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

VOL. 11 NO. 1

FLAK NEWS

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## “Again, I Thank God That I Am Back To Write This”

**“While we were on the bomb run we caught living hell in the Flak barrage. A plane in the high element, some 100 feet in front of us, took a direct hit and exploded in a huge ball of fire. I saw two men blown free. They had on chutes, so they might have survived, but the others surely were killed. A second after the explosion I looked up and saw a fully inflated life raft passing over my head. Then came a landing gear with the wheel spinning. An instant later I looked toward the sun and here came two ME 109’s ...”**

It read like it had been etched in the memory banks of a World War II combat airman. And so it was. Never to be forgotten.

The words were recorded only hours after the event, and they might have sounded more like fiction rather than comments on a just completed 398th Bomb Group combat mission.

It began with these words –

“Again, I thank God that I am back here to write this.”

And then he goes on to tell of encountering fighters “as soon as we got over Germany ... and of seeing seven Fortresses from another group go down ... and the best piece of B-17 flying I ever saw in bringing a Fort out of a dive.”

And still the day’s real drama in his own 602 squadron had not yet unfolded.

The target for the day was Lechfeld near Munich, and the date was July 19, 1944. Writing in his diary after the mission was John Harbauer, engineer-gunner on the Sheldon (Bob) Nelson crew, flying in the slot element of Col. Pete Rooney’s lead squadron. Harbauer and most of the others on his crew were on their 25th mission.

The plane that turned into a fireball was the B-17 piloted by Dallas Hawkins, flying in the high element.

The ultimate demise of that aircraft was photographed by a German civilian,

who caught the front half of the plane tumbling in the air a few hundred feet above the ground. And again after it hit the ground and exploded. All crew members in that section perished. The rear half, carrying the tail gunner to his death, landed nearby. Harbauer thought he saw two crew members blown out, but it was actually only one, the waist gunner, Doyle Borchers.

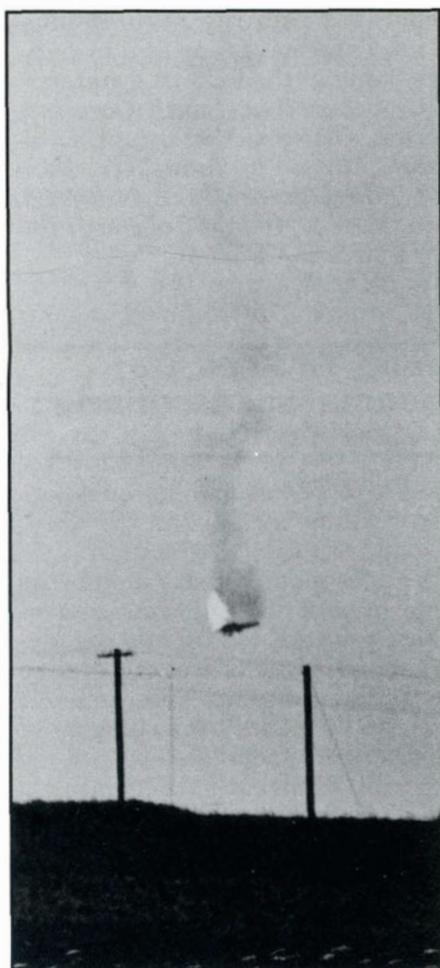
And Borchers is alive and well today, a member of the 398th association and currently in the process of recording his amazing survival from the high-altitude explosion that took the lives of all his comrades.

Borchers parachuted to safety and was able to escape capture for 10 days. He ultimately was found and sent to a Stalag Luft. His story will be told in a forthcoming issue of FLAK NEWS.

Dallas Hawkins had been the co-pilot on the E.D. Scott crew, one of the originals who flew over from Rapid City. On the morning of the July 19 mission, he was pressed into duty as first pilot to replace Leland Zimmerman, grounded temporarily by the flight surgeon.

The regular bombardier, John Cosco, was recovering from a flak wound incurred on the July 8 mission, and was replaced by John Loomis of the Scott crew. The engineer, Charles Schultz, and

*Continued on Page 8*



### Death Of A Fortress

**WHITE FLAMES and black smoke stream from the stricken Hawkins B-17 seconds before hitting the earth. One flak hit tore off a wing and a second split the craft in two. The tail section landed nearby. One crewman, Doyle Borchers, survived. See accompanying story of this dramatic mission.**

*(Photo courtesy “Mighty Eighth War Diary”)*



### Congresswoman Claire Booth Luce and 398th Friends

Congresswoman Claire Booth Luce was among the many VIP's who visited Station 131 during those WW II days. She and others from the US came by on November 28 and 29, 1944 for the purpose of seeing an American bomber group take off on a mission.

Mrs. Luce, as well known for her literary skills as a politician, had the full attention of these four sergeants during a visit to one of the base rec rooms.

The next morning, with the group poised to take off for a mission to Misburg, Mrs. Luce, accompanied by Colonel Hunter in his Jeep, stopped by the Linn Rogers 601 B-17, in this case, "Ugly Duckling."

She asked to see Sergeant Ray Brokaw, a gunner. When Brokaw caught his breath after saluting Col. Hunter and meeting this blonde lady in a fur coat, Luce explained that she had seen his name on the Rogers' loading list and asked to meet him.

"My first husband was George Tuttle Brokaw," she said. "We were divorced in 1929, but I knew your grandparents, Abraham and Sarah Brokaw."

It was a morning to remember for Brokaw, who naturally got the celebrity treatment from his crew, along with a St. Christopher statue gift from Mrs. Luce.

Pastor Raymond Brokaw, of Coleman, MI, is deceased.



### A Great Landing: They Walked Away

So it was not exactly a smooth three-pointer, to say the least. But nine members of the 601st Squadron rode this Fortress down after running out of gas

on a long mission to eastern Germany. See Ed Arbuthnot's story on the next page, "Ignominious End To A Fine Old Lady."

# New 398th By-Laws To Kick In

A major change in the character of the 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association begins this year – 1996.

Acting on the Charleston membership vote to upgrade the by-laws to include an "infusion" of non-veterans in leadership roles, the call now goes out seeking "Associate" and "Auxiliary" members to serve as "Deputy Officers." (See July 1995 FLAK NEWS).

The first of four such questionnaires is included in this issue, incorporated into the regular dues notice. These have been sent to members living in the following states:

*North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, Arkansas, Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Oklahoma, North Dakota and South Dakota.*

This coincides with the quarterly dues program introduced several

### Group To Seek Out Associates, Auxiliaries In New Format

years ago. The remaining questionnaires will be included in the April, July and October, 1996 issues.

The dues requirement remains the same (\$5.00) with options to contribute to FLAK NEWS and the Memorial Fund. The questionnaire incorporated into the dues notice is designed to identify the category of each person's membership, and his potential interest in becoming a Deputy Officer.

These questionnaires will be filed and examined by President Bill Comstock and committee members named by him to ascertain which members will be selected to serve as Deputy Officers.

Associate (wife, widow or blood relative of a Veteran) and Auxiliary (no formal relationship with 398th) members who wish to present their names now, rather than wait until their next dues notice, may send a letter outlining their wishes to Secretary Wally Blackwell, Rockville, MD 20850-3067.

# 843-P Just Ran Out Of Gas

BY ED ARBUTHNOT  
601st Squadron

*Valentine's Day, Ash Wednesday,  
Flight Engineer's Birthday ...*

This has got to be a good one, right? Wrong!

February 14, 1945. Mission number 146 of the 398th Bomb Group was to drop "valentines" on Dresden, Germany. This was mission number 22 for our crew and our aircraft was to carry six 500-lb. general purpose and four 500-lb. incendiaries as valentines for delivery.

With all flight preparations made, warm-up completed, the crew, led by Pilot Byron Magness and Co-Pilot Robert Dee, clamored aboard 843-P.

The balance of the crew was comprised of myself as navigator; Danny O'Connell, togglier; Bill Williams, engineer-runner; James Oliver, radio; Bert Ongley, ball turret; Joe Jakovac, waist; and Larry Nulf, tail.

The big white "W" in the black triangle showed a dull glow in the early morning light. The number "30" on the fuselage of the aircraft indicated this to be a ship of the 601st Squadron as it lumbered out into the "Taxi Parade" for take-off. The beginning of a highly eventful day.

Formation assembly was uneventful and went well. Group formation was good as we headed out over the North Sea toward Germany.

The route to the target was NOT AS BRIEFED. Due to some unforeseen conditions, we had to fly somewhat south and at a higher altitude. As the mission wore on, it became apparent that we were using too much time and fuel, and were decidedly off course. This became more evident when we turned on the wrong Initial Point.

The bomb run went smoothly and only light, inaccurate flak was encountered. Group formation remained very good.

"BOMBSAWAY!!" Mission accomplished!

However ... the "valentines" were mis-directed. Instead of Dresden, we hit Prague, an OPEN CITY!!

The Group left the target in good formation but shortly thereafter the fun began, particularly with our airplane. 843-P began to struggle to keep up with the formation. Too much fuel was being consumed. The crew was ordered to jettison as much equipment as possible to lighten the ship, but eventually we had to drop out of the formation, and we slowly began to lose altitude.

Finding ourselves alone over enemy territory, we had become a proverbial "sitting duck" for enemy fighters. Everyone was alerted to keep a sharp look-out for "Bandits", expecting to be pounced on from any direction at any time. Time moved very slowly and nerves became



**THIS 601 CREW is all smiles here, but shortly after this photo was taken there was more "fear" than "fun" on their countenance when they rode their B-17 down for a crash landing on the continent. Left to right, back row – Bill Williams, ETG; Byron Magness, pilot; Robert Dee, co-pilot; Ed Arbuthnot, navigator. Front row – Danny O'Connell, togglier; James Oliver, radio; Bert Ongley, ball turret; and Larry Nulf, tail. Not shown is waist gunner Joe Jakovac.**

more frayed. While we were headed on a straight line course, on what I had calculated to be the shortest, quickest way out of enemy territory, everyone's thoughts contained many questions:

– Can we make it home or at least hold on long enough to land in friendly territory?

– Will we encounter flak or other enemy action from unknown areas?

– If we have to abandon ship, will we be found by the German military or by hostile civilians?

– Which Stalag Luft will we be put in? No one panicked, but there were a thousand silent prayers being uttered by nine nervous and scared men. Someone once said, "There are no atheists in fox-holes". I got news ... there are none in B-17's either!

To conserve as much fuel as possible and stay airborne, Magness and Dee feathered both outboard engines. Minutes seemed like hours but old 843-P kept plodding slowly ahead ... continuing to suck fuel from the tanks.

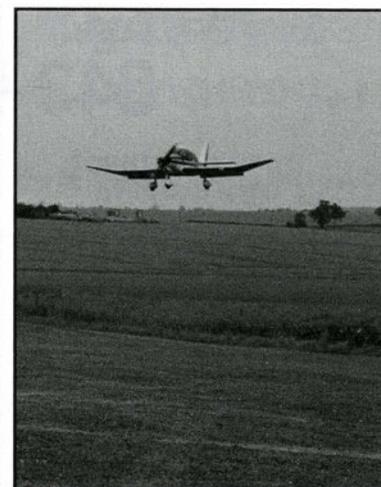
With only the two inboard engines operating, Engineer Williams began transferring fuel five gallons at a time. The pilot considered bailing out the crew at 5,000 feet, but after I informed him that we were still 20-25 miles behind the lines, and that jumping could result in serious consequences, the complete crew voted to "ride her down".

We were confident that the two guys sitting up front could keep us airborne long enough to get over the lines. Then, as if to support this confidence, two "little friends" appeared ... one off each wing. These were the prettiest P-51's anyone ever saw. They indicated that they would follow us down and radio our location to authorities. We promptly lost our fear of enemy fighters.

As the pilots put the plane into its almost powerless glide, the rest of the crew moved to the radio compartment, took "crash landing" positions and awaited the impact with mother earth. I want to state that there is no amusement park ride that can compare with the twisting, grinding, wheels-up landing of an old metal bird sliding over rough terrain, screaming her anger at her fate. Old 843-P finally came to rest with severely bent props, bomb bay filled with dirt to the catwalk, and almost broken in half at the waist. It was a great landing. We all walked away.

What an ignominious end for a fine old lady. She took us as far as she could, and as her last full measure of devotion, protected us from injury as she came to her final rest. She was lost not to direct enemy action or mechanical failure, but for the want of a few more gallons of gas.

Her final resting place, 50°-37' N; 05°-45' E. May she rest in peace.



IT WILL BE SOMETHING SPECIAL every day for the England tour members next June. Like the "Welcome 398th" jeep that will escort the coach back to Nuthampstead. And Lady Helen Long, who with her husband, Viscount Richard Long, will

welcome the 398th to the House of Lords in London. And special flights from the old runway for everyone wanting one more view of Station 131 from the air. Now is the time to make that reservation to join the tour.

## Short Tour Only To England In June

### London And Nuthampstead

Members of the 398th Bomb Group heading for England this coming June said they want to spend their time reminiscing at the old base and visiting with their Friends at Nuthampstead.

They also want some time in London, but said "no" to the proposed extension tours to Yorkshire and Norfolk.

Thus, the tour will be from June 10 through June 18 only. The seven-day "extended" tour has been cancelled, according to Barbara Fish of Travel House, Inc., Seattle, the group's travel consultant.

"There is still time to join the tour," she said, "and take part in the many activities scheduled for London and Nuthampstead. But we need to receive members' \$300 reservation deposits by March 1, 1996."

The tour is priced at \$2249 from the west coast and \$2149 from the east coast. Barbara can be reached toll free at 1-800-423-5454.

The tour will feature a special visit to the House of Lords in London, there to be greeted by Lord Richard Long, CBE, who makes his "regular" home near Nuthampstead.

While others are expected to be added, the following members are currently on the travel roster –

*Howard & Jane Traeder, Wally & Teedy Blackwell, John & Rosemary Cosco, Russ & Millie Reed, Arnie Schneider and Marie Bammer, Phil & Marge Stahlman, Jack & Jean Madlung, Dana Maryott and son Glenn Maryott, Richard Knerr, and Allen & Geg Ostrom.*

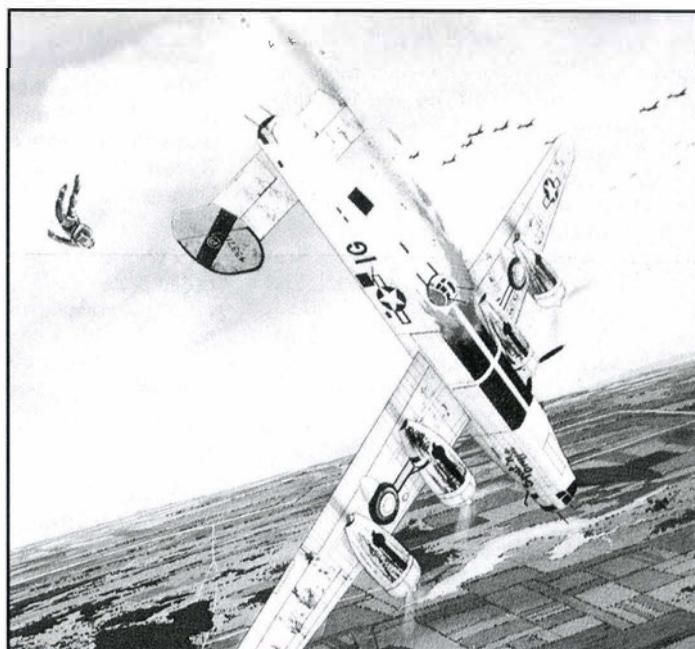
Ostrom is the tour coordinator.

While the "extended" tour has been cancelled, Ostrom and others will journey to the city of Norwich in East Anglia to present a special framed B-24 picture to the 2nd Air Division Library. (See accompanying story.)

The tour group will visit Duxford Imperial Museum, home of England's only operational B-17, Sally B, and static B-17, Mary Alice. There will also be a look-see at the new Eighth Air Force Museum, now under construction on the museum grounds.

It is there that the Friends of the 398th hope to arrange for a special display featuring artifacts and memorabilia from Station 131. Records, photos, diaries and documents are now being sought from 398th personnel for possible presentation to the new 8th museum, according to Friends chairman Wilfred Dimsdale.

Another possible repository is the County Record Office at Hertford, located midway between London and Nuthampstead. A visit will be paid to Hertford during the upcoming tour.



### Tour Party To Carry Gift To B-24 Liberator Library

The air war over Europe took its toll on B-24's as well as our B-17's, witness this artist's version of a Liberator going down over France.

A framed print of this original painting will be carried by the 398th tour group to England next June and presented to the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich. It will help in restocking their original library, which burned in a disastrous fire.

The plane depicted in the above drawing was from the 448th Bomb Group, located at Seething. All crewmen survived.

Despite the fire that destroyed the group's entire library, the 2nd AD has already restocked its temporary facility with over 2,000 books, flags, aircraft, tailfins, etc. The contribution by the 398th might just be the only gift from a B-17 group. Maybe the 488th will come by one day in the future with a gift for the 398th ... when and if such a facility becomes a reality.

# The Pottsville Connection: Three On One Crew From Town In PA

BY EUGENE MINCHOFF  
Buzza Crew, 603rd Squadron

This is a little story on how our B-17 flight crew was put together. It is more or less the same script as used to form other bomber crews of World War II, except for the "Pottsville Connection."

After completing gunnery school, I was sent to Lincoln, Nebraska for crew assignment. Others were to come from their own specialty schools – pilots, navigators, radio operators, etc.

After being on the base for a couple of days, I met a highschool buddy of mine – David Morgan – from Pottsville, Pennsylvania.

Morgan said there was another guy on the base from Pottsville, John McMenamin, so we looked him up. He was awaiting crew assignment as a radio operator. Dave and I were gunners.

So here are three of us from the same town in Pennsylvania – Pottsville. As we talked about the hometown, somebody suggested that we should try to get on the same crew. We agreed to try and we headed for base headquarters.

We introduced ourselves to a Sgt. Kennedy, who was responsible for making out the crew assignments. Would you believe he was from Pottsville, Pennsylvania?

Anyway, he didn't give us all that much encouragement about all of us getting on the same crew, because there was a policy against it. But a few days later, when the crew assignments were posted, here we were, all three of us put on the crew piloted by Kenneth Buzza of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The co-pilot was John Blythe of Springfield, Pennsylvania; navigator was Mike Cingle of Penn State, Pennsylvania; bom-



## Ready For Springfield

**JERRY MONAGIN** and wife, Polly, have accepted the responsibility of being chairpersons for the 398th Bomb Group reunion in Springfield, Missouri, next September 25-28, 1996. Jerry did his hitch with the 398th as engineer-gunner on the Paul Roderick crew of the 602nd Squadron. The Monagins make their home in Florissant, MO, near St. Louis. Registration forms and complete reunion information will appear in the April issue of FLAK NEWS.



**PAUL RODERICK**  
A 398th Advertisement For Tail-gaters



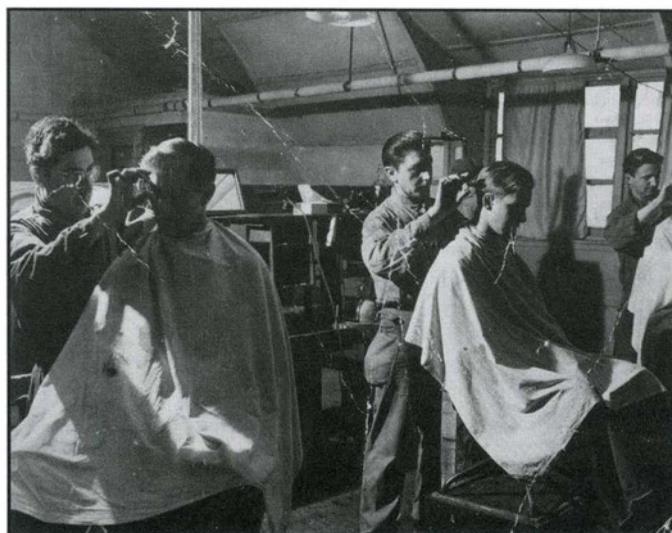
bardier I.B. Porton of Washington, DC; engineer-gunner George Spraggins of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; gunners Walter Suggett of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Jack Madlung of Monticello, Indiana.

One of our stops in flying over to England was in Iceland. And who should we meet there but an OSS lawyer who came from Pottsville, Pennsylvania? He was operating the PX, and naturally we partied in his barracks during our layover.

When we got to Nuthampstead, who should we find working in the enlisted men's combat mess but Francis Buehler? Where from? Pottsville, Pennsylvania, naturally! He took good care of us when we came home late after some of those long, 10-hour missions.

Buzza, Spraggins, McMenamin, Morgan, Madlung and I went on to become a lead crew and were shot down over Merseburg on November 21, 1944. Only Madlung, Cingle and I from that lead crew are still alive after all these years. Blythe, who got his own crew, also is still with us. I lost track of Porton.

It might not make "Believe It Or Not," but seven out of ten men from Pennsylvania on one B-17 crew was unusual. And three from Pottsville made for a pretty good connection.



**CHARLIE LINDSEY** (far right) has saved this slightly crumpled photo all these years since 1944 at Nuthampstead. He was one of the 603 Squadron Barbers, doing business in a Nissen hut and using old B-17 radio operators chairs for customer seating. Lindsey also had a variety of memorabilia from Station 131 days that he asked to be sent on to the new 8th Air Force museum now under construction at Duxford, England. The Friends of the 398th hope to have a special exhibit at the building.

# When The Roll Is Called Up Yonder

Milo Adleman  
 Harry Agnew  
 Robert Agnew  
 Claude Alexander  
 John Allare  
 Alfred Alves  
 Emil Anderson  
 Ralph Anderson  
 Roy L. Anderson  
 Russell M. Anderson  
 William G. Anderson  
 Kenneth E. Andrews  
 Joseph Ariotta  
 Allen A. Arlin  
 Arthur Armstrong  
 Sidney A. Armstrong  
 Walter G. Armstrong  
 Dean H. Ashworth  
 James R. Atkins  
 Paul E. Audet  
 John V. Auwerkerman  
 Arnt M. Aune  
 Kermit Austad  
 Howard F. Baer  
 Bernard Bagley  
 Ray E. Bailey  
 Harold Baird  
 Albert A. Baker  
 Hermus C. Baker  
 Joseph (Dave) Bancroft  
 Claude A. Baptist  
 Fred Barkovich  
 Lynn W. Barnes  
 Joseph E. Barnhard  
 Neil R. Bartimus  
 John J. Basco  
 Claire C. Bash  
 James Basham  
 Fred G. Bassman  
 John Baughman  
 John Bawduniak  
 Richard Baxter  
 Hugh Don Beattie  
 Oscar L. Beatty  
 Cecil Beavers  
 John J. Becker  
 Robert J. Beckley  
 Jess Belcher  
 Marvin Bell  
 Robert Bell  
 Phillip L. Benefiel  
 Norville Bennett  
 Cecil E. Berggren  
 Loyola A. Bernier  
 Kearie L. Berry  
 Charles Berthoud  
 James A. Bewley  
 Andrew Biancardi  
 Henry Bingle  
 John C. Bird  
 Walter Bittner  
 Marvin Blancett  
 Guido Blanda  
 G.W. Blankenship  
 Winston Bley  
 James M.S. Bobbitt  
 Orv. W. Boequer  
 Edward J. Bogdanski  
 Phillip T. Boltz  
 Bruno Bonjani  
 Herbert Bosshart  
 Millard S. Bottoms  
 Joseph E. Bourke  
 H. Guy Bowcock, Jr.  
 Leonard L. Bowman  
 Haskell Boyes  
 Heyward M. Braddock  
 Jack Brady  
 Al Breault  
 Royal Breimeyer  
 Darrell F. Brewer  
 Clarence W. Bridges  
 J. Briody  
 James J. Briody  
 Thomas F. Britt  
 Rev. Raymond C. Brokaw  
 E. Logan Brown  
 James C. Brown  
 Lawrence Brown  
 Robert E. Brown

Samuel M. Brown  
 Sidney Brown  
 Wayne Brubaker  
 Earl Brunke  
 Earl H. Brunke  
 Chester S. Buck  
 James S. Buckingham  
 Francis X. Buckley  
 Al Burke  
 John Burton  
 John P. Busciani  
 Louis Bushle  
 John Butler  
 David Buvinger  
 Kenneth Buzza  
 Felix E. Byrne  
 Noel Callahan  
 Tom Campbell  
 Van B. Campbell  
 Alfred Campdon  
 Donald P. Carlton  
 Nigel Carter  
 Alfred Cason  
 Edward Castro  
 Francis Charbonneau  
 Lewis D. Chase  
 Kenneth Chesshir  
 Raymond J. Chimelewski  
 Robert T. Chorba  
 George Christofer  
 Fred M. Church  
 Wesley H. Churchill  
 William A. Chivatarese  
 Lloyd Clafford  
 Benjamin L. Clark  
 Francis C. Clark  
 Walter F. Clarke  
 Ernest Clifton  
 Curtis Cochran  
 William Coene  
 George Colantoni  
 Warren Colburn  
 Harold Cole  
 George F. Coleman  
 Winsor Coleman  
 Charles E. Colvin  
 John Colwell  
 William F. Coombs  
 Ralph E. Coomes  
 D.G. (Bud) Cooper  
 Joseph D. Cooper  
 Joseph L. Coopet  
 Joseph W. Corcoran  
 Fr. George Corry  
 Anthony Corsuti  
 Arthur Cote  
 Bernard Coupert  
 Harry Cowen  
 John J. Cowley, Jr.  
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 Norman Cox  
 James Crouch  
 Julius P. Cubranich  
 D.L. Cummings  
 James L. Cutcher  
 Charles H. Dacon  
 Hal Dalton  
 William J. Daly  
 John J. Dames  
 Leroy Darner  
 Paul M. David  
 Herman Davidoff  
 Wm. H. Davidson  
 Jack Davis  
 John H. Davis  
 Larry Delancey  
 Lawrence Delancey  
 Raymond S. Delbart  
 Joseph Delorier  
 John L. Demander  
 Samuel Devan  
 Steve Devlin  
 Robert L. Dexter  
 Clarence Dickhart  
 Claude E. Dierolf  
 Francis Dippel  
 Gerald Dixon  
 Gene Douglas  
 Robert A. Downing  
 Charles G. Dreyer

John W. Duncan  
 Richard J. Dunn  
 Bill Dunne  
 Francis Durbin  
 Gordon P. Dutrow  
 William J. Dwyer, Jr.  
 Harry Edgell  
 Gilbert Edgington  
 John H. Edwards  
 Edward Ehil  
 Clarence Ehret  
 Francis C. Eisele  
 Orville Elrod  
 Kenneth Elwood  
 James W. Emmons  
 Robert Engard  
 Herbert G. Faber  
 John S. Falkenbach  
 Francis L. Farenthold  
 Francis A. Farewell  
 Robert Farley  
 Edward Farmer  
 Dexter Farnsworth  
 William A. Farrell  
 Joe Faughn  
 Reginald C. Ferguson  
 Frank Fernandez  
 Horace Fleming  
 Richard E. Fletcher  
 Charles R. Flickinger  
 Robert Folger  
 Kenneth H. Foraker  
 Paul Foster  
 Hannibal Fowler  
 Gino Franceschini  
 Lawrence A. Freel  
 Ozie French  
 George Frew  
 Arthur Fritog  
 Jack Fritz  
 James S. Froelich  
 Stanley W. Gabriel  
 Glen S. Gagnon  
 Octavus Gallardo  
 Jack S. Garland  
 B. Gary  
 Tom Gerber  
 Harry Gerloff  
 Robert Gibb  
 Charles F. Gibson  
 Joseph A. Gillenwater  
 Joseph Ginsburg  
 John Gloor  
 John Godfrey  
 John K. Godwin  
 Ernest Goldbach  
 Gil Goldman  
 Benito Gonzales  
 Charles Gordon  
 George Goveia  
 Sam Grant  
 Jay O. Gray  
 Jay O. Gray  
 Norbert Green  
 Abraham Greenberg  
 Robert K. Gregorie  
 Steve Gresh  
 Arthur Griffo  
 M. Grossman  
 Al Grothues  
 Fred Gruber  
 Thomas G. Gulledege  
 George C. Hafer  
 Herman L. Hager  
 Floyd Hakomaki  
 Robert D. Hale  
 Joe Hall  
 John A. Haller  
 Ross L. Hamacher  
 William C. Hancock  
 Alfred Hapgood  
 Harry B. Hardenberg  
 Arnold Hardy  
 Carl H. Harmon  
 Cornelius Harrington  
 Karl E. Hart  
 George W. Hartwell  
 Dwight Hatch  
 Robert Hatcher  
 Harold R. Hatten

William A. Haworth  
 Harold D. Hayward  
 Melvin Hedeon  
 Paul F. Heitman  
 Henry H. Henagan, Jr.  
 William Hendrickson  
 George Hennrikus  
 Herbert G. Hentschel  
 Earl Herbert  
 Robert G. Herbert  
 Carl A. Herbst  
 Selby P. Hereid  
 Raymond A. Hernden  
 Pedro Herrera  
 Kenneth Hesterly  
 Franklin Hicinbothem  
 Charles Hickey  
 Robert Hildreth  
 Dwight Hinkle  
 S. Leathers Hoddesdon  
 Carl H. Hogrefe  
 Edwin C. Holloway  
 James B. Holloway  
 Lester Holmly  
 James Holstead  
 Frank J. Hopp  
 Harry Houchins  
 Grant Howard  
 Earl K. Hoyne  
 Joseph Hreachmack  
 Herman D. Hudson  
 Elzie Hunnicutt  
 Edwin F. Hunsaker  
 Dr. Lewis G. Hunter  
 Sam Huntington, *Associate*  
 John L. Hutchinson  
 Gervase (Gerry) Hyland  
 Willie H. Inman  
 Chester R. Isdahll  
 George Iwamoto  
 Leroy K. Jackson  
 Paul K. Jackson  
 Gordon Jarman  
 Kenneth V. Jeffries  
 Anthony J. Jellen  
 Elwell S. Jellison  
 Ray Jendrezweski  
 A.G. Johnson  
 Gene Johnson  
 Warren Johnson  
 Andrew Jones  
 Ira Jones  
 William H. Jones, *Florence AL*  
 William H. Jones, *Olympia WA*  
 Edward Jordan  
 William F. Jordan  
 Joseph Kaminski  
 Philip Kantor  
 Harry Katz  
 Allen Kay  
 Earl Kearney  
 Raymond Keene  
 Jerome F. Kelly  
 William C. Kilby  
 Dale Kimball  
 Charles E. King  
 Kenneth Kiser  
 Dallas E. Kite  
 Victor (Klemens) Klimaszczfski  
 John Klingenhoffer  
 George A. Klix  
 Arthur T. Kneuer  
 Percy Knife, *Honorary Member*  
 George N. Knight  
 Charles Kohut  
 John Kolafa  
 Kenneth Kolb  
 Ernie Konie  
 Norman E. Kotte  
 Harvey Kramer  
 John J. Krause  
 Charles H. Kroh  
 Homer R. Kuck  
 Lionel L. Labat  
 Russell Lachman  
 Ernie LaCoste  
 John W. Lamar  
 James C. Lamiell  
 Don Land  
 Fredrick Lang

Ray Langford  
 Edward R. Lanich  
 Leroy Lassegard  
 Peter Latrenta  
 Harvey Latson  
 Ray J. LeDoux  
 Don Leemon  
 Gene Leonard  
 David L. Levy  
 Peter Libertucci  
 Waldean Like  
 Fred Lindo  
 Walter J. Linke  
 John Locy  
 Douglas Long  
 Harold Loveless  
 Robert Lovely, Jr.  
 Donald B. Lowe  
 Lloyd F. Lowe  
 Douglas M. Lundy  
 Walter A. Lusk, Jr.  
 Joseph Lutz  
 Floyd Lynch  
 Frank Mackey  
 Edward F. Madden  
 Mark Magnan  
 Jere L. Maher  
 Clayton Mahlum  
 Jack D. Mallory  
 Douglas Mann  
 Jerry Manzi  
 Donald E. Mapel  
 Tom Marchbanks  
 Elmer H. Marfilius  
 George A. Martin  
 August J. Martone  
 Angelo Martorella  
 Frank Massey  
 Marvert Masters  
 Stanley Mates  
 Burton Matheson  
 Tom Matthews  
 John M. May  
 Joseph W. Mayers  
 Eugene D. Mazzanti  
 Edward J. McCormack  
 Wayne McCoy  
 Robert G. McCurdy  
 Harry T. McDougall  
 Raymond McGlaun  
 Raymond McGovern  
 Garvin McLaughlin  
 Robert J. McLaughlin  
 Ken E. (Bud) McLughlin  
 John A. McMenamin  
 Quentin McMurray  
 J.F. McNalley  
 Claude A. Jr. McNeil  
 Charles Meis  
 Rufus Melson  
 Donald Merritt  
 Revel J. Meyers  
 Russ Meyers  
 Lewis M. Miller  
 Paul Miller  
 Richard (Rocker) Mills  
 George Mitchell  
 Robert W. Molesworth  
 Arnold Money  
 Randolph Moore  
 Vincent Moore  
 Raymond J. Moretti  
 Edward T. Morneau  
 Stacey Morris, Jr.  
 Russell Morrison  
 Latrelle R. Moss  
 H.D. Motsenbocker  
 William F. Motter  
 John A. Mullins  
 William S. Mummert  
 John F. Naioti  
 John Namey  
 Daniel J. Naragon  
 George N. Nash  
 M.A. (Bud) Neidringhaus  
 David S. Neill  
 Leroy Nejaski  
 Gene Nelson  
 J.C. Nelson  
 Orville Nelson

## MISS ME – BUT LET ME GO

When I come to the end of the road  
 And the sun has set for me  
 I want no rites in a gloom filled room  
 Why cry for a soul set free.  
 Miss me a little – But not too long  
 And not with your head bowed low  
 Remember the love that we once shared  
 Miss Me – But Let Me Go.

For this is a journey that we all must take  
 And each must go alone  
 It's all a part of the Master's plan  
 A step on the road to home.  
 When you are lonely and sick of heart  
 Go to the friends we know  
 And bury our sorrows in doing good deeds.  
 Miss Me – But Let Me Go.

*Author Unknown*

Elvis M. Newman  
 Earl Noble  
 William Norby  
 Robert J. Notorpole  
 Robert J. O'Brien  
 Danny O'Connell  
 Marion Offutt  
 Bert Ongley  
 John W. Osborn  
 Vernon Overton  
 Thomas V. Overturf  
 Blaine Owens  
 Joseph H. Painschab  
 Venizelos G. Pappas  
 Lewis E. Parrish  
 B.H. Parsons  
 Claude N. Payne  
 Marshall M. Payne  
 Tom Peach  
 Kenneth R. Peek  
 Ed Perrou  
 Arthur M. Perry  
 Christian Peterson  
 Raymond Peterson  
 Albert M. Petska  
 Benjamin J. Pierzchala  
 Joe Pintek  
 Brian A. Poston  
 Carl W. Poston  
 John Powell  
 Sam Powell  
 William B. Prettyman  
 Jene L. Pricer  
 William T. Priestley  
 Lewis A. Puthoff  
 Robert F. Pyles  
 Albert Pysson  
 Stephen R. Quinn  
 William B. Radnedge  
 Manson Ramsbottom  
 Francis M. Redican  
 Howard W. Rehme  
 Perry Reid  
 John H. Rex  
 Michael Riccio  
 James T. Rich  
 Ronald Rickabaugh  
 Erwin J. Riley  
 Howard K. Riley  
 Jack Roberts  
 Robert Robinson  
 Kenneth J. Rockstroh  
 Linn R. Rogers  
 George Rolles  
 Norman Roller  
 Pete Rooney  
 Arthur Rose  
 Robert S. Rosenberg (Ross)  
 Harold Rosenzweig  
 Gaylord Ross  
 James H. Rossi  
 John A. Ruboski  
 Norman V. Rudrud  
 James B. Ryan  
 Michael O. Ryan  
 Stanley Sachs  
 Carl O. Saglin  
 Hiram N. Sawyer  
 Maurice Schallert  
 Joseph S. Schapiro  
 Richard H. Schmidt  
 John Schneider  
 Ernest A. Schoen

George W. Schoener  
 James Schofield  
 William P. Schultz  
 Alpha H. Schumacher  
 George J. Schwerer  
 Ernest D. Scott  
 R.F. Scott  
 Talma A. Scott, Jr.  
 Warren Seaver  
 Earl W. Seibert  
 Arthur Selevan  
 Clifton L. Self  
 John Selgrath  
 Lyndell Sellers  
 Alfred Shadrouti  
 W.A. Shaffer  
 Donald Shaw  
 Roy M. Sheely  
 William Louis Shields  
 Albert J. Shimek  
 Charles W. Shirk  
 Edwin E. Shott  
 Eli G. Shreve  
 John R. Sigsworth  
 Robert Simeral  
 Joseph Skarda  
 Walt. Skellinger  
 Thomas G. Slawson  
 Harry Steaman  
 Clarence Smith  
 Coy Smith  
 Frank Smith  
 Harold Smith  
 Herbert E. Smith  
 John E. Smith  
 Ralph D. Smith  
 Frank A. Snyder  
 Glenn M. Sorrell  
 Earl J. Southwick  
 Edwin F. Spain  
 Milo Sponholtz  
 Harold Stallings  
 Claude Stanbrough  
 Charles Stankiewicz  
 Robert P. Starkey  
 Stanley Staskiel  
 James Stephens  
 Robert L. Sternadel  
 Paul J. Stetter  
 Robert F. Stickel  
 A.J. Stockman  
 C.E. Stombaugh  
 Warren Stone  
 Plato Stout  
 Carl J. Strickrott  
 Aaron M. Stripling  
 Frank Strnad  
 Wallace Strohschein  
 Tom Struckmeyer  
 Howard P. Studor  
 Walter Suggestt  
 The Rev. Walter B. Sullivan,  
*Catholic Chaplain*  
 Neil Swan, Jr.  
 Dr. Robert Sweet  
 Franklin Taylor  
 Dr. Urban Terbieten  
 Leo W. Terrion  
 Ike Thacker  
 Henry Thomas  
 Oakley J. Thompson  
 Robert Thompson  
 Williams H. Thompson

George I. Tilden  
 Wally Tillman  
 Albert Tillotson  
 Antonio J. Tomaino  
 Emmett W. Tone  
 Kenneth Townsley  
 Claude W. Tracey  
 John T. Travers  
 Sidney Triebwasser  
 H.M. Troost  
 Joseph H. Trotter  
 William V. Tryon  
 Frank Tucker  
 Mark Turner  
 Rudolph E. Unkel  
 Tom Upmeier  
 William G. Vale  
 William Vanderlick  
 George E. Vela  
 Waldemar Vernet, Jr.  
 Raymond A. Vicha  
 John H. Vines  
 Arthur Waaramaa  
 Charles A. Waldbauer  
 Benjamin I. Waldman  
 Robert L. Walker  
 Charles A. Walkup, Jr.  
 Raymond Wallrath  
 R.N. Walter  
 Ernest Walthall  
 John Ward  
 Leonard H. Waring  
 Alfred Warren  
 Charles Wasserman  
 Sam Watkins  
 Leland A. Watson  
 C.D. Weatherwax  
 Wayne Weaver  
 Burton B. Wells  
 David Wells, *Honorary Member*  
 Victor H. White  
 Fred A. Whitehead  
 James E. Wickam  
 Walter Wickman  
 Joseph Wierney  
 Bill V. Wight  
 George J. Wilde  
 Frank J. Williams  
 William C. Williams  
 Delmar Williamson  
 Rufus C. Williamson  
 Claude Wilson  
 William R. Wilson  
 Edward C. Wineman  
 Horace Withers  
 Leonard Wolfe  
 William Woodcock  
 Warren Woodham  
 D.A. Woodmansee  
 Dave Woodring  
 Clinton L. Woodruff  
 Harold Woodson  
 Woodrow Woodson  
 Ellsworth S. Wright  
 Warren H. Wright  
 Kenneth M. Wymer  
 Donald R. Young  
 William W. Zackman  
 Larry Zagelow  
 Raymond J. Zajic  
 Dr. Herman Zampetti

## 34 City Tour:

# Aluminum Overcast In The Air

The Aluminum Overcast, sporting the Triangle W colors of the 398th Bomb Group, will embark on a 16-state, 34-city tour beginning February 28 in Nashville, Tennessee.

The spring-summer tour winds up on July 15, with another set for the fall beginning in September.

Greg Anderson of the sponsoring EAA Aviation Foundation, emphasized that the sites and dates are not all firm, and that persons interested in viewing the B-17 (or opting for a cockpit ride) should check with the local airport or call Kyle Guyette of EAA at 414-426-4865.

Following is the tentative schedule:

Nashville/Lebanon (Warbird Conference/Pilot Training)	February 28-March 7
Memphis, TN	March 8-11
Muscle Shoals, AL	March 11-13
Gwinnett County, GA	March 13-19
Tulahoma, TN	March 19-21
Knoxville, TN	March 21-25
Greenville, SC	March 25-28
Columbia, SC	March 28-31
Hictory, NC	April 1-4
Lebanon, TN	April 4-8
Terre Haute, IN	April 8-12
<i>Oshkosh, WI</i>	<i>April 12-21</i>
Champaign, IL	April 22-25
Evansville, IN	April 25-29
Paducah, KY	April 29-May 2
St. Louis, MO	May 2-6
Louisville, KY	May 6-9
Indianapolis, IN	May 9-14
Cincinnati, OH	May 14-16
Columbus, OH	May 16-20
Ft. Wayne, IN	May 20-23
Toledo, OH	May 23-27
Jackson, MI	May 27-30
Valporaiso, IN	May 30-June 2
<i>Oshkosh, WI</i>	<i>June 2-7</i>
Aurora, IL	June 7-10
Peoria, IL	June 10-13
Rock Island, IL	June 13-17
Cedar Rapids, IA	June 17-20
Waterloo, IA	June 20-24
Ottumwa, IA	June 24-27
Des Moines, IA	June 27-July 1
Souix City, IA	July 1-4
Lincoln, NE	July 4-8
Albert Lee, MN	July 8-11
Wausau, WI	July 11-15
<i>Oshkosh, WI</i>	<i>July 15</i>

**These names represent the men of the 398th Bomb Group who passed on since returning home from World War II. This list does not necessarily include everyone, but only those names which have been made known to FLAK NEWS. The Killed in Action list was published in the October issue.**

# July 1944 Was A Bad Month For The 398th

## Nine Crews Lost, Plus Five Crashes

*Continued from Page 1.*

tail gunner Carroll O'Neill, were on leave and were replaced by Gordon Sudborough and Gregory Groncki, also from the Scott crew.

Regular Zimmerman crew members flying that day were Earl Hart, co-pilot; Joseph Doglio, navigator; Paul Bunning, radio; Thomas Garrett, ball turret; and Borchers, waist.

Scott was aboard the Bill Durschi plane as deputy Air Commander. Four months later, on December 24, Zimmerman from the 602nd and Don Grinter from the 600th crashed on take-off as all four squadrons were called out to support the Allied forces in the Battle of the Bulge. (see Flak News Vol. 4 No.4)

Each B-17 carried two, five-man rubber life rafts. These were stowed out of sight in compartments above the bomb bay. They were to be manually released by a crewman after the ditched plane hit the water. They inflated automatically and dropped on each wing, tethered to long ropes. Each carried oars, emergency supplies and a hand-generated radio.

In a ditching at sea, all this would have appeared quite normal ... at least accord-

ing to SOP (Standard Operating Procedure).

But at 25,00 feet?

Little wonder that Harbauer, and others who might have witnessed this high altitude drama, blinked their eyes as this rubber dinghy floated by in space.

The German 88 anti-aircraft shell apparently exploded in the aircraft, tearing the plane apart, ejecting the raft, and setting off the gasoline tanks. Hence the fireball.

According to Roger Freeman's "Mighty Eighth War Diary," Hawkins' B-17 was hit on the approach to Lechfeld by an 88 that exploded in the fuselage. The blazing front portion spun into the ground near Altheigenburg, the bombs detonating. The rear fuselage floated down and landed nearby. The tail gunner (Groncki) was alive but so badly injured he died within 30 minutes.

July, 1944 was a devastating month for the 398th. Counting the eight dead on the Hawkins crew, the list of Killed in Action casualties rose to 32 as eight other crews were shot down over Germany and France.

Other crews going down during this

dark period were Boyd Nisewonger, 603, Leipzig, July 7; Robert Folger, 600; Leipzig, July 7; Ray Thornton, 601, Humieres, France, July 8; George Wilson, 601, Humieres, France, July 8; Thomas Foster, 603, Munich; July 13; Dana Lovelace, 600, Munich, July 16; Raymond Gallagher, 603, Munich, July 16; and Wilbur Dwyer, 603, Merseburg, July 28.

And there were five other crashes in various parts of England involving 398th Bomb Group crews.

July was not a good month.

### FORMATIONS

JULY 19, 1944

#### LEAD SQUADRON (602)

ROONEY DUNLAP			
Dollar		SCOTT	
		Durtschi	
Turner			Cobb
Boehme	Clark	Hawkins	Driscoll
		Ballard	
	Ford	Nelson	

#### HIGH SQUADRON (603)

BAKER Hopkins			
Howden		Kaufman	
Novak			Dwyer
Engel	Foster, D.L.	Farenthold	Seamon
			Davis, J.H.

	Chase	
Wheeler		Menzel

#### LOW SQUADRON (600)

ARLIN Griffin			
McCarty		Binger	
Heintzelman			Davis, J.A.
Taylor	Weekley	Wierney	Farnsworth
		Alhadeff	
	Lowe, D.B.		Slavin



MAJ. JEAN MILLER (far left), then the commanding officer of the 603rd Squadron, joined some of his ground officers for a rare group photo at Nuthampstead. Front row, left to right, Lt. David Hall; Capt. Howard Scholl; Lt. George Stanton; and Lt. Albert Grossman. Second row, Lt. F. Ward Hendee; Lt. Cohen; Capt. Carl Hogreve; Lt. George Rusinak. Back row, W/O Frank Kinzler.

## 50-Year-Old 398th Bomb Found In Neuss

The relationship between the 398th Bomb Group and the residents of Neuss, Germany became more personal and emotional than ever last September, with the discovery of a 1,000 - pound American bomb during the course of road construction in the city.

The city well remembers the raid on January 23, 1945, losing Col. Frank P. Hunter and all crew members except pilot Fred Gonzales.

Since then, 398th tour members and several individuals have re-visited Neuss and established close, personal ties with many residents. One of these residents, Matthias Kiefer, wrote to Gonzales and enclosed the news clipping of the 1,000-pound discovery.

The bomb was found (and defused) near the railway yards - the target for that mission - and prompted the evacuation of some 1,800 employees of a nearby firm

plus 1,000 additional citizens. Also, the rail line between Neuss and Dusseldorf was closed (for the second time in 50 years.)

Neither the bomb in 1945 nor the bomb discovery in 1995 were successful in closing the bridge permanently. However, it was shut down and dismantled this January. The reason -

Unprofitability.



# THE 398th GROUND WAR: Or, The Art of Trying To Beat Those Freezing English Winters (Even If Very Dangerous)

BY LOU BAFFARO

Because only three of the four squadrons would fly each mission, one squadron would have a non-flying day. We were kept busy in some aspect of training-attending ground school, shooting at enemy planes much like those you would see in arcades. And sometimes from the back of a pickup truck and with shotguns. We'd shoot at clay pigeons as we passed shacks that threw them up unexpectedly. This simulated a moving platform (the plane) and a moving target (the enemy fighter). We also sharpened our skills in identifying enemy planes shown by half second projections on a screen.

Nevertheless, much of our free time was utilized in taking steps to keep warm. Sometimes bomb rings were dumped in our squadron's compound. We gathered all we could as fast as we could and stored them in our Nissen Huts. If we stored them outside, they would be stolen by comrades who also wanted to keep warm.

First we had to remove the steel straps that were attached to the thick layered cardboard rings in which the bombs were shipped. We would then cut the rings in thirds so that they could fit into the pot bellied stove. This was a source of quick heat . . . good for rapid heat when we were roused at 3 or 4 am. Since we only were allowed one bucket of soft coal per day, we needed fuel for those damp cold English winters.

I remember the time four of us tore down a football field goal post and chopped it up for fuel.

But the best heat came from used engine oil. The idea was to get the top of the pot bellied stove very hot by conventional means, then remove the top and place it in the stove on top of the coals. We then let the oil drip on the lid in the hot stove. The oil would burst into flame and presto we had an oil burner. It took some scrounging of parts from the depots to rig up the piping, shut off valve, and a tank to hold the oil (usually a discarded wing tank). The tank had to be kept inside the hut or the oil would congeal and not flow in the cold weather.

I remember one day when four of us officers went to the depot to get some oil. We took a 50 gallon drum of used oil and were kicking it down the street toward our hut when a car came down the road. It was the executive officer, Colonel Berryhill, he asked us what we thought we were doing. We sputtered something about fuel to keep warm, but he told us to take it back. We turned around and kicked the drum back toward the depot, but as soon as the car had disappeared, we continued on to our hut.

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Lou Baffaro was the navigator on the 600 Squadron Milo Sponholtz crew. In his article, which came from a talk given to the Italian Club in Raleigh, NC, Lou tells of the ingenious (or devious) efforts air crewmen dreamed up in efforts to beat those cold, capricious days in England of 1944-45.

Others on the crew were Delmar Morgan, Robert Dittmer, Edwin Dutra, Paul Erickson, James Brockman, William Seaver, John Bush and Rober Zajiz.

---

A few weeks later a hut caught fire from an oil burner and we all had to dismantle our equipment and get out of the oil heat business.

The fire, incidentally, was caused by gasoline mixed in with the oil. In cold weather, before the engines are shut down after returning from a mission, the engineer turns a valve allowing gasoline to enter the oil pan and mix with the oil. The valve is left on for a few seconds depending on the temperature. This thins out the oil making it easier to turn over the engine the next time it is started.

Once the engine and the oil heat up, the gasoline evaporates and only oil is left to properly lubricate the engine. Normally, if the engine oil is to be changed, gasoline is not added. Someone goofed and thus gasoline was mixed with oil in the drum that started the fire.

One day I had what I thought was a brilliant solution to keeping warm.

I knew that our electrically heated flying suits were heated by 24 volt generators. England has a 240 volt electrical system in contrast to the American 120 volt system. There were three crews of officers in one hut. That makes twelve men. If we all wore our heated suits to bed and hooked them up in series, each suit would see 20 volts instead of the maximum 24 volts while we were flying. This would be enough to keep us nice and warm.

I was not successful in selling the idea to my hutmates however. They thought that we might be electrocuted in our sleep. In retrospect, I think they made a good case. We froze instead, but we came out of it alive.



## And Every One A Master Sergeant

**THESE ARE THE CREW CHIEFS** who were responsible for "keeping 'em flying" in the 603rd Squadron. And every one a master sergeant. From left to right, front row – Ruben E. Larsen, Earl Southwick, Leonard Bowman, Frank Gelwicks, Robert Myers, Vernon Overton and Uhro Kaskella. Top row, left to right – Fred Gruber, Nathan Klatskin, Arthur Kneuer, Irwin Riley, Charles Bacon, Durward Stegall (line chief), Carl Harmon, William Otto, Charles Williams, Robert Vincent and Maurice Schallart. Missing from the photo are flight chiefs George Hilliard (he took the picture), Ray Bailey and Leland Watson. Tail gunner and FLAK NEWS editor Allen Ostrom joins other air crew types to say, "thanks, guys!"

# BRIEF-Things

A milestone, of sorts: with this issue, FLAK NEWS has begun its 11th year of publication; each one produced by the same editor who had *Bill Cole* wearing a 601 jacket in the October issue when it should have been the "Ruptured Duck" 600th; sorry, *Bill* and *Ray Armor* ... the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum was the recipient of four laminated pages from LIFE magazine, vintage 1945, and depicting "The Battered Face of Germany" via aerial photos right after war's end; these came from *Ladislav Kohout* of Pilsen, Czech Republic, who was in a Skoda bunker when the 398th came over on the Last Mission ... among the many young folks joining the 398th of late was *John F. Naiota, Jr.*, whose father was the navigator on the Bill Scott 603 crew; and before that a quarterback and defensive back with the Pittsburgh Steelers ... 1995 came and went and we neglected to note the 60th anniversary of the B-17, unlike the 50th in 1985 when the 398th joined some 10,000 others to celebrate the event in Seattle ... historian *Roger Freeman* is turning out another book called, "Mighty Eighth in Art," and to be included will be "Clearing & Colder," the *Jack Olson* drawing used these past 10 years as the 398th logo ... the "no-holds-barred" letter (page 11) to the Smithsonian was penned by a guy who knew about Norden bombsights, *George Schatz* of the 600 *Ken Elwood* crew; there are no such things as "revisionist" memories in his war record ... your FLAK NEWS editor would like to hear from any of our men who spent time at Ephrata AAB, Washington ... Ephrata was where the 398th was activated in 1943, even though the group was actually formed at Geiger Field in Spokane ... who among our members might have published the 603rd Squadron history at Rapid City? And were there similar histories published for the other three squadrons? ... president *Bill Comstock* and *Evelyn* wish to thank all the members, at home and off-shore, who sent Christmas and get-well messages; and your editor also says "thank you" for many kind remembrances ... the 398th recently lost one of its longtime Board members, *William H. Jones* of Florence, AL; he will be remembered by many as for his famous "Alabama Auctions," raising many dollars for various group projects ... many thanks to *Fred King* of Chicago, whose King Graphics Co. "enhanced" the group officers photo on Page 8, making it printable in FLAK NEWS; Fred, of the 602 *Charles Cobb* crew, liked combat so much he volunteered for a second tour ... sad to report, but there are no more copies of "398th Bomb Group REMEMBRANCES" available ... in *Jack Lee's* Christmas card was a message entitled, "Freedom Is Not Free," with the last lines reading, "Remember that we have been both the receiver and giver of one of the greatest gifts ever bestowed upon people - the gift of the land of the free" ... when asked how things looked for him in the future, *president Comstock* replied, "Well, I'm still working almost every day, still planning on going on the England tour next summer, but if the Lord calls me tomorrow my bags are packed" ... it will be most exciting to see who among our "Associate" and "Auxiliary" members step up to seek leadership roles with the 398th the coming years ... *Harold & Nancy Stallcup* received high marks for their handling of the Charleston reunion, and for good reasons, but they also are quick to point out that they had "wonderful" helpers in making it so successful ... most everything at Charleston was letter perfect, even if the golfers did encounter some unwelcome precipitation (they are a hardy bunch, however) ... our *Hal Weekley* has been named honorary chairman for the EAA's annual "Fund For Excellence" promotion, developed to preserve aviation's rich heritage ... *Hal* was the pilot on nine Aluminum Overcast tours last fall, with more upcoming this spring ... *Herbert Guild* who lived to tell about being "ejected" from his tail gun position when his plane's tail hit the ground, was finally located (in Florida) and told that his pilot, *Larry DeLancey*, had died only this past year ... among the other "lost souls" found recently was *Leland Zimmerman*, who with his 602 crew survived a crash landing at Station 131 on December 24, 1944 (he is also living in FL).

# Letters, Letters

Letters to the Editor  
SMITHSONIAN  
900 Jefferson Drive  
Washington, DC 20560

Gentlepersons:

In the interest of my love and regard for free speech, may I congratulate the SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION as the Publisher of Stephen L. McFarland's remarkable book: "America's Pursuit of Precision Bombing, 1910-1945." This estimable Professor makes it quite clear that those of my fellow air crews who lost their young lives in an effort to do something, anything, to inhibit Hitler's Blitzkrieg for two years before we would be prepared for a land invasion, wasted those young lives with worthless equipment and ineffective technology. It had been my mistaken impression that if the Norden bombsight was the best retaliatory weapon we had, it was better than a slingshot.

Perhaps we should have waited until the 1980's and returned with laser-guided missiles. Unfortunately, our instructions might have had to be written in German.

I understand that when Professor McFarland writes " ... was Japan, nearly prostrate from blockade and conventional bombing, already prepared to surrender?" he would have bravely approached President Truman and said: 'Rather than suffer eons of self-incrimination by using an atomic bomb, allow me to pursue a conclusion to this war by conventional means. Although several hundred thousand more lives, on both sides, may be lost, it is my firm inner conviction that the Japanese people are predisposed to capitulate under the slightest inconvenience.'

Rumors are rampant that Professor McFarland is already at work on his next book: 'Revelations about the stupidity of people who listened to the thrilling voice of Enrico Caruso on scratchy 78rpm acoustical phonograph records, when if they had simply waited around for about 80 years they could have heard him sing on AC-3 six-discrete channel digital surround sound, better than if you heard him in person.'

I understand, as well, that Professor McFarland is being honored for his lucid, articulate, dispassionate investigations with a Doctorate in "The Joys of Revisionist Hindsight."

Prayers for our boys and girls who offered up their lives for the preservation of freedom in every and any horrible conflict we call "WAR," using whatever means was available to them at the time, is, of course, voluntary.

Sincerely,

George E. Schatz  
Highland Park, IL 60035

~~"I hope this contribution helps defray the expenses of the new, 1995 Membership Roster. And I might add that I have nothing but respect for our 398th Bomb Group officers. I say that they are our "national treasures," and our country is better because of them."~~

~~*Frank Lewis, Mobile, AL 36608-4350.*~~

"Thanks for the new roster, which I just received. That cross-index is really appreciated. The enclosed check will help with the printing and postage."

~~*Kenneth M. Orndorf, Woodward, PA 16882-0136*~~

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for sending to us the LIFE magazine pages which you received from Mr. Kohout. I also wish to thank you for taking the time to have them laminated which is a tremendous help to our archives people. Because this museum will focus on the people who served in the Eighth Air Force, it means a great deal to receive personal items. These items form the backbone of our collection. The exhibit design work is underway, so we are in the process of incorporating such articles into the exhibits."

*Gary Miller, Museum, Director, Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum*

# Monument Fund Financial Report

The monument Fund was created in 1982 for the perpetual care of the monument and plot of ground owned by the Association at Nuthampstead, England. The Fund is a segregated account administered by a three-member committee comprised of Robert Wiggins, chairman; W.A. McLaughlin; and Albert Turney.

Monies in the Fund came from members' donations, supplemented by revenue produced by the book, "REMEMBRANCES."

The monies are held in a "Working Capital Management Account" opened in 1993 with the Merrill Lynch brokerage firm and are invested in long-term corporate bonds yielding at least 7% annually.

The Monument care and maintenance is administered by the American Battle Monuments Commission.

## FINANCIAL DETAILS—

1993	Opening balance	\$51,093
	Interest income	1,919
	Monument maintenances	1,700
	Annual broker's fee	80
	Year-end account market value	\$53,126
1994	Interest income	\$ 3,838
	Monument maintenance	1,500
	Annual broker's fee	80
	Year-end account market value	\$48,203*
	*Reflects market price fluctuations	
1995	Interest income (Nov. 30, 1995)	\$ 4,036
	Monument maintenance (not yet received)	
	Annual broker's fee	80
	Account market value (Nov. 30, 1995)	\$57,067

—Submitted by ROBERT WIGGINS