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398th BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION • 8th AIR FORCE • 1st AIR DIVISION • NUTHAMPSTEAD, ENGLAND

VOL. 14 NO. 2

FLAK NEWS

APRIL 1999

## Trelleborg's Tidningen

TRELLEBORG, SWEDEN

SEPTEMBER 13, 1944

**"A hard struggle took place yesterday at the relatively low altitude over the roadstead outside Trelleborg. The final phase of the battle was clearly seen this beautiful September day from the harbour and from on the ships lying there.**

**"It was a damaged American Flying Fortress, which was followed over Swedish territorial water by a German Messerschmitt."**

## Oklahoma City

It's only April now, but August will come quickly enough. Now is the time for 398th members and friends to make plans for the 16th annual reunion – August 25-26-27-28, 1999.

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK.

Hotel reservations for the Marriott are included in FLAK NEWS, along with the Official Registration Form on Page 3.

And all the necessary information on the various activities are recorded on Page 2.

## All "KIA" Just Wasn't So

The man had been listed by the 398th Bomb Group as having been killed in action as of September 12, 1944. He and all the others on the James Fields B-17 of the 602nd Squadron. All marked "KIA".

They went down in the Baltic Sea after not one, but two encounters with German Fighters.

Now, 55 years later, it turns out that Lyman N. Cranston, Jr. is alive and well and living in Florida. His name will NOT appear on the stained glass Memorial Window at Anstey, after all.

Cranston was the co-pilot on the Fields crew and his story of escaping death in the Baltic Sea, and his subsequent return to the United States comes under the heading of "slightly incredible."

And having played through this scenario without knocking over a mountain of Air Force paper work smacks of, "it just fell through the cracks."

After almost 30 minutes in the frigid Baltic Sea, he was rescued by the Swedish Navy. His plane was downed by an ME 109 "just when we all thought we would make it safely to Sweden...and internment."

He was pulled from the sea by his Swedish rescuers, along with Fields, badly bruised and missing a leg.

"He was dead when they pulled him in." said Cranston.

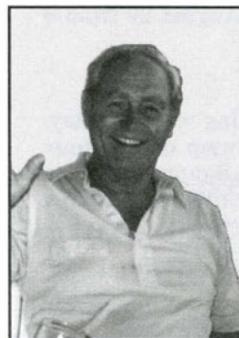
Only one other crewman was found. Navigator Goodrich White's body washed up on shore near Trelleborg, on Sweden's southern tip.

Reflecting on the loss of all his comrades after reaching shore, Cranston said to his rescuers –

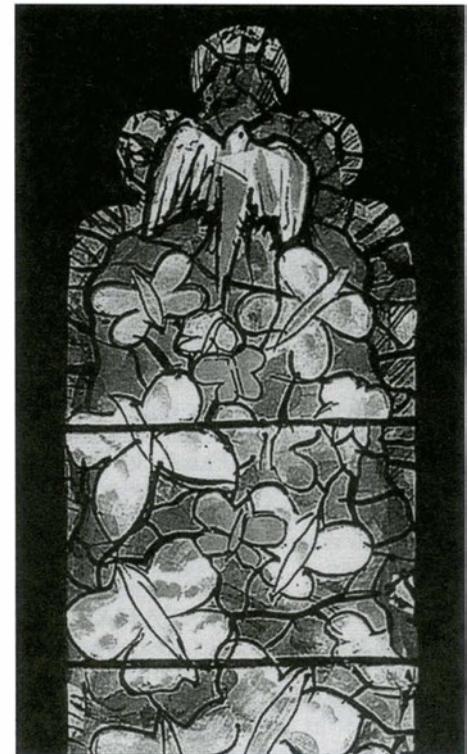
*Continued on Page 8.*



LYMAN CRANSTON  
1944



1998



The BUTTERFLIES on the Anstey Memorial Window can serve to remind members that they can fly to England for the dedication in June 2000. See Page 4 for more details.

# OUR NEXT REUNION

## Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

August 25-28, 1999

The 16th annual reunion of the 398th Bomb Group will be held in Oklahoma City, OK on August 25-28, 1999, the final official get-together before the new millennium.

Oklahoma City, land of the football Sooners, big oil and cowboys, will open their All-American city to the 398th veterans, families and friends.

And heading up the greeting party will be James R. (Dick) Frazier with the title of Reunion Chairman. And cochairing will be his wife, Junice. Dick has served the 398th for many years as a member of the Board of Directors. He paid his combat dues with 35 missions as pilot in the 602nd Squadron.

### REUNION FACTS

#### HEADQUARTERS HOTEL

Oklahoma Marriott Hotel. 3233 Northwest Expressway; Oklahoma City, OK 73112. Telephone (405) 842-6633. Special 398th Bomb Group rate: \$75.00 per day. See enclosed hotel reservation envelope.

#### BACKUP MOTEL

Day's Inn, 2801 NW 39th St., Oklahoma City, OK 73112. (I-44 & N May, Exit #124). Telephone (405) 946-0741 or 1-800-992-3297. Special 398th Bomb Group rate: \$40.00. Group block #261732. Day's Inn is located three miles from the Marriott.

#### REGISTRATION

You may clip out the Official Registration Form on Page 3 or make a photo copy. Fill in completely, tabulate the costs, including \$10.00 registration fee, and mail to the Reunion Chairman. You will receive by return mail a photo copy signed by the Chairman.

#### LET'S SEE OKC TOUR

A wonderful way to get acquainted with the reunion city. Tours set for Wednesday, August 25, 1 to 4 PM for the early arrivals; and on Friday, August 27 from 9 AM to 1 PM. See the Cowboy Hall of Fame, Myriad Gardens, Bricktown, the Murrah Building bomb site; the world's largest stockyards, the Zoo, and much more. All via motor coach with tour guide.

#### KIRKPATRICK CENTER TOUR

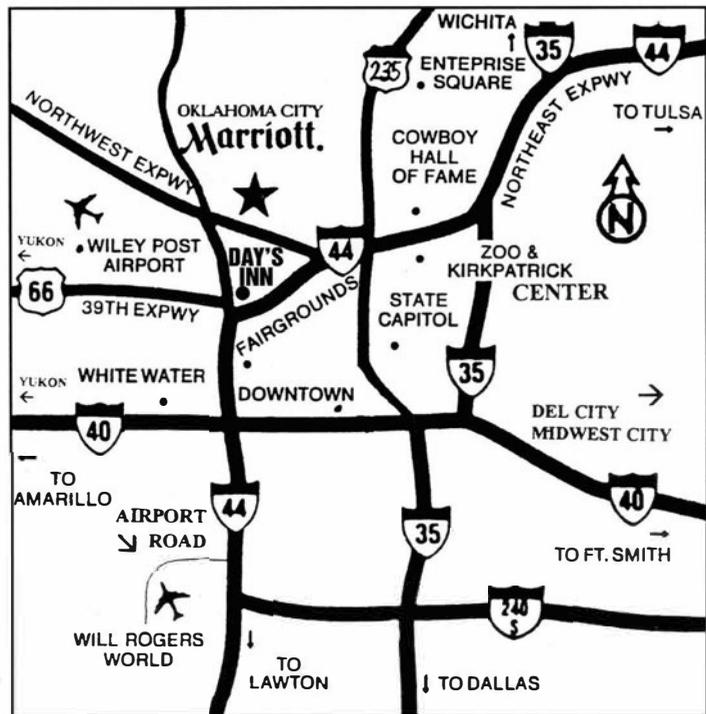
A group of interesting museums within a museum. See the Air Space Museum with vintage aircraft dating back to the 20's; Photography Hall of Fame; the Planetarium; Laserscope of the Grand Canyon; the Green Arcade with its gardens and horticulture exhibits; the Omniplex exhibit for people of all ages; and much more. This tour set for Thursday, August 26 from 9 AM to Noon.

#### LADIES MALL TOUR

While the men are at their business meeting on Thursday, August 26 from 2 to 4 PM, the ladies can jump on the tour coach at the same time and head for the Penn Square Mall, the finest mall in OKC. Shopping, looking, snacking, or perhaps touching up the coiffure.

#### TINKER AIR FORCE BASE

Friday, August 7, 8:30 AM to 1:30 PM. Check out one of our nation's best and most modern AF bases. A tour of the base with guide, finishing with lunch at the Officers Club.



#### HISTORIC GUTHRIE

An all-day tour to what used to be Oklahoma's capitol city. It's like a step back in time, because most of the city's buildings date back to the historic land run of 1889. It's called the Williamsburg of the West. See all these, plus the Scottish Rite Temple, the largest Masonic complex in the world; plus a tour of the historic homes. Lunch at a place called Granny Had One. And perhaps a bit of shopping at the infamous Blue Belle Saloon.

#### GOLF

Lake Hefner Golf Course. 36 holes of the best golfing layout in Oklahoma City will be at the disposal of the 398th golfers. And it is located only three miles from the Marriott Hotel and six from Day's Inn. Golfers should mark their Registration Forms in the proper boxes if they wish to play on Wednesday, Thursday & Friday. Car pools will be arranged and ready to leave the lobby of the Marriott at 6:30 AM each morning. There is a restaurant in the club house. Green fees are \$19.51, which includes a half a cart. The pro at Lake Hefner is Ailse Hyden.

#### SPECIAL NOTE

All tour prices are based on full coaches. The tour company reserves the right to reduce the number of coaches if registrations fall short. Each coach will be staffed by a professional tour guide.



# OFFICIAL REGISTRATION FORM

398th Bomb Group Memorial Association 16th Annual Reunion  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma August 25-28, 1999

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN AUGUST 1, 1999

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ WIFE \_\_\_\_\_ SQD. \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP+4 \_\_\_\_\_

NAMES OF OTHERS IN PARTY. PLEASE PRINT FOR NAME TAGS

## WEDNESDAY, August 25 —

Golf	6:30 AM	Meet in Lobby	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Registration	9:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Salon A-B		
Let's See OKC Tour	1:00 PM to 5:00 PM	Tour Coach	\$29.00 x _____	\$ _____
Board Officers Meeting	7:00 PM	Salon C		

## THURSDAY, August 26 —

Golf	6:30 AM	Meet in Lobby	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Registration	9:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Salon A-B		
Kirkpatrick Center Tour	9:00 AM to 12:00 PM	Tour Coach	\$22.00 x _____	\$ _____
Ladies Mall Tour	2:00 PM to 4:00 PM	Tour Coach	\$13.00 x _____	\$ _____
Group Business Meeting	2:00 PM	Grand Ballroom		
No Host Cocktails	6:00 PM	Lounge		
Welcome Banquet	7:00 PM	Grand Ballroom	\$26.00 x _____	\$ _____

(Table reservations required)

## FRIDAY, August 27 —

Golf	6:30 AM	Meet in Lobby	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Registration	9:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Salons A-B		
Tinker AF Base Tour	8:30 AM to 1:30 PM	Tour Coach	\$29.00 x _____	\$ _____
Let's See OKC Tour	9:00 AM to 1:00 PM	Tour Coach	\$29.00 x _____	\$ _____
Dinner on your own				

## SATURDAY, August 28 —

Registration	9:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Salons A-B		
Historic Guthrie Tour	9:00 AM to 4:00 PM	Tour Coach	\$37.00 x _____	\$ _____
No Host Cocktails	6:00 PM	Lounge		
Farewell Banquet	7:00 PM	Grand Ballroom	\$31.00 x _____	\$ _____

(Table reservations required)

Registration Fee (per person, 2 maximum per family)	\$10.00 x _____	\$ _____
1999 Dues (if applicable)	\$10.00 x _____	\$ _____

**TOTAL** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I/We will be staying at the:  Marriott Hotel  
 Day's Inn  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete the form, enclose check, and mail to:

James R. (Dick) Frazier 398th  
Bomb Group Reunion  
Norman, OK 73069-9612

Received \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**James R. (Dick) Frazier**

A copy of this form will be mailed to registrant upon receipt of check or money order, payable to 398th Bomb Group Reunion.

# Tourists Will See Czech Celebrations

The Year 2000 Tour of the 398th, already assured of being the biggest and best of all previous visits to England and the continent, got even bigger recently with the news that the city of Pilsen, Czech Republic, will be staging millennium events during the week of the 398th visit.

The Pilsen Region will be 1000 years old next year, and the 100-plus 398th tour members will be in the city during the celebrations. This will take place during June 13-17, 2000, the week following the group's visit to Nuthampstead and the dedication of the Memorial window at St. George's Church at Anstey.

Those who have already indicated they wish to go on the tour will soon be receiving special Registration Forms from Barbara Fish. This will include tour prices and official itinerary. Persons wishing to be added to the tour list should contact her toll free at 1-800-423-5454.

Among the other activities scheduled for the Czech portion of the tour will be a visit to the world famous Hotel School at Marianski Lazne (formerly Marianbad). Also a stop at Litice, where there is a memorial to the 602 Ferguson crew shot down on the Last Mission on April 25, 1945.

And no visit to the Czech Republic would be complete without shopping for that famous Czech glassware. A store in Pilsen will be open especially for 398th tour members.

The Year 2000 Tour starts on June 7, with scheduled SAS flights to Copenhagen from Seattle and Newark, with immediate connections to London. Coaches will be at Heathrow for the one-hour trip to Cambridge and the Holiday Inn.

Friends of the 398th chairman Wilfrid Dimsdale and his committee are arranging the activities at the old base.

As of press time, this was the loading list:

Wally Blackwell & Teedy; Dewey Cook & Effie; Arnie Schneider & Marie; Gertrude and Karen Neff; Bob Hart & Eloise; David Mills; Bill Engle & Norma; Ted Gulyas & Margaret; Maurice Fletcher & Betty; Lou Stoffer & Betty; John Cosco & Rosemary; Howard Traeder & Jane; Helen Beatovich Beam & Patty Hass; Mary & Cate Ludlam; Sidney Beshunsky & Mary; Ralph McIntyre & Jewell; Russ Reed & Millie; Lowell Culver; Keith Anderson & Chuckie; Bill Fisher & Fran; Hamilton Mero & Mary; Hank Rudow & Louise; Ben Core & Polly Anna; Arthur Flatt & Jean; Walter Wolff & Phyllis; Paul Roderick & Margaret; Peter Krause & Sharon; Joe Roberge; Merwyn Hornshuh; Bill Markham; Joe Mansell & Willetta; Harry Overbaugh & Susan; Bob Knowles & Elaine; Harold Clyne & Marilyn; Homer Campbell & Meg; Elliot Novek & Connie; Jean Madlung, Randy Madlung, Nancy Zeller & Cherry Ross; Bill Markley & Ada; Ross Moxey; Charles Sutton; Arthur Watson & Phyllis; Clinton Slusher & Rowena; Chuck Sasse; Jan Kolb; Bill Dean & Pat; Joe Joseph & Rozanne; Jean Stange; Randy Stange; Bill McLaughlin & Kathy; George Hilliard & Elaine; Phil Swan; Charles Hough; William R. Cole & Ellen; Ben Ruckel; Allen & Geg Ostrom, Tour Coordinators; Barbara Fish, Consultant

# 398th TOURS: Been There, Done That

Anstey	Clervaux	Ettal	Liege	Merseburg	Pilsen	Stone
Ardennes	Cologne	Frankfurt	Litice	Moosberg	Portsmouth	Stone-on-Trent
Baldock	Copenhagen	Garmisch	Loch Lomond	Munich	Prague	Stonehenge
Bastogne	Coventry	Glasgow	London	Neuss	Remagen	Tivoli
Beauleau	Dachau	Hadrian's Wall	Luxembourg	Normandy	Rothenburg	Utah Beach
Bingen	Derby	Heerlen	Lymington	Nuthampstead	St. Avold	Versailles
Blackpool	Dover	Hendon	Macclesfield	Oberammergau	Ste. Marie	Waterloo
Boppard	Dusseldorf	Hitchen	Madingly	Omaha Beach	Dumont	Wildboardclough
Caen	Duxford	High Wycombe	Maidstone	Oostende	Ste. Mere Eglise	Windsor
Cambridge	Edinburgh	Karlovy Vary	Malmedy	Oxford	Salisbury	Wurzburg
Canterbury	Eisenach	Kilmarnock	Margaraten	Paris	Snettisham	Zons
Cheshunt	Eisleben	Leipzig	Marianski Lazne	Penn	Southampton	Zugspitze

# Flag and Family Will Be There

Jack Madlung stood at GI attention at the Luxembourg cemetery along with the other 1988 tour members when Ralph Hall and Bill Markley presented a floral piece in honor of the 398th men killed in action. One member of Hall's crew is buried there - Darrell Argubright. And one of the US Army's all time heroes - Gen. George S. Patton. But when the trumpeter came on to play, "America The Beautiful", Madlung wrote later, "Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined anything so powerful. There was a lump in my throat and my

legs felt like jelly."

He was an emotional man. "What you see is what you get." Months ago, he placed his name on the England, 2000 tour list. He wanted one more trip. Maybe even another ride in one of the Friends' AT-6's up on the old airfield. He made the Taps list, instead.

He was buried in Monticello, Indiana, his casket draped with an American flag signifying his status as an Air Force veteran.

That flag will be carried to Nuthampstead in June 2000 by his widow, Jean. And at

# Burma Star and 398th Hook up

What does the 398th Bomb Group have in common with The Burma Star, British veterans organization of the World War II campaign in Burma?

(Americans can kinda' relate with the CBI (China-Burma-India Theatre).

The other connection is the editor of the "2 & 3 Wireless Observer Units" newsletter, Wallace F. Noble, Edgware, Middx, England.

He has a brother in Issaquah, WA, also the home of Keith Anderson, 600 pilot, and Board member. The brother gave Keith a copy of the excellent English Burma Star newsletter and Keith responded with a copy of FLAK NEWS.

Would you believe that the Burma Star folks installed a stained glass window at the Barkway Church, honoring their fallen comrades left behind in the Burma jungle?

Barkway is two miles from Nuthampstead and Anstey, where the 398th will dedicate a stained glass window in June, 2000.

As Editor Noble wrote -

"I'm sure the two memorials will be of outstanding interest during their visit. The joining together of two theaters of war within two English villages whose inhabitants peacefully exist within the Hertfordshire countryside, will forever be reminded of those who died that they might live in peace and tranquility."

Noble said he will be on hand for the Anstey dedication.

some point during that visit, Jack's flag will be raised at the Memorial pole, and Jean and the three Madlung children, Randy, Nancy and Cherry, will have an opportunity to experience the same stirring felt by Jack at another ceremony a dozen years earlier.

Later, the flag will be flown at the tall pole near the old tower. A 398th veterans' flag has flown continuously, day and night, on that pole since the flag program was inaugurated in 1988, beginning with the flag of Col Frank P. Hunter, Jr.



## IT WAS A SAD TIME

The saddest day for the residents in the little town of Anstey was Sunday, October 15, 1944. This was the morning that a 398th Fortress with 10 men aboard crashed on take off just south of the main runway. All 10 airmen perished as the lead 603rd ship first struck the trees and then plunged into the moat surrounding what had once been Anstey Castle. Aboard the ill-fated Fortress that day were Charles Khourie, Command of Aircraft; Bill Meyran, pilot; William Vanderlick, navigator; John Baker, MIC navigator; Carlton Moore, bombardier; William Tull, engineer; George Barton, radio operator; Charles Kennedy, ball turret gunner; Victor Petrauskas, waist gunner; and Melvin Brown, tail gunner.

As a little girl, Eunice Fox lived in Anstey and this is how she remembers that fateful morning.

"It was a Sunday morning, a bit misty. I woke up as usual to hear the planes

warming up, as we called it, around 5 a.m. to take off.

"Then suddenly, when still half asleep, I remember hearing this plane making a terrific noise. I lived in a little bungalow on the edge of the moat, and as I looked through my bedroom window I saw the plane. It first hit the tree in the field beyond, and as it came towards us I hid under the bed clothes because I thought it would hit the house.

"Next thing there was a terrific bang as it plunged through the trees and into the side of the great mound. My father and mother were in the next room. We were all shaken. I rushed to our back door, opened it, and quickly shut it again as the heat of the fire was dreadful.

"Within minutes we were surrounded by everything and everybody and told to run for our lives as the plane was loaded with bombs and they could go off. So still in our nightclothes we ran across the

fields. As my neighbor's daughter was getting married the following weekend we took with us her wedding dress and cake.

"We were not allowed to come back for two days. Luckily, the bombs went into the water and were removed later after the moat was drained.

"It was a sad Sunday as all those poor dears died. I was the organist at the church at the time and we had a special service. It is still said that there may be a bomb in that moat. I do not know. It took a long time to clear it all up.

"Where I lived in those days I used to count the planes as they went out and when they came back. Often they would be ragged and torn, with bits hanging off. It was a sad time."

*Reprinted from  
398th Bomb Group REMEMBRANCES*

# "The Greatest Generation" Brokaw's Video Tribute To GI's Stir's Widow

By Reneé Nadel  
Westlake Village, California

Living in California in the same general area all ones life, and still being involved with the "kids" of that generation, our perspective of self and of the "GI heroes" is colored by the past.

I find myself watching the program intently, mesmerized by the related experiences, the photos of the "kids". I cannot watch, yet I cannot turn away. I weep tears for those awakened memories.

My husband Saul, a GI, an Air Force Captain, always young in mind and spirit, survived the chaos of the war, to become a brilliant trial lawyer, father, grandfather and loyal husband. I looked up to him, sought his knowledge, received guidance and support. He represented the best of that generation.

And now engrossed in the program I become aware that daily we are losing one thousand men and women of that era, members of "The Greatest Generation." My husband is included – a statistic that belies his individuality, his identity, my love.

Who are these people? They appear so old. I always thought myself an outsider, yet in reality I am not. There was no difference in our ages then. He told me war stories, proudly showing me his medals and pictures of the planes he flew. I told him how we bought stamps, bonds and knitted socks. In some small way I am part of that history.

Saul and I began our life but 11 years apart. What happened? When did we grow so far apart in age from this generation of children that it is so difficult to relate to their music, their dress, their contrary comments of parental and social relationships? Most disturbing, and with good reason, is that many lost their dads in defense of a country that exists only in memory. The political and social fabric of the nation was forever changed with the Korean and Viet Nam wars. These children cannot now understand why so many were sacrificed, for what reason, for what moral and holy crusade. Have we failed to make them a part of that history?

Now alone, I feel like I ought to be in a zone for misplaced persons. I don't belong anywhere. Yet I survive despite all. Where do I fit in? Who am I?

Am I reflecting or rejecting? Where, in this pattern of life, do I reside? They were all heroes, all of them. We reap the benefits of their supreme effort and read stories to our grandchildren of a time they can hardly know. I knitted the socks and bought the savings stamps. Can I really tell my children how proud I am to be a member, even by association, with these very special people who made this country what it is today?

Saul is gone. I will have the "kids" I went to school with and the wonderful new and dear friends I have met on my journey through the years. However, it will not be too much longer that I will be able to share my conflicted feelings and know that there are others who understand just where we fit into this big picture. One thousand daily! Gone but never to be forgotten.

More and more I feel distanced and apart from our heroes. No, I am not a part of them, just very proud to have known and loved just one special Captain of their group.

## EDITORS NOTE –

Saul Nadel served the 398th Bomb Group as a navigator on the Franklin Taylor and Dwight Ross lead crews of the 602nd Squadron. Reneé Nadel was moved to write the foregoing words after seeing the PBS video based on Tom Brokaw's book, "The Greatest Generation." She describes her feelings as "personal thoughts of a survivor of that generation."

# 398th BOMB GROUP

## First Combat Anniversary



# May 6, 1945

## Anniversary Program

... time		place
1300	Free Beer--Festivities Begin	Picnic Area Barrel House NCO Club Officers' Club
1330	Picnic Lunch Serving until 1600	Picnic Area Officers' Mess
1400	Carnival Begins Opening Salute by Divisionaires Band Special Novelty Acts	Picnic Area
1430	Baseball Game 364th Fighter Gp. vs. 398th Bomb Gp.	Hardball Diamond
1530	Field Meet Begins Relay Contests Track Events Prizes to Winners	Picnic Area
1600	Tea Dance for Enlisted Men and guests	Barrel House
1800	Star Studded Variety Show	Hangar A
1930	Dancing Enlisted Men--Flying Eagles' Band Officers--Astor Club Band	Hangar A Officers' Club
2000	Buffet Supper	Hangar A Officers' Club
2300	Taps	Everywhere

Aero Club: Lounge open to guests only  
Barrel Club: Open only to Enlisted Men and guests  
NCO and Officers' Club: For members only and their guests  
Religious Services will be held as usual

In Event of Rain outdoor activities will be held in Hangar A

# The Wakefield Watch.

Vol. I, No. 12

Of, by and for men of the USS WAKEFIELD

16 April, 1944

## AROUND THE GLOBE \*\* NEWS IN BRIEF

STOCKHOLM--Swedish customs officers seized a number of German-printed military maps of Sweden today. The maps were in unlabeled packages, and were addressed to German headquarters in Oslo, Norway.

\* \* \*

MOSCOW--A dispatch late today said that Russian troops are now within the suburbs of Sevastopol. Airfields at northern and southern ends of the city have been taken.

\* \* \*

NAPLES--Two waves of Allied troops penetrated 3 miles into the German defenses near Anzio today. This successful action was supported by tanks.

NAPLES--An unidentified tail gunner on an American Flying Fortress had an amazing story to tell his C.O. a few days ago: This gunner fell from 6 kilometers in the sky--without a parachute--and lived to tell about it! In fact, all he had to show for his dizzy plunge was a scratch on his chin! The bomber was on its 13th mission, a routine flight, far from its home base. The gunner tells his story: "The navigator had just called out our altitude as 5 kilometers 940 meters, when I felt a sudden jolt....It seemed as if our plane had hit a stone wall....I was

MOSCOW--Drama behind the war in the Crimea was revealed today by the Russian news agency Pravda in a story telling of how Russian engineers rebuilt a bridge over the Dneiper River. Soviet engineer troops fought against its waters and an almost constant German artillery barrage to build a temporary bridge. Men worked in the icy waters for 16 hours to install sandbag pylons, not withstanding the German artillery and Nazi bombers. A strong wind sprang up, which threatened to blow the whole structure away. Finally, the gap was closed, linking the Ukraine and the Crimea, and hordes of Soviet troops poured over the structure to pursue the fleeing Nazis.

pinned beneath ammunition boxes by the force of the impact....Screwing my neck around, I saw a B17 going down....I got the impression that we had collided with it for we were in a heavy cloud bank at the time....I could feel that we were spinning and falling at a terrific rate of speed...I was praying....Then, suddenly, our fall was stopped by what seemed to be a large cushion....Looking out, I saw the limbs of a large tree on which the buds were just beginning to form....I thought that I must be dead, and that I must now be in heaven....I could hear a crackling sound, and then I realized the ship must be on fire...so, I got the ammo boxes off my legs, found my shoes, dug out 3 bars of candy, and opened the turret door to climb out...only then did I realize my greatest shock....The tail section was the only part that was there! (about 18 ft. of it)....I still don't know how I came out of it alive."

....TRUTH IS STRANGER THAN FICTION!....

BURMA--Allies are now in control of all of the Imphal sector in the Indian state of Manipur. Chinese 38th Division forces are moving down from the north and have captured 2 villages. To capture these localities, the Chinese had to cross four rivers in three miles through blazing elephant grass.

PACIFIC ACTION---Japanese targets on the Kuriles, New Guinea, New Ireland, Bougainville, and the Admiralty Islands were attacked by Allied planes today.

UP N/ DOWN  
HAPPY OOPING!

# REMEMBERING THE WAR

Here are a couple of FLAK NEWS pages devoted to remembering some of those historical days of 1944-45.

The "Wakefield Watch" will be remembered by those men who began their journey to Nuthampstead not by air but by ship. The 398th Bomb Group Ground Echelon, under the command of Col. Earl Berryhill and Maj. Jack Garland, entrained from Rapid City, SD, on April 4, 1944 and arrived at Camp Myles Standish on April 7. They boarded the USS Wakefield (formerly luxury liner Manhattan) in Boston on April 12 and sailed on April 13. Eight days later, April 21, 1944, they docked at Liverpool.

On April 22 the Ground Echelon arrived at Station 131, there to greet the first planes of the Air Echelon headed by Col. Frank P. Hunter, Jr. Already at the base was Maj. John Weibel, Deputy CO, and his Advance Echelon party who had arrived on April 5, 1944.

While aboard the Wakefield, in the company of thousands of other GI's and airmen headed for war, more than a few of the passengers endured the rolling seas wishing someone would end their sea-sick misery by tossing them into the Atlantic.

An unsympathetic shipboard editor (a seaman) made light of these personal agonies in his column, "Naupathia And How To Recognize It." Note the editor's closing epitaph--

"HAPPY OOPING!"

However, he did report the amazing story of a B-17 tail gunner who fell to ground from 18,000 feet in his severed tail section and lived to tell about it.

The 398th held celebrations for the group's 50th (Munich July 16) and 100th (Brunswick Oct. 22) missions. And also for the First Combat Anniversary (Page 6) on May 6, 1945. This was to mark the group's first mission on May 6, 1944 to Sottevast, France. (The REAL first missions came on the two following days, May 6 and 7, both to Berlin.

Victory in Europe came on May 8, 1945. A week later, May 13, the 398th was ordered home.

The Air Echelon, B-17's with 10 airmen and 10 passengers, began flying home on May 26, 1945. The Ground Echelon, again under the command of Col. Earl Berryhill, left for home from Glasgow, Scotland aboard the Queen Elizabeth on June 24, 1945.

The 398th Bomb Group was deactivated at Drew Field on September 1, 1945.

## NAUPATHIA AND HOW TO RECOGNIZE IT By John S. Lane, Halc.

To the fellow who flits about the deck with a lemon in one hand and a box of crackers in the other: Do YOU feel dizzy?..Got a headache?..Want to stay near the rail?....Do you think your stomach has dissolved? If you have these symptoms, BROTHER, YOU'VE GOT IT!....The reign of seasickness is becoming an epidemic. Every morning the compartment cleaners drag scores of limp men out of the sand buckets and strew them out on the deck. Officers quietly withdraw to dark corners and are listed as 'missing' for several days...Some of the more violent cases retreat to sick bay, and instead of sacking-in in a comfortable bunk, tread a beaten path to the head....Others, with ghastly faces, try to laugh it off by taking up residence on the deck and leaning over the rail with a piece of line..dangling it in the water, pretending to be fishing. The following episode took place in Sick Bay:

Sailor: "Doctor, I don't feel very well!"  
Doctor: "Are you seasick?"  
Sailor: (Lifting his face from the deck where it had been lying)--"HELL, NO!.. I just wanted something to stop my..." (He dashed off wildly to topside, and has not been seen or heard of since....Seriously speaking, there's little a doctor can do..Stay out in the air as much as possible..Eat your meals regularly..Keep your mind on your work, and by all means...FORGET YOURSELF! (Ed.Note:How can you?) Sometimes a little Belladonna will help, but ... only sometimes!

# Navigator's Body Washed Ashore

*Continued from Page 1.*

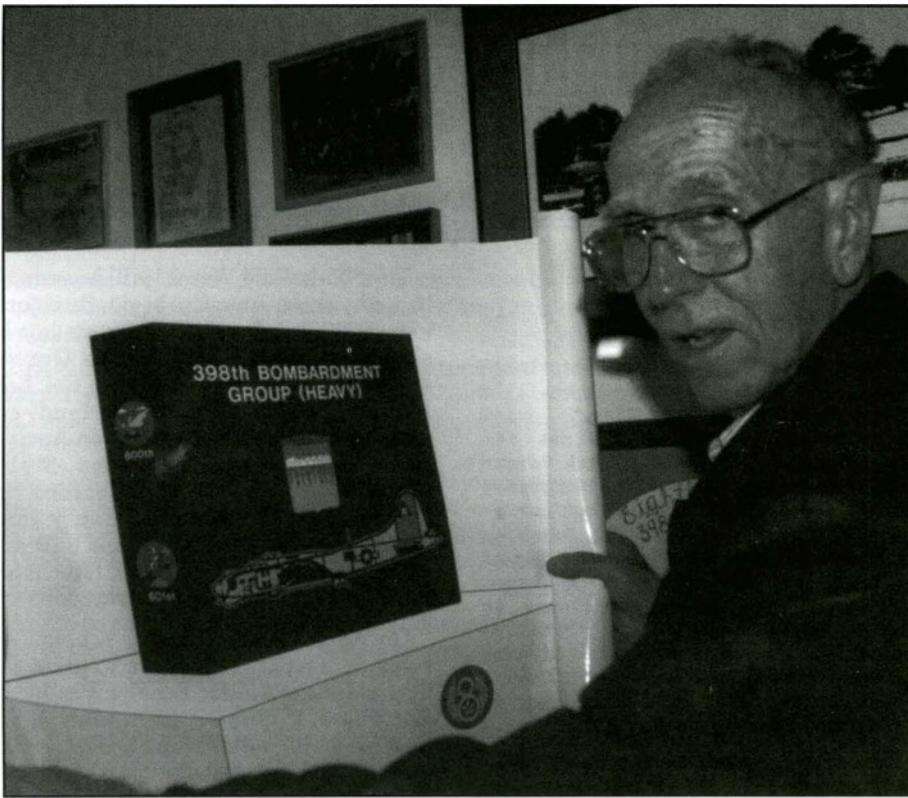
"And here I am still standing on grass." Since that time, and in the ensuing years, "I tried to forget."

What he was trying to forget was the entire mission to Brux, Czechoslovakia... and the loss of his comrades, one of whom he had met only that morning. That would be bombardier Billy Gonser, who was finishing up his mission slate with the Fields crew.

It was one of those long, 10-hour flights, a roundabout way to reach a chemical plant on the German-Czech border. After World War II Brux and surrounding "Sudetenland" was given back to the Czechs and the city is now called "Most".

Three quarters of the way to the target, between Hamburg and Berlin, a Foche Wulf 190 made a quick pass at the 602 squadron. He hit Fields' No. 1 engine, creating a windmill. Soon No. 2 began to fail and there was no way his Fortress could keep up. Some 60 miles from the Baltic Sea, Fields and Cranston opted to try for Sweden, another 60 miles over the water. Nuthampstead was almost 400 miles to the west.

*Continued on Page 9.*



**LOU STOFFER**, member of the 398th Bomb Group Board of Directors, displays an architect's drawing of the memorial proposed for the **Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum** in Savannah, Georgia. President **Wally Blackwell** will explain the plan at the group's annual reunion in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, August 25-28, 1999.

## Aluminum Overcast Tour Schedule

April 1-4	Kissimmee, FL
April 5-10	Kissimmee, FL (P-51 Gathering of Mustangs)
April 11-17	Lakeland, FL
April 18	Fort Myers, FL
April 22-25	Cartersville, GA
April 26	Fulton Co. GA Airport
April 27	Carrollton, GA
April 28	Marietta, GA
April 29	Peach Tree City, GA
April 30-May 2	Lawrenceville, GA
May 4-6	Charlotte-Douglas, NC
May 7-9	Pinehurst-Moore, NC
May 10-11	Asheville, NC
May 12-13	Salisbury-Rowan County, NC
May 14-16	Hickory, NC
May 20-21	White Sulphur Springs, WV
May 22-23	Winchester, VA
May 24-31	Wash. DC Area
June 3-20	Newark, NJ Area
June 24-30	Cleveland Area
July 2-4	Aurora, IL
July 5-15	Chicago Area
July 16-18	Racine, WI
July 24	Sturgeon Bay, WI
July 28-Aug. 3	Oshkosh, WI

## Quarterly Dues States

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

## 55 YEARS LATER 603rd PILOT REMEMBERED

On the Wall of Valor at the 8th Air Force Museum in Savannah is a plaque that reads, "1st Lt. Paul Rich 603rd Sq. 398th BG." And beneath these letters, "English Boy, 13".

Paul Rich was killed on November 21, 1944 over Merseburg, the pilot of one of five 603rd planes to go down that day under Foch Wulf 190 guns. Those plus two more that crash landed on the continent.

But who was the "English Boy, 13" who contributed the plaque in Rich's honor?

"Special Correspondent" Ralph Ambrose has the answer --

"Frederick Seaman and I were evacuees from London, living near the base. As 13-year-olds we rode the school bus together to Buntingford, all the time swapping stuff we picked up around the base, like 50 calibre ammo, leggings, helmets and the like."

"Fred met Lt. Rich at the base hospital one day and even signed his leg cast. He had broken it playing football."

"Fred went to see him at his tent later, only to learn he had been shot down."

A half century later, this same Frederick Seaman, now living in Florida, came to Savannah to honor his friend.

## FORMATIONS

**Brux, Czechoslovakia  
September 12, 1944**

**LEAD SQUADRON (601)**

**PETERSEN**

**Lamb**

**DeLancey**

**FRAZIER**

**Dalton**

**Stallcup**

**McCarty**

**Curtis**

**Sitler**

**Hunt**

**Rogers**

**Marias**

**Conrow**

**Morrison**

**LOW SQUADRON (600)**

**PAPPAS**

**Rice**

**Ballard**

**Scott, W.F.**

**Slavin**

**Mann**

**Atkinson Matthews Hansard Zimmer**

**HOLSTEAD**

**Cummings**

**McLaughlin**

**HIGH SQUADRON (602)**

**Scott, E.D.**

**Hancock**

**Hough**

**Leukardt**

**Rudow**

**Ertler Hall**

**Griffin Hershberger**

**Fields**

**Connolly**

**Buzza**

## Nuthampstead Was 400 Miles Away

*Continued from Page 8.*

White plotted a course for Trelleborg, near Malmo, and the fast-failing B-17 appeared on its way to safety. The Swedish coastline was in sight.

Suddenly, the plane's guns opened fire and at the same time the ship was rocked by an explosion, caught by an ME-109.

"We were immediately on fire and Fields rang the bail-out bell. I got to the front hatch and motioned for White to jump. He said, 'go ahead' and so I jumped.

"At the same time I hit the water the plane also hit and exploded. It came in on fire at 45 degrees. Nobody still in the plane could have survived that crash."

(See accompanying reports from the Swedish Navy as their ships sped to the downed B-17, less than two miles from the outer beacon off Trelleborg).

Cranston was treated at the Trelleborg hospital and later transferred to Falun, north of Stockholm. Here he was interned for over three months with many other Allied airmen who had similarly found refuge in neutral Sweden. (This "hospitality" also included downed German airmen.)

Cranston's return to England was accompanied via a clandestine airline operated by Norwegian explorer/pilot,

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## Cranston Returned In Bomb Bay Of B-24

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Bernt Balchen, a USAF colonel. Huddled in the converted bomb bay of a B-24 with several other internees, Cranston was returned on December 23, 1944 with the station in a state of heightened activity related to the Battle of the Bulge taking place on the continent.

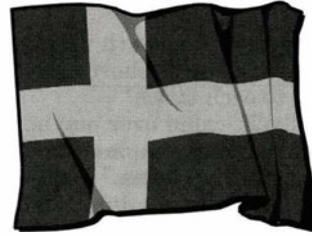
He had a brief meeting with Capt. E.D.Scott, who had assumed him to have been killed with the rest of the crew, as it was reported on the group Intelligence Report. All his personal belongings had been efficiently removed by squadron staff for subsequent shipment to his family.

He returned quickly to the U.S., where he "tried to forget."

Fields' body was returned to his hometown after the war. White is buried at the Brittany Cemetery in France.

The names of bombardier Gonser, engineer Edward Mullendore, radio operator Richard Goodman and gunners Marvin Leach, James Somers and George Van Luven are inscribed on the Wall of the Missing at Cambridge, England.

# Swedish Navy Witnessed Death of Fortress



## REPORT (Translation)

*To CO of the Navy Command-Area Malmoe.*  
I hereby beg to give a report regarding a crashed American aircraft outside Trelleborg.

The 12th of September at 1240 a four-engined bomber was observed when it flew in direction of the Trelleborg harbour. At the same time shots being heard from the sea. At the outer beacon it suddenly made a turn to the right at the same time as it started to dive. When I also saw flames coming out from the right wing I immediately ordered all navy vessels in the harbour to sailing out for rescue.

In the harbour I had the Picket-boats VB 28, HJVB 201 and Antares, the Minesweeper M19, and with engine trouble - Picket-boat HJVB 341.

Outside the harbour on the roadstead we had Picket-boat HJVB 202 and lightship No. 8.

When the aircraft crashed into the water all ships, except for HJVB 341, were on their way out to the place. After the crash a black cloud of smoke covered the whole place. When the cloud had disappeared the plane was partly seen over the surface of water. After another couple of minutes everything of the plane had disappeared.

When we arrived to the place for the crash, 1.5 nautic miles in heading 180 degrees from the outer beacon, we only found small objects floating on the water. Small pieces of aluminum and plywood were scattered all over the place.

We took on board two big life rafts and two small, one map-case, five oxygen bottles, one fuel tank in rubber and finally a burnt leather jacket.

Personnel in the lightship's lifeboat reported that they had seen two men parachuted from the plane. VB 28, Antares and M19 left their lifeboats at the place in case there would be any more survivors.

The two picket-boats VB 28 and Antares and the minesweeper M19 started searching for survivors in west direction.

At 1600 an area of 100 square miles had been searched without finding anything. All boats returned to the harbour at 1645.

Just before the darkness VB 28 made a last search on the place for the crash.

(Enclosed with this report is also the report from picket-boat HJVB 202 that rescued the survived crew member.)

*Picket-boat VB 28, the 14th September 1944  
Stig Flodén, Commanding Officer 32nd  
Picket-Boat div.*

## REPORT (Translation)

*To the Commander of the Navy Command-Area Malmoe.*

Tuesday the 12th of September at 1230 we observed a Flying Fortress followed by a fighter plane outside Trelleborg within 2 and 3 nautic miles from the coast.

We could clearly see an exchange of fire between the two planes, and suddenly we saw fire and smoke coming out from the bombers right wing.

The bomber began to dive, and at the same time it made a sharp bank to the right. In a moment we could see two men bailing out from what I would guess an altitude of 300 meter. The fire spread rapidly now to the entire aircraft, and when it finally hit the water a large area became covered with smoke and fire from burning fuel.

Then fighter plane disappeared to the south.

At that moment we were out on the roadstead in patrol-duty, and I ordered immediately full speed ahead on our picket-boat HJVB 202. We reached the place for the crash in 15 minutes. First we found a dead man who was taken on board, and then about 200 meter west we discovered a survivor. When we had got him safe on-board, we say that he was very weak and in bad condition, but we tried to take care of him in the best way we could.

After that we took them to the harbour in Trelleborg and both the dead body and the only survivor were handed over to military authorities under supervision by nursing staff.

The two men were found at latitude 55 19.7 north and 0 13 08.5 east.

*H.M. HJVB 202, the 13th of September 1944  
(His Majesty's Picket-boat 202)  
S. Arvenas, CO*

# Letters, Letters

"I feel happy and proud that I could make a small contribution toward that beautiful Anstey Memorial window in our special and lovely old church in memory of those brave young men who flew from Nuthampstead. It must have been terrifying for you all."

"What a wonderful bunch of people the 398th veterans and friends alike for hitting the target in such a short time. It goes to show how much we all mean to each other."

"The B-17 from Duxford, Sally B, came over our house recently with smoke pouring from one inner engine. It reminded me of 1944-45 seeing you boys returning home."

"We are all looking forward to your visit in June, 2000."

**Jean Mustoe, Royston, Herts SG8 7DL, England.**

"My wife, Sherry, and I have funded an endowment at Penn State University to preserve and expand archives and material related to the Eighth Air Force during World War II."

"This collection is housed at the Pattee/Paterno Library at the university and can be seen upon request when visiting the Library."

"The endowment is named in memory of Sherry's father, Albert M. Petska, who was a pilot in the 602nd Squadron of the 398th Bomb Group."

"As baby boomers, Sherry and I realize that what we have attained in our lives and what freedoms we have retained as a country, we owe to Al Petska and men like him. May God bless you all."

"Should some of the 398th men wish to add to this fund, write to Albert M. Petska Endowment, Penn State University, Pattee/ Paterno Library, University Park, PA 16802."

**George and Sherry (Petska) Middlemas, Chicago, IL 60606.**

"Just a note to thank you for the B-24 article in the January FLAK NEWS. It was so pleasant to read a "straight" article about the Liberator in a B-17 publication. Unfortunately, I guess we Liberator survivors are just as guilty as anyone in taking pot shots. They were two great airplanes, and way down inside I'm sure we all recognize that. I guess the traditional American sense of humor is hard to stifle. Thanks again for the article."

**Charlie Freudenthal, Vienna, VA 22180. 489th Bomb Group, 2nd Air Division, Halesworth, England.**

## WORLD WAR II VETERANS

BY JUDIE TIMM

As a nation we stood holding our breath.

Hoping and praying there would be no more deaths.

These veterans were so young when they left our shores.

They were fighting for our freedom and much, much more.

A cause they believed in 'til death they did fight  
and our hearts were with them throughout their terrible plight.

Some were wounded, some did not return,  
some were prisoners for many years.

But their families kept praying and fought back their fears.

These people are our hero's, they are giants among men. But,  
these humble Veterans simply state

"We would do it again."

Freedom and democracy is what it was about.

After all that they suffered can there be any doubt?

So, we as a nation should kneel and pray  
in thanks to these veterans

for the freedoms we enjoy every day.

*Judie Timm is the widow of Wilber Timm, Engineer-Gunner on the 603 Farenthold crew. She wrote this poem in memory of her late husband, and all World War II veterans. She lives in Sacramento, CA. It is published in FLAK NEWS in time for Armed Forces Day on May 15 and also for Memorial Day on May 30.*



## RDX Mission Recalled

MANY 601 SQUADRON airmen will remember what happened 54 years ago -- April 13, 1945. In this photo, the 398th was on its way to a "war's almost over" milk run to Neumunster, Germany. It turned out to be much more. See FLAK NEWS Vol 3. No.1 and 398th Bomb Group Remembrances.

## 398th BOMB GROUP

SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT - 1998

January 1, 1998 - December 31, 1998

Income:	
Dues	\$7,195.80
Flak News	2,879.94
Memorial	105.00
P.X. Sales	5,770.00
Memory of Fund	534.00
From Monument Fund	2,000.00
Transfer from General Fund	7,043.05
Closed Book Fund	680.19
Checkbook Interest	12.61
Reunion	3,302.57
Roster	805.00
Miscellaneous	180.00

**Total Income \$30,508.16**

Expenses:	
Printing	\$5,523.42
Postage	3,486.81
Telephone	1,346.97
Supplies	630.00
P.X. Restocking	6,225.43
Reunion	2,308.68
Flak News	3,165.25
Miscellaneous	93.74

**Total Expenses \$22,780.30**

**Net Income \$7,727.86**

**Checkbook Balance as of December 31, 1998 \$6,705.53**

### Monument Fund

**1998 Interest Income \$5,071**

**Portfolio Market Value  
January, 1999 \$65,107**

The memorial maintenance is paid through March 1, 1999.

— MARILYN GIBB  
Treasurer

# BRIEF-things

Thanks to some nice "over and above" contributions by lots of nice people, it will be possible to print a new 398th Bomb Group directory this summer ... the rector of Anstey Church, **Rev. Gerald Drew**, is a true blue 398th fan; he wears his 603 cap to church when the Yanks come and holds up a copy of REMEMBRANCES when he preaches ... more UK dues contributors are **Peter Last**, **Kevin Whittaker**, **Bill Bruty**, and **Rev. Drew ... Jim Haas**, our dues manager, appeals to his dues contributors to fill in all the information (name, address, phone, etc.) Ditto for the FLAK NEWS editor when it comes to address changes for our roster and newsletter mailings ... how far from either coast is Oklahoma City? Answer: About the same from either San Francisco or New York (or from either Miami or Seattle) ... FLAK NEWS will try to keep up with our members' "e-mail" and "Web Site" addresses, but you gotta use the "US Mail" to send us the information ... an early reminder to those going on the England tour next year: use **Joe Joseph's** PX at OKC for special gifts to take along (caps, T-shirts, patches, etc.) ... note from **Herb Wilson** on the story about the 398th airmen missing Christmas dinner after their Dec. 24 mission: "We PW's missed ours, too" ... Ouch! the Taps list published last January listed 77 more names than the year before ... and how about this 385th BG tail gunner from Tumwater, WA who built a radio-controlled B-17 with a wing span of eight feet? **Gren Hawes**, the last living survivor of his crew, has a photo of every one of his comrades in their assigned positions in the plane (yes, it really flies) ... some of us ol' guys feel pretty spry when we walk 18 holes on the golf course, but consider **Bob Goren**, waist gunner on the 600 **Earle Ford** crew - he still plays fastpitch softball in a Florida league for guys 75 and over; and also goes "on the road" to Pennsylvania each year for a tournament. **Gen. Buck Shuler** has given up some of his heavy load at the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum in favor of concentrating on the larger issues like corporate fund raising; the new director of overall operations is **Dr. Barry Buxton** and we'll meet him when the 398th goes to Savannah for the September, 2000 reunion ... The Memorial Chapel to be built at the Mighty 8th Museum, looking a little like the Anstey church, should be completed by October; funds are still needed, so mail your check to 8th AFHS Chapel Fund, P.O. Box 1787, Savannah, GA 31402 ... **Paul Droy**, our Jeep-driving Friend of the 398th at Nuthampstead, informs that the museum at Duxford will swap one of their Spitfires for a B-24 currently sitting at Lackland AFB in Texas and will restore it to be a partner with the B-17 Sally B ... In addition to **Reneé Nadel**, many widows were deeply touched by **Tom Brokaw's** "Greatest Generation" story & video ... while **Lyman Cranston** appears to be the only 398th airman to have been interned in Sweden, there were no less than 131 B-17's and B-24's that found their way to the country's southern coast, some to land safely and others to crash land with multiple fatalities ... **Robert J. Beckley's** name got on the 1999 Taps list through error; please note that he is alive and well, living in Michigan ... and special thanks to **Jim & Diana Haas** for their work in keeping track of our dues each quarter, and also those countless number of address and telephone changes (and passing on notes and letters to the FLAK NEWS editor) ... only two Shiners among 2,000 each year from his Aleppo Temple in Massachusetts are awarded the "Wilson Award" for "above and beyond" contributions and one was our own ex-treasurer **Ralph Hall** (tail gunner, naturally) ... and special thanks to the folks in the Missoula, MT, rest home where volunteers read FLAK NEWS to **Robert Templeton**, the lone survivor on the 600 **Wells** crew; and thanks to **Willie Ivy**, who pays his annual dues ... **Chaplain Jim Duvall** celebrated his 90th birthday last year, reminding us that he is now the last of the 398th trio born in 1908, the others being **Colonels Frank P. Hunter** and **Earl Berryhill** ...

# 398th Bomb Group PX

	<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Enter Total Cost</u>
Cap - Fits All Sizes (Specify Squadron or Group)	_____	\$8.00 each _____
Jackets - Navy Blue (S, M, L, XL, XXL, B-17 on Front)	_____	\$25.00 each _____
Golf Shirts - White or Navy Blue (M, L, XL, XXL)	_____	\$20.00 each _____
T-Shirts - White, Navy Blue (S, M, L, XL, XXL, B-17 on Front)	_____	\$10.00 each _____
T-Shirts - White (Children Sizes 2-4, 6-8, 10-12)	_____	\$8.00 each _____
Sweat Shirts - White, Navy Blue (S, M, L, XL, XXL, B-17 on Front)	_____	\$15.00 each _____
Sweat Shirts - White, Light Blue (Children Sizes M & L, B-17 on Front)	_____	\$10.00 each _____
Squadron Patches - Specify Squadron	_____	\$6.00 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	_____	\$5.00 each _____
Group Lapel Pin - Special Design	_____	\$5.00 each _____
Bumper Sticker - 398th Bomb Group	_____	\$1.00 each _____
China Plate with B-17 - 9"	_____	\$15.00 each _____
Glass (9 oz.) with B-17	_____	\$6.00 each _____
B-17 Lapel Pin - Specify Silver or Gold	_____	\$5.00 each _____
Photo (Control Tower) - Station #131	_____	\$2.00 each _____
Photo (398th Memorial) - Post Card Size	_____	\$2.00 each _____
Photo (Aluminum Overcast) - 8"x10" (Latest photo)	_____	\$2.00 each _____
Bolo Ties - 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 _____
Barrel Bag with picture of B-17	_____	\$17.00 each _____
B-17 Christmas Ornament	_____	\$6.00 each _____
B-17 Playing Cards (single)	_____	\$7.00 each _____
B-17 Playing Cards (double)	_____	\$12.00 each _____
<b>Cost Of Items Ordered</b>	\$ _____	
<b>Delivery And Handing Add \$3.00, or \$4.00 if Order is Over \$20.00.</b>	\$ _____	
<b>Total</b>	\$ _____	

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Make checks payable to **398th Bomb Group Association PX** (US funds).  
 Mail to: **Joe Joseph**  
**New Smyrna Beach, FL 32168-6168**

"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."