The Citadel to view the cadets' Full Dress Parade. (See the photos on this page on Col. Jim Humbert and the story on the next page on Col. Berryhill).

## Reunion Facts

**EVENT** - 12th annual 398th Bomb Group reunion.

**WHEN** - October 11-14, 1995.

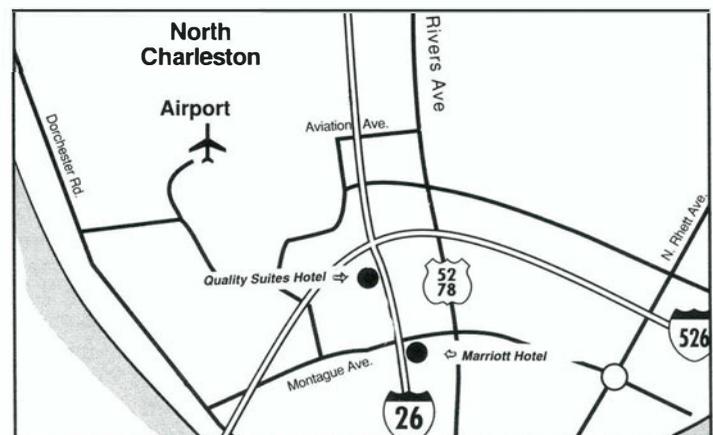
**WHERE** - Charleston, South Carolina.

**HQ HOTEL** - Marriott Hotel, 4770 Marriott Dr., North Charleston, SC 29418. (803) 744-6108.

**BACKUP HOTEL** - Quality Suites, 5225 Arco Lane, North Charleston, SC 29418. 1-800-221-2222.

**CHAIRMAN** - Harold & Nancy Stallcup, Forest City, NC 28043. Contact them for Official Registration Forms and general information.

**TRAVEL INFORMATION** - Barbara Fish, Travel House, Inc., 5042 Roosevelt Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105. 1-800-423-5454.



# He Was The "City Manager"

## Some Airmen Met His MP "Cops"

If it moved on the ground at Station 131, Colonel Earl John Berryhill knew about it.

He was the 398th Bomb Group Ground Executive Officer, hand-picked by Colonel Frank P. Hunter, Jr., for this job, and his presence was seen and felt in just about every echelon of activity in and around the Nuthampstead, England air base.

The business of flying was in the hands of Col. Hunter, his air executive officer, squadron commanders and operations people. But if it had to do with business on the ground, the name "Berryhill" was attached to it in some fashion.

With ground personnel outnumbering flying personnel by a 2 to 1 margin (2012 to 1031 as of December 31, 1944), the Berryhill "shadow" fell in areas much unknown to combat crews, although at least a few airmen were known to have been introduced to Berryhill's policemen, the 1142nd MP Company.

Most of the Group Executive communication came through "channels," such as Group Adjutant Jack Garland, and the Squadron execs, Raymond Richmand (600), William Priestley (601), Norville Bennett (602) and Joe Schapiro (603). And, when it came to dealing with the enlisted personnel, the squadron first sergeants.

Berryhill was a 1931 graduate of Texas A & M, receiving a reserve commission. He learned about "work" during the Depression when he commanded a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) company in Texas.

(Are you listening, Frank Weiler?)

He then entered active Army duty in 1939 and in 1941 transferred to the Air Corps at McChord Field, WA. Two years later he was called by Col. Hunter as 398th ground exec. He moved with the group from Blythe, CA, to Geiger Field, Spokane, WA, Ephrata, WA and finally to Rapid City, SD.

In April, 1944, under Berryhill's command, the ground echelon entrained from Rapid City to Camp Myles Standish, MA. On April 7th, the contingent boarded the USS Wakefield bound for Liverpool, England, arriving on April 21st. The next day they set foot on Station 131, there to greet the Air Echelon commanded by Col. Hunter.



**COL. EARL BERRYHILL**

At Nuthampstead, Col. Berryhill functioned much like a city manager, dealing not only with the station troops, but also with the community at large and the civilian personnel working on the base.

Men like Chaplain James Duvall, Special Services Officer Bill Holmes, Red Cross agent Walter Duke, Intelligence Officer Matthew Meyer, Finance Officer Nathan Turen, MP Officer Frank Guiner and Station Complement Officer Heywood Braddock numbered among

## 11 Medals For 398th Exec

Always an "officer's officer," Colonel Earl Berryhill concluded his illustrious military career in 1974 with a colorful array of ribbons on his uniform.

No less than 11 medals were accrued by the 398th Bomb Group Ground Executive Officer, topped by the Legion of Merit, the third highest award given by America's armed forces.

Berryhill, now 87 years of age, earned the following decorations –

- Legion of Merit*
- Commendation Medal, Army*
- Commendation Medal, Air Force*
- American Defense Medal*
- European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal*
- American Campaign Medal*
- World War II Victory Medal*
- National Defense Medal*
- Korean Services Medal*
- Armed Forces Reserve Medal*
- United Nation Korea Medal*

Berryhill's frequent contacts.

And, the group's Sergeant Major, Ed Pennylegion.

Now and again, Berryhill would be called in to deal with an errant airman, such as the unnamed officer who drove his Jeep through the front door of the Officer's Club.

And it was Berryhill's trucks who were waiting at Royston to pick up the late arrivals from London, sometimes just in time for mission briefing the next morning.

Following the inactivation of the 398th at Drew Field, FL, Berryhill remained as Commandant of Troops. Subsequently he moved on to Biggs Field, TX.; to the Pentagon; Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, VA; and Warren AFB, WY.

In 1952 he served at Clark AFB, Philippines; and in Manila as Commander of the US Military Port.

He retired as a permanent Colonel in 1952 following stints as professor of Air Science at Lehigh University and Programs Officer at the Air University. He holds Bachelor of Science, Master of Arts and Doctor of Education degrees.

From 1965 to 1974 he was on the faculty of the Citadel, the military college at Charleston, SC.

Charleston holds a prominent place in Berryhill's past. Not only because of his Citadel service, but his great-grandfather was a captain in the South Carolina militia, serving under the legendary Swamp Fox, Col. Francis Marion in the defense of Charleston.

## Berryhill Returns To The Citadel

You may be sure that Col. Berryhill will be in attendance at the Citadel parade Friday, October 13, in Charleston.

Having spent nine years at the military school as an associate professor, Berryhill will be returning to Charleston for the first time, this time in the accompany of children and grandchildren.

The parade is included in the Charles Town Landing/Citadel tour scheduled for 1:10 to 5 PM. Cost of the tour is \$17.00.

## Dues For The West

Members living in the far western states get the honor of paying their 1995 dues this quarter. Dues are still \$5.00, with opportunities to add contributions to the Memorial Fund and FLAK NEWS.

Dues inserts should be in place for members living in Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Idaho, Colorado, Wyoming, Hawaii and Alaska.



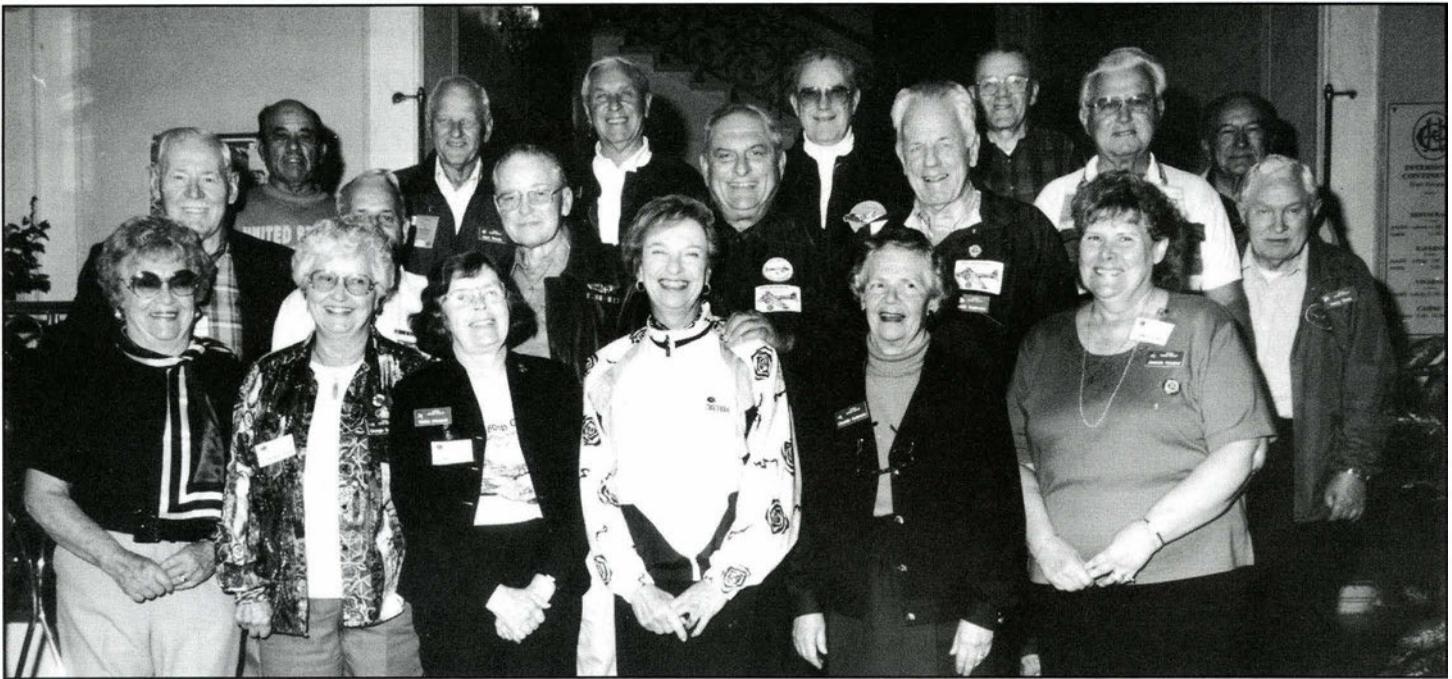
**THE 398TH BOMB GROUP** was the only Air Force group represented at the 50th Anniversary VE Liberation celebrations in Pilsen, Czech Republic. Eight of the 13 veterans marched in the Republiky Square parade, amid cheers from the citizens. Left to right, front row, are Mark Woods, Arnie Schneider, Daniel Leyva and Len Streitfield. In the second row are Harry Hoelzel, Bob Howard, Keith Anderson and Lewis Sullivan. Other veterans in the party included Charles Hough, Al Bischoff, Allen Ostrom, Harry Gray and Elliot Novek. Leyva wore his WW II uniform and carried the 398th group commander's flag.



**BOB AND HELEN HOWARD** display the WW II uniform Bob presented to the members of the SLET group who are active in recording the history of the air war over Czechoslovakia (long before any of the eight members were born). The SLET members have researched over 300 Allied air crash sites in what is now the Czech Republic. Bob & Helen have been American Legion members for 50 years. Helen was a WAVE in WW II.



**HARRY GRAY**, whose 602 Ferguson crew was shot down on the Last Mission over Pilsen 50 years ago, presented an engraved plaque to Litice Mayor Josef Vesely, bearing the names of the crew members who were killed. The plaque was given by Gray and the surviving crew members, Harry Mazer, Bill O'Malley and John Schmid. The ceremony at Litice was attended by America's assistant ambassador to the Czech Republic, Leonardo Williams, Air Force Embassy attache Col. George Dunkelberg and some 200 local residents and officials.



THE HOTEL CONTINENTAL lobby in Pilsen became a photo studio last May when a local photographer came by to snap pictures of the visiting members of the 398th Bomb Group. Left to right, front row, are Olive Bischoff, Georgie Sullivan, Helen Howard, Connie Novek, Chuckie Anderson and Jeannie Hoelzel. Middle row are Al Bischoff, Lewis Sullivan (partly

hidden), Bob Howard, Elliot Novek, Keith Anderson, Harry Hoelzel and Harry Gray. Back row are Daniel Leyva, Mark Woods, Charles Hough, Len Streitfeld, Allen Ostrom and Arnie Schneider. Not pictured are Barbara Fish, tour director and Elaine Tyler of the Friends of the 398th, Nuthampstead. (Photo by Petr Eret, Pilzinsky Vecernik).

## U.S., Allied Veterans Receive Big Welcome

*Continued from Page 1*

Thus, 21 members signed on for the 10-day tour. There were 13 airmen, eight of whom had been on the Last Mission. Plus six wives as well as tour consultant Barbara Fish and English Friends secretary, Elaine Tyler, who flew over from Nuthampstead.

The men included Keith Anderson, Al Bischoff, Harry Gray, Harry Hoelzel, Charles Hough, Bob Howard, Daniel Leyva, Elliot Novek, Arnie Schneider, Len Streitfeld, Lewis Sullivan, Mark Woods, and tour leader Allen Ostrom.

Each veteran was received by Pilsen Lord Mayor Zdenek Prosek at a huge ceremony at "Beseda" and presented with a personal silver medal dedicated to the 50th anniversary of the Liberation of Western Bohemia. And a certificate with his name inscribed.

Just the beginning of a non-stop series of celebration events.

Some 10,000 Czechs were on hand for the big event at "Republiky Square." There to hear the mayor again, Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus, American UN Representative Madeleine Albright, Czech Ambassador Adrian Basora and other guests on the reviewing stand called the "tribune."

Marching like they probably never did in the Air Force were eight from the 398th. The "troop" was led by Leyva, who came to Pilsen with his complete WW II uniform down to the last minute detail.

They marched past the "tribune" in the accompany of other veterans and to the acclaim of the spectators who cheered, applauded, photographed, cried and appealed for autographs from the overwhelmed veterans. Many of whom marched with tear-stained faces.

Elliot and Connie Novek had the honor of presenting the 398th wreath at the new "Thank You, America" memorial. The two, giant granite pillars, according to Mayor Prosek, represented a promise made 50 years ago to the Americans, but delayed a half-century by the Communist occupation.

Madeleine Albright said – "I will return to the United States and tell President Clinton what you, our Czech friends, have done here."

Harry Gray came to neighboring Litice to see the memorial dedicated to members of his Ferguson crew who were killed on The Last Mission. He and the three other crew members who survived gave a plaque to Mayor Josef Vesely honoring the men who died.

Assistant Ambassador Leonardo Williams and Air Attache Col. George Dunkelberg of the Prague Embassy presented a wreath at the Litice Memorial.

In Prague, "the most beautiful city in Europe," Czech citizens and visitors lined a parade route for over a mile in length to cheer and applaud the marching veterans. The men of the 398th

responded with waves, hand shakes, kisses ... and tears. Leyva again carried Col. Frank P. Hunter's commander's flag, which has since been returned to Air Force archives at Wright-Patterson AFB.

After the parade, a scheduled veterans' meeting with Czech Republic President Vaclav Havel. That proved to be quite exciting (see Page 6).

Connie Novek, who's heritage is Czech, visited the old Pinkus Synagogue in Prague. After WW II the names of 78,000 Czechs killed by the Nazis were inscribed on a wall, only to be painted out by the incoming Communists.

Today, those names are being restored to the wall. And Connie, after much looking, did find the names of her maternal grandparents and sisters. Victims of the Holocaust.

When it was all over, and time to depart for two days of rest in Copenhagen before flying home, these were the last words heard by the slightly overwhelmed men and women of the 398th –

"Please come back again next year!"

### New Roster Coming

A new 398th Bomb Group membership roster has been approved for publication by President Bill Comstock and the Board. The new book should be available by late September.

*"I bow in homage before the memory of the thousands of participants in that great fight for the salvation of humanity who fell on battlefields, were executed or tortured to death, or passed away before they could see this commemoration day."*  
— VÁCLAV HAVEL.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Addressing you, soldiers of the Allied Armies, members of the Czechoslovak units that fought abroad as well as of the domestic Resistance, our foreign guests and my fellow citizens, I am proud that today – fifty years after our country was freed from Nazi rule – I can, on behalf of the Czech Republic, thank all those to whom we owe the liberation.

My thanks go to all the surviving men and women of many nationalities who took part in the liberation struggles on both the eastern and the western fronts. I thank them for having risked their lives for the restoration of the democratic Czechoslovakia, for the freedom of us all, for the victory of the human race over Nazi violence.

By the same token, my thanks go to all the surviving Czechs, Slovaks and other Czechoslovak citizens, including those of German birth, who joined foreign military forces to fight on the side of the Allies for the liberation of their home country. Furthermore, I thank all the surviving members of the domestic Resistance. Acting for all their fellow citizens and in their name, they saved the honour of our nation, and it was also due to the important contribution which they made to the liberation struggle that our state became a member of the victorious coalition.

I bow in homage before the memory of the thousands of participants in that great fight for the salvation of humanity who fell on battlefields, were executed or tortured to death, or passed away before they could see this commemoration day.

The present generations owe a debt of gratitude to them all, the living as well as those who are not with us any more, because all of them stood up, with or without arms, to combat an evil that sought to subjugate the entire civilized world.

It was not their fault that the fight would not have taken such a heavy toll if the international community had not made concessions to Nazism for so long and had resisted it earlier. Nor was it their fault that Stalin was no true military leader and that he sacrificed on the eastern front uselessly and wantonly millions of troops who could have survived had the operations been conducted more skillfully. And it was not their fault either that the freedom we finally won was half-baked and did not last. So after the end of World War II our country was again subjected to a totalitarian regime, this time to one of the Communist type, and more than forty endless years had to pass before we succeeded in shaking it off and became truly free.

Today, we are commemorating V-E Day at a time when we are, at last, genuinely free, in every way and, as I firmly believe, forever.

Everyone who fought against Nazism as well as everyone who opposed Communism made a contribution to this accomplishment,

Address by

**Václav Havel**

**President of the  
Czech Republic**

**At the World War II  
Veterans and Resistance  
Fighters' Assembly  
Marking the  
50th Anniversary  
of V-E Day**

**Third Courtyard, Prague Castle  
8 May 1995**

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## **A Day To Remember**

The 398th Bomb Group, the only American Air Force delegation at the 50th Anniversary of VE-Day held in the Czech Republic, was in Prague to see and hear President Havel's speech.

But it almost didn't happen.

The president spoke, but only after a delay of almost an hour due to a rain-wind-hail-lightning-thunder storm that wreaked havoc among the 5,000 courtyard spectators that included not only American veterans but dignitaries from around the world.

Ambassadors, generals, political leaders, charge'd' affairs and ladies in their finery were routed by the storm, which also scattered the orchestra and wiped out the entire program but for the president's speech.

"I wish to thank each of you who were brave enough to stay and hear me."

And he delivered a great speech.

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not only in the form of the tangible results of their fight but also through something that goes beyond that, something that cannot be confined to the history books alone: the moral example which they set for us and for our successors. It is first and foremost thanks to all those who fought against evil in different periods of modern history that we understand today better than ever before that evil must be resisted consistently and from the very beginning, and that there are moments when personal interests have to be forgone for the sake of a brighter future of the community.

If, as a nation, we want to have backbone, to preserve our honour and to be able to respect ourselves, we must never forget the heroism shown by our liberators as well as by our ancestors in resisting violence. At the same time, however, our nation must acknowledge the depth of the failure of those of its members, many as they were, who remained passive in the face of evil or even abetted it.

We should never cease to feel shame at the indifference with which a great part of our population stood by and watched how disgracefully the Communist regime, in the name of us all and of our country, treated the heroes and the victims of World War II. Those who did more than anyone else for our liberty were among the first to be persecuted. This is what I consider one of the biggest crimes of Communism, one through which Communism most clearly revealed its true nature: the new oppressors, proceeding to stifle freedom again, dealt first with those who had proved that they treasured freedom before all else.

Therefore, I avail myself of this moment of celebration to apologize on behalf of our national community to all those who during World War II saved its honour and helped restore its liberty for the inaction toward the persecution which they suffered after the war.

The cringing caution which many of us were so good at showing both after Munich and during the Nazi occupation and later under Communism must never again be our national programme. We have to build on something else: on love for freedom and justice, on respect for human dignity, and on the ability to prove the validity of these feelings, if need be, by concrete deeds. In other words, the values which we need now are the very qualities which were demonstrated by all the men and women to whom we give our thanks today and whose memory we honour.

One more thing has to be said today: while World War II ended with a victory of the Allies over Germany, in the years that followed Germany itself has accomplished a victory over Germany as the new Germany triumphed over the old one. Today's Germany, having dissociated itself long ago from its nationalist and expansionist past, is an important component of the democratic and increasingly united Europe, and has become the Germany which brave German antifascists longed for.

I therefore avail myself of this occasion also to appeal to all my fellow citizens not to give in to the anti-German sentiments which certain enemies of a peaceful and democratic Europe would wish to foment, but to find in themselves the courage to condemn as well all the injustices and cruelties which many of us once perpetrated when taking revenge on Germans for the pernicious work of Nazism.

Nazism and Nazi Germany receded into the past long ago. What has not receded and must never be allowed to recede is the valour of the men and women who resisted Nazism and the memory of those who on the various battlefields of World War II continued to fight the battle which the human race has been waging since time immemorial against the evil it breeds and to which it has so often succumbed.

World War II Veterans and Resistance Fighters,

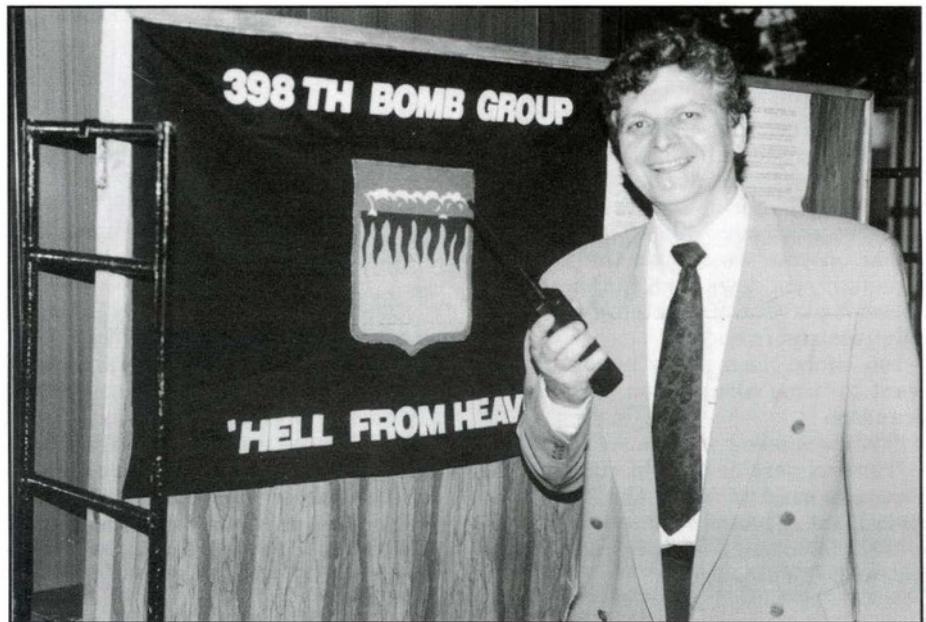
Never again shall we betray your legacy.



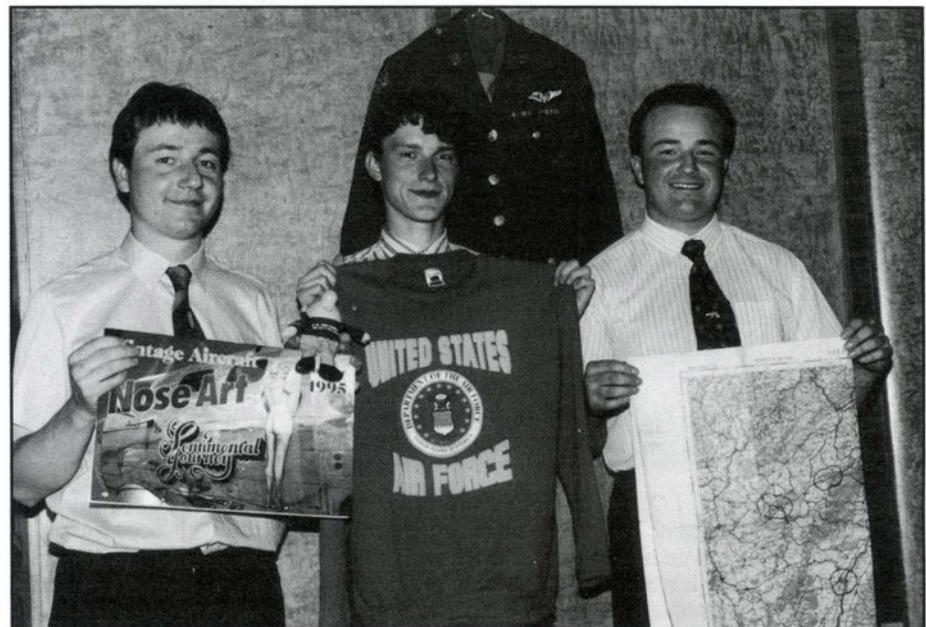
THESE TWO GIANT granite pillars represent the new "Thank You America" memorial which was dedicated during the 50th Anniversary of VE Day celebrations last May in Pilsen. The 398th Bomb Group was invited to share in the dedication. Elliot and Connie Novek presented a colorful wreath on behalf of the only Air Force group represented at the Czech Republic ceremonies.



MIROSLAV RABOCH was the director of the "Nadace 700 mesta Plzne" celebrations held last May in Pilsen, Czech Republic. He coordinated the entire festival program, including a fireworks display set to the music of Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony. He still found time to come to the Veterans Center and admire the special 398th Bomb Group flag. He is really a scientist, but lent his talents to the Czech celebrations.

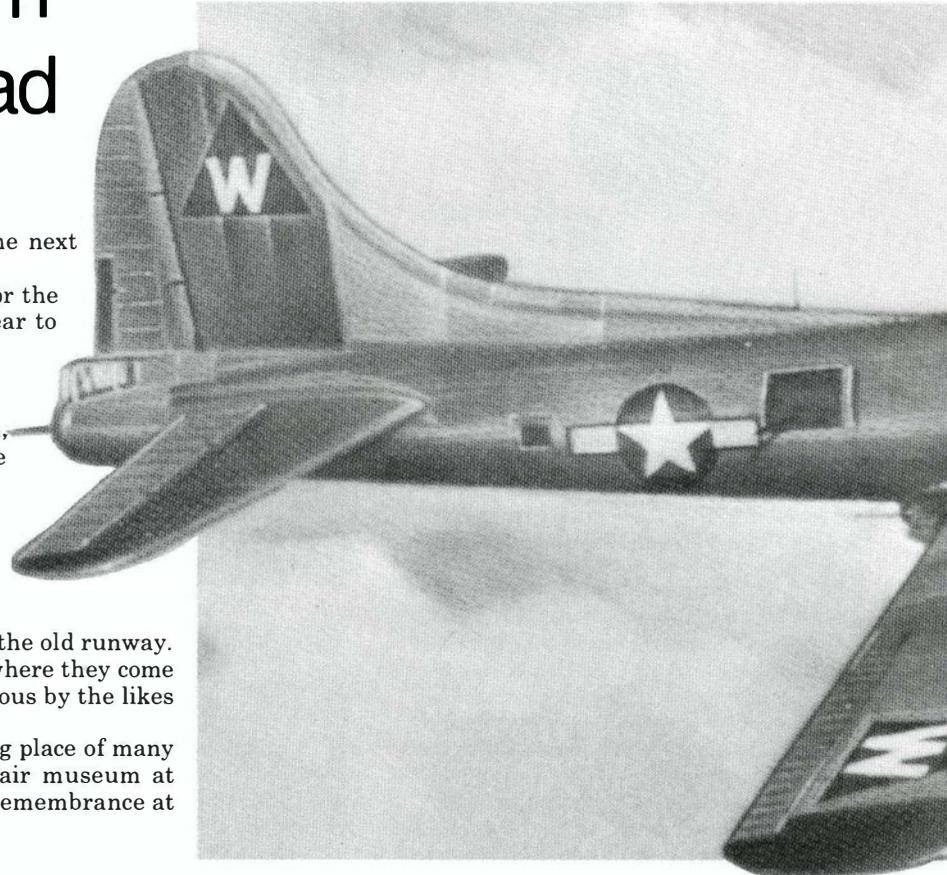


THREE MEMBERS of the Czech SLET group from Pilsen display some of the many gifts given them by members of the 398th Bomb Group tour party on their visit to the Czech Republic last May. Left to right are Jaromir Kohout, Kamil Vik and Martin Kohout. The other five members of the group, who search out WW II air crash sites, were unable to attend the special banquet given in their honor. The others are Jindrich Spearl, Lubos Mokriz, Radek Kuchera, Jaromir Kveton and Michal Pokorny.



# Nostalgic Return To Nuthampstead

## June 9-25, 1996



No, it is NOT too early to begin planning for the next Return To Nuthampstead!

Now is the time to circle the tour dates and ... for the ladies ... to think about the "just right" hat to wear to the House of Lords.

Mark it now – June 9-25, 1996.

Or, for a shortened version – June 9-19.

Station 131, the "Friends of the 398th", London, the Woodman Inn, Royston, Barkway and Cambridge are all on the itinerary for the June, 1996 tour.

And so much more, including a special invite from Lord Richard Long CBE, to visit the House of Lords at Westminster.

And so much more, like "home stays" with the folks who live in and around Nuthampstead.

And so much more, like small plane flights from the old runway.

And so much more, like a great 40's barn dance where they come in WW II uniforms to dance to the tunes made famous by the likes of Glenn Miller.

And so much more, like visits to Madingly, resting place of many 398th comrades killed in battle; the great RAF air museum at Hendon and Duxford; and, of course, a Service of Remembrance at the 398th Memorial near the Woodman Inn.

And so much more, like visiting London either on your own or on the tour bus especially sent down from Nuthampstead to escort the returning veterans, spouses, relatives and friends.

Yes, more than a few members will want to bring along a son, a daughter, grandson.

"This is where I was stationed."

"Here is part of the old runway; the rest was used to build the Motorway from London."

"This is where I lived in that Nissen hut with the other guys."

"There is the farm where Ralph Hall used to go to steal milk."

Those remembrances and more will be included in the "short" tour, or the first 10 days. The "regular" tour is scheduled for 17 days, and will include visits to York and Norwich, both regions steeped in British history. We'll be visiting places in England previously seen only from the air on the way to deliver 500 pounds across the Channel.



**LORD RICHARD LONG, CBE, and his wife, Lady Helen, will be welcoming members of the 398th Bomb Group tour party when they visit the House of Lords in London in June of 1996. The Longs make their home near Nuthampstead. Viscount Long functions as the "party whip" in the House of Lords.**

## A London Welcome



# PRINT AVAILABLE

*THIS GREAT charcoal drawing of a B-17G was created by James Curtis of Dayton, Oregon. It is offered as a contrast to the 398th mode of travel to England back in 1944 as compared to the United Air Lines' Boeing 777 service that will be offered to members going on the 1996 England Tour. A 12x18 matte photographic reproduction of this picture is being offered for \$20.00 each, postage paid. Very suitable for framing. Send your order to Glenn Curtis, Canon City, CO 81212. James Curtis is a UAL instructor pilot on the 747's, 767's and 777's. His father, Glenn, was a pilot in the 601st Squadron.*

## Tour Info

Information on the 1996 England Tour may be obtained Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM, Pacific Coast time, by calling toll free 1-800-423-5454.

Ask for Barbara Fish, a Certified Travel Consultant with Travel House, Inc., 5042 Roosevelt Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105.

Barbara is arranging all the airline transportation via scheduled United Air Lines. Some of the flights may be on the new Boeing 777, depending on UAL's scheduling program. Gateway cities will include Newark, Washington DC, Los Angeles, Dallas/Fort Worth, Chicago and Seattle.

Flights to the gateway cities also may be arranged with Travel House.

Allen Ostrom of the 398th will be the tour coordinator.

See the special Travel House insert for prices on both the "regular" and "short" tours.



## 1996 ENGLAND TOUR ITINERARY

**Sunday, June 9** – Depart U.S. for London via scheduled United Air Lines.

**Monday, June 10** – Arrive at Heathrow Airport. Pass through customs, then board coach for Kenilworth Hotel, downtown London. Time for a "wee nap" or some shopping before Welcome Dinner at the hotel.

**Tuesday, June 11** – A half-day scheduled London tour and a half-day on your own for shopping, personal sightseeing or re-visiting those old haunts in Picadilly Circus. Dinner at the hotel.

**Wednesday, June 12** – A few morning hours on your own, but back to the hotel for a special "Pub Lunch" and briefing for the afternoon activities. These will include a stop at Whitehall, where Winston Churchill held forth in the Cabinet War Room. Then on to Westminster and a tour of the House of Lords. And, possibly, tea on the Terrace overlooking the Thames River. (Jacket and tie, men; pretty hats, ladies).

**Thursday, June 13** – Bid goodbye to London and head for Nuthampstead and Station 131. But first, a stop at the RAF Museum at Hendon and a lunch/shopping visit at Tesco's in Cheshunt. Arrive in Barkway Hall to meet our "home stay" hosts for the five-day visit.

**Friday, June 14** – Today we lay a wreath at Madingley in memory of the 398th men who were killed in action. Also a visit to Duxford for a look-see at the Mary Alice, the museum's B-17 and the great exhibit of WW II warplanes. Some may wish to visit Cambridge before getting ready

for the 40's dance at Anstey this evening. Fish & Chips dinner, naturally.

**Saturday, June 15** – Start the day at Tony & Greta Barker's for morning coffee, tea and cakes. Then to the Memorial and a Service of Remembrance. Always an impressive and emotional ceremony. In the evening a dinner honoring the officers of the "Friends of the 398th."

**Sunday, June 16** – Morning service at St. George's Church, Anstey, which one of our planes just missed when it crashed with the loss of 10 lives. Summer drinks on the lawn of Anstey Hall, then the day is free to visit with your hosts or to take in other sights on your own.

**Monday, June 17** – A good day for a game of golf, a special visit to Cambridge, Saffron Walden, Barkway, Royston or other old haunts of a half-century ago. Then get ready for a Hog Roast at a 17th century barn at Meesden Bury.

**Tuesday, June 18** – The "short tour" members return to London this morning for their flights home to the USA. The "regular tour" members will board their coach and continue north to "Yorkshire" for a three-day visit to the capitol of Northern Britain, York. We'll be at the Abbey Park Hotel. Dinner at the hotel.

**Wednesday, June 19** – All day to visit the many sights in York, like the National Railway Museum, the Jorvik Centre, or exploring beneath the Minster, where life in the old 1st century Roman city is exposed. Dinner at the hotel.

**Thursday, June 20** – A tour of the famous Yorkshire Dales, made famous by the television series, "All Creatures Great & Small." Enjoy the countryside, stone walls, winding roads, the sheep and villages. This is "Yorkshire England." Dinner at the hotel.

**Friday, June 21** – Off to another bit of England, the East Anglia area, east of Hertfordshire. We'll be staying at the regional center of Norwich, the Maids Head Hotel. Before arriving, we'll visit the magnificent Ely Cathedral. And then we'll pass through the Fens before entering Norwich. Dinner at the hotel.

**Saturday, June 22** – Lots of optional things to do today, including a visit to the Norwich Castle and Market. For others, perhaps a ride in a hot air balloon. Dinner (for the survivors) at the hotel.

**Sunday, June 23** – A full day to explore the area of Norfolk, like Cromer, the "Gem of the Norfolk Coast". A swim in the North Sea? Brrr. See the famous Thursford Steam Museum, where all the steam organs still play. Visit the Pier, Felbrigg Hall and Gardens for lunch. Dinner at the hotel.

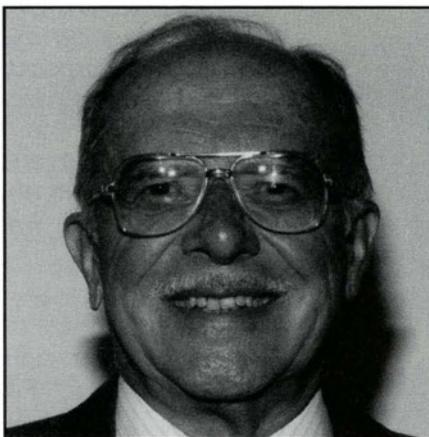
**Monday, June 24** – This area of East Anglia was home to dozens of WW II 8th AF bomber bases, and we'll be visiting one of the old towers that has been refurbished. Then on to the little town of St. Albans, north of London, where we'll have our Farewell Dinner.

**Tuesday, June 25** – Depart Heathrow for flights back to the USA.

# “What Happened to My Comrades?”

## Navigator Finally Comes To The End Of The Trail

BY WILLIAM L. FRANKHOUSER  
Original Navigator, Newman Crew, 603rd



**BILL FRANKHOUSER**

The 398th Bomb Group mission to Merseburg on 2 November 1944 has received notice in prior issues of FLAK NEWS – e.g., July 1991, January 1992, and October 1994. The Campbell (601), Newman (603), and Reed (603) crews were lost. Six crew members were reported subsequently as KIA, including the pilots Campbell and Newman and four others from the Newman crew. All other crew members became POWs.

Campbell initially was buried at an isolated grave in Mulcheln, near Merseburg. When his body was disinterred in 1948, the autopsy report indicated that almost all major bones had been fractured.

What happened to the five persons in the Newman crew who did not become POWs? That question had nagged me for years, especially since I had been a member of this crew when it was assigned to the 398th in July 1944. I had learned also that families of the missing persons had difficulties in getting information about their fates from military authorities, including the Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Office. For example, some life insurance payments were not made promptly because crew members were reported only as MIA.

During my first contact with the 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association in 1988, I asked George Hilliard how to obtain information on these crew members. He gave me several excellent suggestions and I made an inquiry to the National Archives (NA). A prompt reply indicated that the Newman crew was the subject of Missing Air Crew Report (MACR #1057). A copy of that report, and supplemental information from a file of the War Crimes Branch of the JAG Office, were made available.

Unfortunately, information in these files did not extend beyond 31 December 1947, because all investigations of European Theater crimes were terminated as of that date. Also, the files obviously were grossly incomplete and, at best, sketchy in respect to many specific details.

After Germany was reunited, I wondered whether the German Government would provide details on the deaths of these U.S. Airmen. With the help of Senator John Warner of Virginia, a contact was made with the JAG Office and they suggested that an inquiry be made to the German Justice Ministry.

Now, after several years of letter exchanges with three German Ministries, I have at least a general understanding

of what happened to these crew members on 2 November 1944. The report that follows is based both on the prior review of MACR #1057 and other records in the NA and on the subsequent German investigations that were conducted during the period 1991 through 1994. Most of the German information was provided by the center for investigating Nazi (NSDAP) crimes, which is located in Ludwigsburg, and by the local justice department in Magdeburg/Halle, that made on-site investigations.

On the mission of 2 November 1944, the Newman crew was flying as lead of the tailend Charlie element in the 603rd (low) squadron (see pg. 9, FLAK NEWS, January 1992). Crew members for the mission were:

- **Herbert H. Newman, 1st. Lt., pilot: Missing.**
- **Paul G. Deininger, 2nd Lt., co-pilot: POW.**
- **W. Dean Whitaker, 2nd Lt., navigator: POW.**
- **Arnold Money, S Sgt., togglier: POW (since deceased).**
- **Cornelius Harrington, S Sgt., flight engineer: POW (since deceased).**
- **Melvin Cohn, T Sgt., radio operator: Missing.**
- **Anthony J. Perry, S Sgt., ball turret: Missing.**
- **Leroy Kucharski, S Sgt., waist gunner: Missing.**
- **William G. Jones, Sgt., tail turret: Missing.**

As the group formation turned from the target, the Newman plane was hit by 20mm shells from German fighters. The tail section and several other areas of the plane were seriously damaged, and a wing was set on fire. Reports from other planes in the group indicate that Jones, in the tail turret probably was killed during this attack. The crew eventually was ordered to bail out, and survivors

assumed that everyone was able to do so, except for Jones.

Parts of the plane fell into Polleben, a small town near Eisleben, which is northwest of Merseburg. At least some of these crew members landed in fields between Polleben and Schwittersdorf. These landings were observed by Polleben residents, including the NSDAP Ortsgruppenleiter (local leader), Seifert. Next, the four missing crew members were killed by civilians, with involvement of at least four NSDAP members. One of these (Zimmerman) was also Chief-of-Police in Polleben. Reports vary in detail, but probably, the deaths resulted from severe beatings and/or shootings.

When the U.S. 7th Army arrived at Polleben in 1945, a German civilian (Flassfeder, now deceased) and/or Polish forced laborers reported the 1944 murders. During the subsequent investigation the Ortsgruppenleiter confessed and was executed by the Americans. The U.S. records indicate that he was shot by a firing squad. The German investigators report that he probably was stabbed to death and then hauled through town on the hood of a jeep “to serve as an example”. The U.S. Army investigation of further civilian involvements was incomplete when Russian occupation troops moved into the area. Some of the involved persons (Heipe, Kaulman, and Korf) may have been moved to West Germany to stand trial, according to the German investigation. No records of subsequent trials were reported in the N.A. file.

In January 1949, at least two of these accused NSDAP members (Zimmerman and Heuke) were brought to trial by the Russian military. Zimmerman was sentenced to seven years in prison and died while serving that term, at age 68. Heuke was acquitted because witnesses said that “he shot only past the victims.”

The German investigator from Magdeburg, in my judgement, was sincere and persistent in trying to determine everything that happened at Polleben. Over 50 years, memories fade and witnesses die or move away.

So what does all of this mean to me in 1995? I am not certain; perhaps, the simplest answer is that these events at Polleben only corroborate the hackneyed adage, “war is hell”. I do know that the WWII experience with one group of political egomaniacs (the NSDAP) was sufficient for my lifetime. Unfortunately, in spite of this lesson, similar political zealots are operating in many places around our world today.

## Newman Class Was Bound For Nuthampstead



**HERB NEWMAN**

Hidden among the yellowing pages of "The Final Approach," the graduation book of Class 44-A, Stuttgart AAF, Arkansas, is a story about the 398th Bomb Group.

Hardly about flak and fighters, however. These young men were just out of Advance, twin-engine flight school and on their way to Chanute Field and B-17's.

Of the 279 graduates, 38 were assigned to B-17's, and 11 of these found their way to Nuthampstead and the 398th.

Including Herb Newman, whose story and demise at the hands of his captors, was researched and written by Bill Frankhouser.

Newman was new to the Air Force, but had risen to first lieutenant as an officer in the Infantry. His fellow students in Class 44-A were cadets Ray Armor (601), Wally Blackwell (601), Nigil Carter (601), Jack Lee (603), Roy Leukhardt (602), John MacArthur (603), Mark Magnan (603), Robert Campbell (601), William Evans (602), and Robert Brown (601).

Newman and Campbell were killed on November 2, 1944, on a mission to Merseburg. Carter and MacArthur were killed on August 4, 1944 on a mission to Peenemunde.

## "Now I Am Satisfied"

Bill Frankhouser did his 30 missions, mostly as a lead navigator in the 603rd Squadron ... and even survived three B-17 crackups ... so he should have been satisfied to leave World War history to the historians.

But after returning home in 1945, Bill could not escape the mental nagging of not knowing what happened to his original combat crew ... the guys he trained with at Rapid City and flew a few missions with from Station 131.

Frankhouser, a relative rookie combat airman in September of 1944, was nevertheless called up to be the 603rd's lead navigator following heavy squadron losses in the previous weeks.

His original crew was piloted by Herb Newman, a former Infantry officer before acquiring his Air Force wings. The Newman crew was one of 16 crews that joined the 398th in July, 1944. Others on the Newman crew were Paul Deininger, co-pilot; W. Dean Whitaker, bombardier; Cornelius Harrington, engineer-gunner; Norm Bergsma, radio; Steve Kernitz, ball

turret; LeRoy Kucharski, waist; Bernie McKenzie, waist; and Arnold Money, tail gunner.

In the coming weeks, Whitaker became the navigator, Money became the toggler, Melvin Cohn replaced Bergsma as radio operator, Anthony Perry replaced Kernitz in the ball turret, McKenzie was injured in a landing crackup and sent home, and Bill Jones became the tail gunner.

Writing to officials in Germany, his senator from Virginia, the War Crimes branch of Judge Advocate's office, and various Air Force bureaus, Frankhouser compiled some 100 pages of documents which concurred that four of his comrades were indeed murdered after parachuting to safety.

In explaining his long time quest, Frankhouser said –

"I have never had a feeling of animosity toward the German people. But I did feel strongly that those people who killed my friends should be prosecuted for their crimes. I was only seeking justice. Now I am satisfied that justice was done."



**STORMY WEATHER** was the name on the nose of Herb Newman's 603 B-17 when he was shot down over Merseburg. The crew, back row, left to right, are Melvin Cohn, Anthony Perry, Dean Whitaker, Cornelius Harrington and William Jones. Front row, left to right, are Arnold Money, LeRoy Kucharski, Herb Newman and Paul Deininger.

## "A Guard With A Limp And Warm Smile"

BY W. DEAN WHITAKER  
Bombardier/Navigator, Newman Crew

All these years – now over 50 – I can still remember the face of the young, sandy-haired German soldier with a limp who saved my life.

It would be years later when the truth of what happened to our crew members, after we parachuted, would come out. And those thoughts also haunt me.

We can all thank Bill Frankhouser for

pursuing the story of what happened to our Newman crew on November 2, 1944. But within the tragedy of that brutality, there was one who did the right thing. He displayed his humanity.

As I was descending in my chute, I could hear the sounds of gunfire from the ground and bullets whizzed by me. There were two civilians shooting at me but luckily I landed within 50 yards of an English PW camp. There were at least 50 in the camp that witnessed all this.

As I landed, a German soldier came out and made the civilians stop shooting. He was so young looking and had such a friendly face. Later he even gave me tea and crackers.

He handed me my life, and for that I want to thank him. If he's still alive I want him to know I am grateful. The story of those atrocities should be told. They are part of history.

But so is the story of a German guard with a limp and a warm smile.

# By-Laws Of The 398th Bomb Group (H) Memorial Association, Inc.

Proposed to the Membership, October 11-14, 1995 at Charleston, S.C.

## INDEX OF ARTICLES

TITLE OF ARTICLE	ARTICLE NO.	TITLE OF ARTICLE	ARTICLE NO.
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Meetings/Voting	III	Sustaining/Dissolution	IX
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**ARTICLE I – NAME:** The name of this corporation is the 398th BOMB GROUP (H) MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION, INC. hereinafter referred to as “the 398th”.

**ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP:** Several categories of memberships are permitted as follows:

1. **MEMBER (voting):** Veteran who was on active duty with the 398th during WW II.

2. **ASSOCIATE MEMBER (non-voting until January 1, 1998):** Who is or was a spouse or blood relative of a Member.

3. **AUXILIARY MEMBER (non-voting until January 1, 1998):** Who has no prior formal relationship with the 398th or its personnel but is interested in its heritage and future. These could include Air Force active duty or retired personnel of current or future namesake Air Force organizations.

4. **HONORARY MEMBER (non-voting):** Non-dues paying person appointed by the Board who does not fit the above membership categories but is very supportive of the 398th objectives and activities and would bring credit to the organization.

### **ARTICLE III – MEETINGS/VOTING:**

1. A Membership Meeting of the 398th will be held at regular intervals, normally at the annual reunion. Notice of such meetings will be published in the 398th newsletter as well as other appropriate veterans publications.

2. A majority of the members eligible to vote and in good standing in attendance at the annual reunion shall be required to be present at the Membership Meeting to constitute a quorum and shall conduct the business of the 398th.

3. Each member eligible to vote and in good standing in attendance at the Membership Meeting shall be entitled to one vote.

4. At the Membership Meeting regular voting shall be via voice. For election of Directors and Officers, voting shall be by written ballot, by plurality in descending order.

5. The Membership Meeting order of business shall be as follows:

- Call to order
- Reading of the Minutes of the Preceding Meeting
- Reports of Officers
- Reports of Committees
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

This order may be changed by a majority vote of the members.

6. Commencing January 1, 1998, all Associate and Auxiliary members in good standing will change to the Member category and be eligible to vote on corporation business.

7. All meetings shall be governed by the latest edition of Roberts Rules of Order.

### **ARTICLE IV – BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

1. The business of the 398th shall be managed by a Board of Directors consisting of the five (5) Officers, four (4) elected Directors and the appointed functional chairpersons.

2. Officers and Directors shall be elected for a term of one (1) year at the annual Membership Meeting. Nominees must be present at the meeting and must have been a paid-up member for the preceding 12 months to be eligible for election. Nominations must be acceptable to the nominee.

3. Special meetings and mail votes of the Board of Directors may be called by the President provided each Director is polled.

4. The majority of the Directors attending regular and special meetings are required in each session to form a quorum for conduct of Board business. A majority of Directors in office is required for a quorum in the case of a written proxy vote. Each Director may have one (1) vote.

5. The Board of Directors shall commission a financial audit each year. The Board shall also make such rules and regulations governing its meetings, conduct of business and voting procedure as it may, in its discretion, determine necessary.

**ARTICLE V – OFFICERS:** The officers of the 398th are: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Contact Officer. Also included are four appointed permanent chairpersons for the functions of Group Historian, PX, Memorial Trust Fund and Public Relations including the newsletter and reunion arrangements.

1. **PRESIDENT:** The President shall preside at the meetings of the Board and the membership and subject to the control of the Board, exercise general management over the affairs of the organization with the authority to delegate such responsibility as deemed advisable.

The President will appoint the Group Historian, Memorial Trust Fund manager, PX manager and the Public Relations manager. He will also make other appointments as necessary to carry out the objectives and planned activities as outlined by the Board.

Between scheduled meetings of the corporation, the President will, as necessary, coordinate the business of the corporation and prepare agendas for forthcoming Board and Membership Meetings.

The President will also approve emergency disbursements by the Treasurer.

2. **VICE PRESIDENT:** The Vice President shall provide leadership and direction as required in the absence of the President. The Vice President will also assume and execute duties and assignments made by the President or the Board.

3. **SECRETARY:** The Secretary will maintain the records of the corporation including minutes of Board and Membership Meetings, file certificates required by Federal or State laws, execute duties incident to the office and perform other assignments made by the President or Board.

4. **TREASURER:** The Treasurer will receive all monies of the corporation including dues and contributions as well as PX sales and income from the sale of 398th publications. The position will also require issuing all approved disbursement checks, maintaining accurate records of receipts and expenditures and preparing periodic financial reports for the Board during the year as well as for the annual Membership Meeting. The Treasurer will also provide membership information to other appropriate officers as required. Funds deposited in checking and savings accounts not needed for short term liabilities will be invested conservatively to provide additional income.

5. **CONTACT OFFICER:** This officer will be the primary contact for former 398th veterans regarding membership and other persons or organizations interested in contacting the 398th on any matters pertinent to the corporation. The Contact Officer will respond to the inquiries and forward them to appropriate 398th of-

## Vote On New By-Laws For the 398th Bomb Group (H)

An extremely important piece of 398th business will be voted on at the 1995 Charleston reunion. The new group By-Laws will be proposed for approval by the general membership. The 398th has been able to effectively function with the Articles of Incorporation dated February 20, 1981.

However, with the passage of time our membership make-up is changing such that the Board felt the need to develop a 398th organization sustaining plan with a fall-back dissolution plan if necessary. Members are urged to study the proposed By-Laws as printed here-in and be prepared for discussion and vote at the Group Business Meeting on Thursday, October 12.

Officers for handling. The Contact Officer's name will appear in the 8th Air Force Historical Society and other pertinent veteran organization publications.

**ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES:** Several standing committees or functions are designated by the President to support the administration of 398th business.

1. **GROUP HISTORIAN.** This person collects and maintains the history of the 398th and prepares biographical information on members.

2. **MEMORIAL TRUST FUND.** This fund is separate from the operating monies of the 398th and income from the fund is used primarily for the maintenance of the memorial at former Station 131, Nuthampstead, England. Other additional 398th memorials requiring similar funding could be included. The fund is administered by three (3) trustees appointed by the President with concurrence by the Board. Periodic status reports are provided to the Board.

3. **PUBLIC RELATIONS.** Quarterly publication of "FLAK NEWS", the 398th newsletter, is the primary product of the function. However, it also includes the periodic updating of the membership roster as well as arranging for re-printing the 398th book entitled "Remembrances" as needed for sale to members and others.

4. **REUNION SITE SELECTION.** A five-year plan of reunion sites is maintained and updated annually. Such plans are presented to the Board for approval at the annual meeting by the three (3) member committee.

5. **REUNION PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT.** Based on the site selection choices approved by the Board, the annual reunion arrangements are coordinated including the dates, selection of a local member Chairperson, hotel-motel selection and reservations and program and activity planning.

6. **TOUR PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT.** 398th sponsored tours to England and other locations shall be approved by the Board and coordinated to include dates, agenda, travel and site arrangements.

7. **FINANCIAL AUDIT.** Each year the Audit Committee composed of three members will review the books and records of the Treasurer to insure the 398th is in legal compliance with Internal Revenue Service regulations as well as corporation objectives and procedures. The results of each Audit shall be reported to the President in writing.

8. **PX MANAGER.** Manage PX sales between and during annual reunions.

**ARTICLE VII – DUES:** The dues of the 398th shall be \$5.00 to \$25.00 per year or \$50 to \$100 for life membership. The specific amounts will be approved by the Board. Dues are required of each Member, Associate Member and Auxiliary Member unless waived by the Board.

**ARTICLE VIII – SALARIES:** No salary or monetary compensation shall be paid to any Officer, Board member, committee member or member at large. However, reimbursement can be made to any of the above for out-of-pocket expenses incurred as part of official corporation business. Such reimbursements will be reviewed by the Treasurer and approved by the President. The Board may hire and fix compensation for any employee or consultant determined to be required to conduct the business of the 398th.

### **ARTICLE IX – SUSTAINING/DISSOLUTION PLAN:**

1. **PURPOSE:** To plan for sustaining the 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association and all related activities associated with its existence. Included are membership, reunions, memorial maintenance, member communications, Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws, coordination with "Friends of the 398th" in England; board, officer and committee makeup.

2. **MEMBERSHIP:** Prior to January 1, 1998 several categories of membership will be permitted as follows:

a. **MEMBER:** (Dues paying) Who was on military duty with the 398th B.G. (H) during WW II.

b. **ASSOCIATE MEMBER:** (Dues paying) Who is or was a spouse or blood relative of a member.

c. **AUXILIARY MEMBER:** (Dues paying) Who has no prior formal relationship with the 398th or its personnel but is interested in its heritage and future. These could include current Air Force active duty or retired personnel of the 398th Operations Group or other future namesake Air Force organizations.

d. **HONORARY MEMBER:** (Non-dues paying) A person appointed by the Board who does not fit the above membership categories but is very supportive of 398th objectives and activities and would bring credit to the organization. To date such members have been selected from our English "Friends of the 398th" and designated honorary officers.

3. **VOTING:** Commencing January 1, 1998 Associate and Auxiliary members in good standing will change to the Member category and be eligible to vote on corporation business and hold office and Board positions.

4. **DEPUTY OFFICERS:** Deputy officers will be added from the associate or auxiliary members. These appointments will be made by the President with concurrence of the Board. They will sit at the reunion board meetings as observers but will have no vote until such time as they be elected as officers. However, they may be given assignments by the Board. As these deputy officers may be employed, care will be taken in their selection to assure they can attend 398th annual reunions and contribute to corporation activities and programs. In addition, they should have voluntarily exhibited or expressed an interest in, and desire to sustain the corporation. Some follow-up tracking of the deputies will be required to assure that those selected are indeed meeting 398th objectives.

5. **IDENTIFICATION OF CANDIDATES:** To maintain a pool of candidates, the dues card will identify the three categories of membership: a. Member; b. Associate Member and; c. Auxiliary Member, with a brief description of each. In addition, articles will be run in the FLAK NEWS periodically soliciting volunteers from the Associate and Auxiliary membership ranks. Such volunteers will be the primary source of candidates for deputy appointments. Lifetime Members will be asked to respond with a dues card and identify which membership category is appropriate. A profile questionnaire will then be sent to each volunteering member asking for appropriate information to aid the selection process.

### **DISSOLUTION PLAN**

However, if in the future it appears that the 398th cannot continue as an active organization the Board will take dissolution actions as provided by law and these By-laws.

1. After all outstanding liabilities are satisfied, the remaining assets, except the Memorial Trust Fund, will be assigned to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum at Savannah, Georgia or other appropriate veteran's organization qualified under the then current Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code or any other corresponding provision of a future United States Internal Revenue Law.

2. Per written agreement, the Memorial Trust Fund and Trustee responsibilities along with the Nuthampstead memorial property Deed will be transferred to the U.S. American Battle Monuments Commission. The Commission will draw on the fund income and arrange for 398th perpetual memorial maintenance directly with a Nuthampstead, England maintenance contractor. The Commission will also administer Memorial insurance.

22 April 1995

24 April 1995

To The Men and Women  
of the City of Plzen, Czech Republic  
and the  
398th Bomb Group Memorial  
Association

On behalf of the men and women of the United States Air Force, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to salute each of you as you gather to celebrate the 50th anniversary of D-Day and Plzens' 700th birthday. I am also proud to greet the members of the 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association who participated in the 25 April 1945 mission to Plzen.

The 398th's legend spans an exciting time in our two Nations' histories. From May 1944 to September 1945, the 398th Bombardment Group played a crucial role in the air battles of World War II. Flying the B-17, members of your group participated bravely in such crucial campaigns as the Air Offensive, Europe; Normandy; Northern France; Rhineland; Ardennes-Alsace and throughout the European-African-Middle Eastern Theater.

As you commemorate the 50th anniversary of your air battle at Plzen, it is important to note that the key to victory is not just aircraft but the dedication, skill and courage of those who fly and maintain them.

I have been impressed by the outstanding endeavor of many of the citizens of Plzen to honor the brave crews who participated in this final mission. Your values and the honor you are bestowing upon former members of the United States Air Force and your show of gratitude and appreciation for their efforts are truly "People to People" initiatives which help to create a better world for all of us.

I congratulate all of you, including those who are present only in spirit, for such gallant service in defense of our Nations and the cause of freedom. Your dedication and commitment to excellence has won the 398th Bombardment Group, City of Plzen, and the Czech Republic an important place in aviation history. I send my best wishes for a most memorable reunion and every continued success.

RONALD R. FOGLEMAN  
General, USAF  
Chief of Staff

**"I have sworn upon the altar of God, eternal hostility toward every form of tyranny over the mind of man."**

— THOMAS JEFFERSON

From the Private Secretary  
To Prime Minister John Major

Elaine Tyler  
Secretary, "Friends of the 398th"  
Nuthampstead, England

Dear Elaine:

The Prime Minister was interested to receive your letter of 14 April about your visit, with Veterans of the US 398th Bomb Group, to Pilzen and Prague on 5 May.

This will indeed be a memorable occasion. The Prime Minister has asked me to pass to you the following message:

*I send my best wishes both to the representatives of the United States 398th Bomb Group, and to their Czech hosts in Prague and Pilzen, as you join together to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the end of the war that tore Europe cruelly asunder.*

*Fifty years later, both sides come together in much happier circumstances. Europe has seen many changes in the last 50 years. The hope of a more peaceful world burns as brightly now as it did 50 years ago. It is essential that all our children should carry that hope forward to their own generations.*

*To all of you gathered here today, whether you have travelled from the United States of America, from my own country or from your own homes just a few miles away, I send warm greeting to you all. Let us resolve that the deep commitment to reconciliation which has brought you here today will continue to guide all our countries in the years to come.*

Yours Sincerely,  
EDWARD OAKDEN

## Batavia, NY Site of Warplane Show

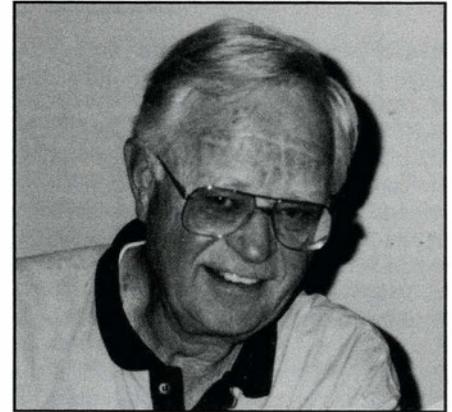
Air show buffs living in the New York state area, particularly those with B-17 ties, will get their kicks on August 19 and 20, 1995 when The National Warplane Museum stages its 15th annual Wings of Eagles extravaganza.

The event will be held at the Batavia, NY airport, located "sort of" between Buffalo and Rochester, NY.

Over 100 vintage warbirds, including the B-17, Fuddy Duddy, from Geneseo, NY and a British Lancaster, coming from nearby Canada. The two "heavies" represented the major "night and day" bombing team during World War II.

For further information call 716-243-2242.

# Plaque Recalls 398th Stay At Geiger Field



TED JOHNSTON

The 398th Bomb Group, represented by vice-president Ted Johnston of Seattle and Dana Maryott of Spokane, took part in a ceremony in Spokane, Washington, May 17, 1995, recalling the stationing of 11 B-17 bomb groups at Geiger Field during World War II.

In addition to the 398th, the old Army Air Corps field also was home to the 34th, 95th, 301st, 305th, 351st, 385th, 390th, 401st, 452nd and 457th during the years 1942-43.

The specially-created plaque, bearing the names of these bomb groups, all of whom saw service with the 8th Air Force in England, was presented to the community of Spokane by the Washington Chapter, 8AFHS, Gordon Wilkinson, president.

Most of the groups moved on to other stations for additional training. The 398th went to Ephrata, WA, for a brief time and then on to Rapid City, South Dakota, before deploying to England in April, 1944.

Members of the 398th who will be flying to Spokane for the annual reunion in July, 1997, will be able to see the plaque in the Freedom Shrine of the airport terminal, now known as Spokane International Airport.

## 398th Not At Ephrata?

A plaque commemorating the training of B-17 bomb groups at the Army Air Corps Base at Ephrata, Washington, in 1943 was presented to the City of Ephrata on June 7, by the Washington State Chapter of the 8th Air Force Historical Society.

The 398th was represented by Allen Ostrom, FLAK NEWS editor, who noted that the "Hell From Heaven" group of Colonel Frank P. Hunter, Jr., had been inadvertently left off the plaque. A special 398th plaque will be presented at a later date, according to chapter president Gordon Wilkinson.

# BRIEF-things

The letter concluded – “Thanks for tracking me down back in 1987.” ... words from **Larry deLancey**, recipient of the Silver Star for bringing home his nose-blown B-17 from Cologne; now given 6-12 months by his cancer physicians ... our bomber crews have gotten “lots of ink” the past year or two ... big story from Charlotte, NC on **Sam Palant’s** adventure on the RDX mission; and one on the **Bill Costanzo** crew who gathered last year in Avon Park, FL; **Gertrude Neff** and her two daughters reunited in Lakeland, FL so they could view the Aluminum Overcast; **Wesley Mudge** was the subject of a full color display in Hemet, CA on his D-Day mission ... he was only 20 years old, but the 398th tour guide in Pilsen, **David Frous**, had a head-full of knowledge; he is a student at the local university, but also teaches English and Spanish; his “co-guide,” **Marcela Radova**, also was super bright (and very pretty) ... the Skoda plants in the Czech Republic employ 90,000 workers (more than Boeing) ... the Army presence (300 men and women) at the Czech ceremonies came from stations in Germany, and all were hand-picked, including a two-star general ... two major “tour attractions” in the Czech Republic are Karlovy Vary and Marianske Lazne, world famous Spa towns; they became but “incidental” in light of the Liberation ceremonies in Pilsen ... thanks to the members who updated their address labels, several even advising of members who have passed on ... **Fred Gonzales** uses a colorful 398/603 letterhead, complete with his Internet E-mail number: fgonz@nwu.edu; he uses the Internet to correspond with his German friends in the near Neuss ... members of the **John McCormick** crew who perished in that mid-air collision on the way to Berlin were remembered with \$100 donations to the Memory Fund by the brother of the plane’s engineer-gunner, Marvin Gooden, and the sister of the ball turret gunner, Renaldo Garcia ... **Jim Dollar** of the 602nd advises that he finished his tour of 31 missions on July 29, 1944, same as **Don Van Dyke** of the 600th; however, **Dollar** says his engineer, **John Ely**, completed his tour a few days prior to this date ... no “field phones” for our modern military at the Pilsen/Prague festivities; communication was by cellular phone and it seemed that every officer and non-com had one as they “escorted” the WW II vets at the various events (the generals had theirs carried by aides) ... the Pilsen tour party was greeted at the Prague airport by newsmen and television cameramen (and cases of champagne furnished by the Czech airline) ... owners of some of the WW II vehicles came from far and near for the Pilsen/Prague parades, one Jeep driver admitting he drove for three days from Belgium for the events; others came from Austria, France, Holland and Czech Republic ... the director of the Skoda museum, **Vladislav Kratky**, admitted he was in a bomb shelter when the 398th came over on April 25, 1945, “praying for my life” ... the mock battle of the Pilsen liberation staged around the town square in the presence of 10,000 Czechs, was more than realistic with 50 caliber and 30 caliber small arms and 40mm anti-aircraft shells popping all around the square (no **George**, they were all blanks this time) ... talk about a thrill on the fast track; **Roy Test**, **John Ryan’s** 602 co-pilot, was honored by the Baldwin Park (CA) police with a right-seat flight aboard the city’s Robinson R-22 “Copper-Chopper” on the 50th anniversary of VE Day (catch any Flak, **Roy**) ... the WW II control tower at Wright-Patterson AFB is now almost completed, and 398th folks will be pleased to know that a glossy photo of the Station 131 tower is now in their hands (per 8th AF News request) ... the Aluminum Overcast will remain “in the barn” at Oshkosh, WI until after the annual Fly-In July 27–August 3; a fall/winter schedule will be published in the October FLAK NEWS ... anyone out there have an “anecdote” about the 398th when stationed at Blythe, Orlando, Spokane and Ephrata? ... more on the Aluminum Overcast: last year “our” B-17 took up 1,045 paying customers (including 39 from the 398th in Tucson) and 450 so far in 1995.

# 398th Bomb Group PX

	Qty.	Enter Total Cost
Cap - Fits All Sizes	_____	\$8.00 Each _____
(Specify Squadron or Group)		
Jackets - Light Blue, Navy Blue	_____	\$25.00 Each _____
(S, M, L, XL, B-17 On Front)		
T-Shirts - Red, White, Navy Blue	_____	\$10.00 Each _____
(S, M, L, XL, XXL, B-17 On Front)		
T-Shirts - White, Pink, Blue	_____	\$8.00 Each _____
(Children Sizes 2-4, 6-8, 10-12, 14-16)		
Sweat Shirts - Red, White, Navy Blue	_____	\$15.00 Each _____
(S, M, L, XL, XXL, B-17 On Front)		
Sweat Shirts - White, Light Blue	_____	\$10.00 Each _____
(Children Sizes M & L, B-17 On Front)		
Squadron Patches - Specify Squadron	_____	\$7.00 Each _____
Group Patch - “Hell From Heaven”	_____	\$6.00 Each _____
Jacket Patch - Rectangle B-17	_____	\$4.00 Each _____
Squadron Lapel Pins - Specify Squadron	_____	\$5.00 Each _____
Group Lapel Pin - Special Design	_____	\$6.00 Each _____
Bumper Sticker - 398th Bomb Group	_____	\$1.00 Each _____
Small Canvas Tote Bag - Group Logo	_____	\$4.00 Each _____
Sun Visor - White With Group Logo	_____	\$3.00 Each _____
Membership Plaque -	_____	\$25.00 Each _____
(Specify Regular or Life Time)		
Belt Buckle - Group Logo	_____	\$8.00 Each _____
B-17 Lapel Pin - Specify Silver or Gold	_____	\$5.00 Each _____
B-17 Earrings - Specify Silver or Gold	_____	\$9.00 Pair _____
(For Pierced Ears Only)		
Photo (Control Tower) - Station #131	_____	\$2.00 Each _____
Photo (398th Memorial) - Post Card Size	_____	\$2.00 Each _____
Photo (Aluminum Overcast) -	_____	\$5.00 Each _____
(Latest Photo)		
Bolo Ties - Group Logo	_____	\$4.00 Each _____
Golf Towels - Group Logo	_____	\$4.00 Each _____
Neck Tie - American Flag	_____	\$22.00 Each _____
Folding Umbrella - Red With White B-17	_____	\$18.00 Each _____
Beach Towel - White With Black B-17	_____	\$18.00 Each _____
Cost Of Items Ordered		\$ _____
Delivery And Handing Add \$3.00,		\$ _____
or \$4.00 if Order is Over \$20.00.		\$ _____
	Total	\$ _____

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable, in U.S. funds, to the  
 “398th Bomb Group Association PX” c/o:  
 Joe Joseph  
 Defiance, OH 43512-8854

(Please, no telephone orders.)

## Tour Diary Available

A day-by-day diary of the Pilsen Tour has been written by Georgie Sullivan, wife of engineer-turret gunner Lewis Sullivan. The 13-page report represents an excellent document of not only the travel and tour activities, but also tells of the deep emotions felt by the veterans as they engaged in the Liberation Day celebrations.

For information on receiving a copy of the diary contact Georgie at DeWitt, VA 23840-2224.



**ALUMINUM OVERCAST CASTS A SHADOW ON THE ARIZONA DESERT**—*Photo by Wally Blackwell*