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

VOL. 21 NO. 2

FLAK NEWS

APRIL 2006

FLAK NEWS *Color* A Smash Hit

It is said, "little things mean a lot."

And to the members of the 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association, this would apply to last quarter's infusion of color to Page 1 of the January FLAK NEWS. It was warmly received, to say the least.

"Sunset At Nuthampstead" was a smash hit, and already has been added to the PX store (Page 11). But also winning admiration was the presence of the color presentations of the

squadron, group and 8th AF emblems, along with the long-admired 398th logo — "Clearing & Colder."

President Wally Blackwell and the Board approved the added printing expenditure (\$200), saying, "I'm certain our members will see fit to cover this, as it adds a dramatic element to our newsletter. We should all be delighted."

The color on the "Aluminum Overcast" tail below comes as a bonus with the added cost.

23rd Annual Reunion:

398th Members Poised For Livonia Gathering

It all started 30 years ago with 30 members meeting in Dayton, Ohio. Each one chipped in \$1.00, and the "398th Bomb Group Memorial Association" was born. And it is still in business!

Thirty years later this same association will meet again, but in numbers approaching 200. It will be the 23rd independently held reunion, the first seven having been held jointly with the Eighth Air Force Historical Society.

Museum Plaque Program Resumes

The recently dormant memorial programs at the Mighty Eighth Museum have been reactivated and are once again open for subscription by 8AF veterans and their families. This includes the Wall of Valor and Crew Plaque programs.

There is a choice of plaque sizes, materials and colors — all on high-quality polished granite. Purchases may be made by veterans, families or by an entire crew.

Information and pricing is immediately available by calling Peggy Harden at the Museum in Savannah — 912-748-8888. Extension 103. Many 398th individuals and crews are already represented in the unique program.

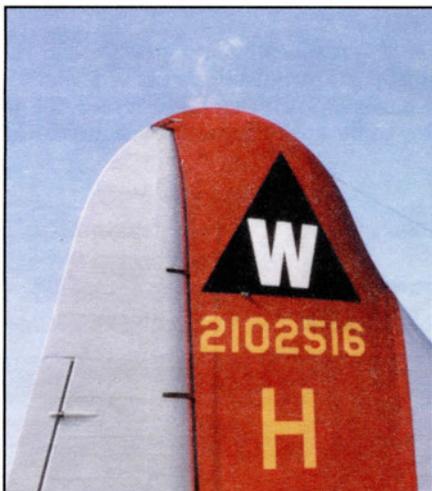
And the group "business" this year will be held just outside the big city of Detroit — Livonia, Michigan. The dates are Wednesday through Saturday, September 6-7-8-9, 2006. The headquarters hotel will be the Holiday Inn Livonia West.

The "independently held" reunions began at Rapid City, North Dakota, in 1984, so this would be the "23rd annual reunion." And no reunion has been held in the same city twice and the venues have covered 21 different states.

The "September" independent meeting dates go back to the beginning, although one was held in late November — San Diego, 1991. (An upcoming winter reunion date is under consideration).

As for this coming September 2006 the Michigan location should in all probabilities attract a crowd. Livonia lies within

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Back In Business

The 398th's "own" B-17, Aluminum Overcast, is out of "sub depot" and ready to return to flight status.

Grounded for almost two years due to damage sustained in a taxiing incident, the EAA Fortress is now ready for this year's "Keep It Flying" national tour. See Page 7.

Golf, Anyone?

It's an offer no golfer can refuse. See the Mighty Eighth story on Page 10.

THE LIVONIA (DETROIT) REUNION

September 6-7-8-9, 2006

Reunion Facts

REUNION CHAIR — Sharon Krause, Plymouth, MI 48170-2870.

HEADQUARTERS HOTEL — Holiday Inn, Livonia West, 17123 N Laurel Park Dr, Livonia, MI 48152. (About 20 miles west of downtown Detroit.) Hotel telephone — 734-464-1300.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS — Toll-free — 1-800-465-4329. This is “Central Reservations” for Holiday Inn. Identify as “398th Bomb Group” and request special rate of \$79.00 (plus tax) for Livonia West. Cutoff date for special rate is August 16, 2006. No mail-in forms will be used.

RESERVATIONS — Use the Official Reservation Form on Page 3 (or a copy). Fill in completely, recording the cost of each special event, tour or banquet. Tabulate the Total Cost at the bottom. Be sure to include appropriate registration fee and dues for 2006 (if applicable). Send the Form and covering check to Sharon Krause. She will return a copy of the Form, indicating receipt of your funds.

TOURS — All coach tours will be conducted by Omega Tours of Novi, Michigan. Barbara Grabill, manager. The Dinner/Cruise will be aboard the Detroit Princess Riverboat. See adjoining column for tour prices and information.

BANQUETS — The Welcome and Farewell Banquets will be held in the Holiday Inn’s banquet hall on Thursday, Sept. 7 and Saturday, Sept. 9, respectively. Table reservations must be made when picking up reservation packet in the Memory Room. Banquet tickets (and tour tickets) will be in the packets.

AIRPORT LIMO — Anytime Limousine, 586-242-5147. To or from Detroit Airport \$35.00 per LOAD (1 to 8 passengers).

Reunion Tours

WEDNESDAY, September 6 — Dinner/Cruise on the Detroit Princess Riverboat. Begin the reunion with this fun-filled cruise and enjoy a traditional buffet of stuffed salmon, roast beef, Southern Style greens, corn bread and so much more. All this plus the music of a live band featuring familiar showboat tunes. Coach leaves from the hotel at 5:15 p.m. Cost: \$77.00.

THURSDAY, September 7 — A round trip journey from the hotel to Grosse Pointe, Michigan, to enjoy and marvel at the home of Edsel and Eleanor Ford. An extraordinary collection of original antiques and art in the mansion and around the 87 acres of lake front grounds. Then on to Pewabic Pottery, a place renowned for its tile and pottery creations. There is even a piece commemorating the 40th NFL Super Bowl (Pittsburgh vs. Seattle). Coach leaves at 8:00 a.m., returns at 1:00 p.m. Cost: \$44.00.

FRIDAY, September 8 — On to Dearborn, home of more Ford history. See the River Rogue Plant, where Ford 150’s are assembled in a “new and lean manufacturing plant.” (Also where the B-24 Liberators were built in WW II.) The two-part tour also includes Greenfield Village, a bustling place of automobile events and amusements. As Sinclair Lewis once wrote of Greenfield, “Main Street is the climax of civilization.” Coaches begin leaving at 8:15 a.m. Cost \$57.00.

SATURDAY, September 9 — A special visit to the Detroit Institute of Arts, “the most important museum west of Philadelphia.” A brief descriptive paragraph on this place would not do it justice. It must be seen to be appreciated. Coach leaves at 9:15 a.m. Cost: \$40.00.

Johnny KNORR ORCHESTRA



MEMBERS ATTENDING the reunion in Livonia, Michigan, in September will be taken back to the Big Band Days when they listen (and dance) to the Johnny Knorr Orchestra at the Farewell Banquet. It is “the most sought after” dance band

in the Midwest. As Glenn Miller soloist Johnny Desmond told leader Knorr, “you play tenor sax like I like to hear it.” The saxes, clarinets, piano, drums, flutes and trombones (and vocalists) all combine to form that great 40’s “sound.”

OFFICIAL REGISTRATION FORM

398th Bomb Group Memorial Association 23rd Annual Reunion
Livonia, Michigan (Detroit) September 6-7-8-9, 2006

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN AUGUST 15, 2006

NAME _____ WIFE _____ SQD. _____

ADDRESS _____ PHONE (_____) _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP+4 _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

NAMES OF OTHERS IN PARTY.
PLEASE PRINT FOR NAME TAGS _____

WEDNESDAY, September 6 —

Registration	9:00 AM to 4:00 PM	Memory Room		
Detroit River Dinner/Cruise	5:15 PM to 9:00 PM	Via Coach	\$77.00 x _____	\$ _____

THURSDAY, September 7 —

Registration	7:30 AM to 4:00 PM	Memory Room		
Board Officers Meeting	9:00 AM to 12:00 PM	Executive Boardroom		
Edsel Ford Mansion & Pewabic Pottery Tour	8:00 AM to 1:00 PM	Via Coach	\$44.00 x _____	\$ _____
GROUP BUSINESS MEETING	2:00 PM	Huron Room		
No Host Bar	6:00 PM	Ballroom		
Welcome Banquet (Table reservations required)	7:00 PM	Ballroom	\$32.00 x _____	\$ _____

FRIDAY, September 8 —

Registration	7:45 AM to 4:00 PM	Memory Room		
Ford Museum, River Rouge Plant, and Greenfield Village Tour (Dinner on your own)	8:15 AM to 3:00 PM	Via Coach	\$57.00 x _____	\$ _____

SATURDAY, September 9 —

Registration	8:30 AM to 12:00 PM	Memory Room		
Detroit Institute of Art & Historical Museum Tour	9:15 AM to 3:30 PM	Via Coach	\$40.00 x _____	\$ _____
No Host Cocktails	6:00 PM	Ballroom		
Farewell Banquet (Table reservations required)	7:00 PM	Ballroom	\$44.00 x _____	\$ _____

Registration Fee (per person, 2 maximum per family) \$10.00 x _____ \$ _____

2006 Dues (if applicable) Veteran Widow Relative Associate \$20.00 x _____ \$ _____

I/We will be staying at the: Livonia Holiday Inn (Must make reservations by Aug. 16) **TOTAL** \$ _____

Other _____

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

398th Bomb Group Reunion
Sharon Krause
Plymouth, MI 48170-2870

Received \$ _____	Date _____
Sharon Krause	
A copy of this form will be mailed to registrant upon receipt of check or money order, payable to 398th Bomb Group Reunion.	

Livonia Ideally Located

(Continued from Page 1)

a day's auto drive of 17 states — Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, New York, Kentucky, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee, Missouri, Iowa, and of course, Michigan, one of the most populous in 398th membership.

Reunion chair Sharon Krause (who lives in nearby Plymouth, Michigan) wishes to remind all those planning on Livonia that they must register for their Holiday Inn Livonia West rooms by no later than August 16, 2006. She emphasizes that the hotel WILL NOT honor the special 398th rate of \$79 after this date. The toll-free Holiday phone number is 1-800-465-4329. No mail-in forms will be used.

Also, the Registration Form must be received by Krause no later than August 15, 2006.

"There is no reason why we should not have up to 200 for the reunion," said Sharon, reminding that 201 came to the 2005 reunion in Overland Park, Kansas.

(Coincidentally, some bomb group associations have already disbanded).

The 398th attendance record, by the way, is 582, established at the Nashville, Tennessee, reunion in 1992. A close second is Tucson, Arizona, with 548 in 1994.

Krause, who negotiated for a very popular 1940s-type dance band at Overland Park last year, has done it again for Livonia. Coming for the Saturday night Farewell Banquet will be the Johnny Knorr Orchestra, featuring songs of the World War II era like "White Cliffs of Dover," "American Patrol," "Sleepy Lagoon," "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree," and many more designed just for toe-tappin' or for dream dancing on the portable dance floor which will be installed in front of the musicians and singers.

Johnny Knorr says, "It is music the way you like to hear it."

Krause has also arranged for a variety of tours to accommodate the 398th "tourists." These will include such "Motor City" features as the Ford River Rogue Plant, Greenfield Village, the Ford Mansion, Pewabic Pottery, art/historical museum and even a Detroit River evening dinner/cruise.

See the pages devoted to Facts and Tours.

As usual, there will be a "group annual business meeting," headed by president Wally Blackwell. This will take place on Thursday, September 7, 2:00 p.m., in the hotel's banquet room.



SHARON KRAUSE

Yes, the Holiday Inn Livonia West does have an indoor swimming pool under a three-story atrium, a putting green, a pool/table tennis room, a sauna and a fitness room.

For those members looking for "rides" while on the tours, Sharon points out that wheel chairs will be available at the various sites. Also, while at Greenfield, you will have such choices as hopping a 1931 Model AA Ford bus, horse drawn carriage, a diesel or steam railroad or a 1913 Herschell-Spillman Carousel.

Also, for those looking for "rides" to and from the Detroit Metro Airport, there is "Anytime Limousine." This costs \$35.00 PER RIDE to the Holiday Inn, Livonia West, be it for one passenger or eight. Call 586-242-5147 to reserve your ride.

10 Vets Will Lead Tour To England

There will be seven pilots, two radio operators and one tail gunner leading the way on this summer's England Tour — "One More Peek."

Plus one widow, three sons, two daughters, two grandsons, one granddaughter, a sister, several spouses and a few "associates."

The May 31-June 9 tour will number 34, headed by president Wally Blackwell, who will be there with his wife, Teedy, son John and grandson Daniel.

"I felt that this was the time, perhaps the last time, that I could bring them all to the place where I spent much of World War II," he said.

The other ex-pilots on the tour will be Russ Reed, Bill Dean, Arnie Schneider, Lew Burke, Bob Bowen and Harry Hoelzel. The radio operators are Cleo Bickford and Don Menard. The lone tail gunner is the group leader, Allen Ostrom, the FLAK NEWS editor.

The mother-daughter pair will be Elaine and Ann Collins.

The father-daughter duo are Menard and Mellisa Menard Ledlow.

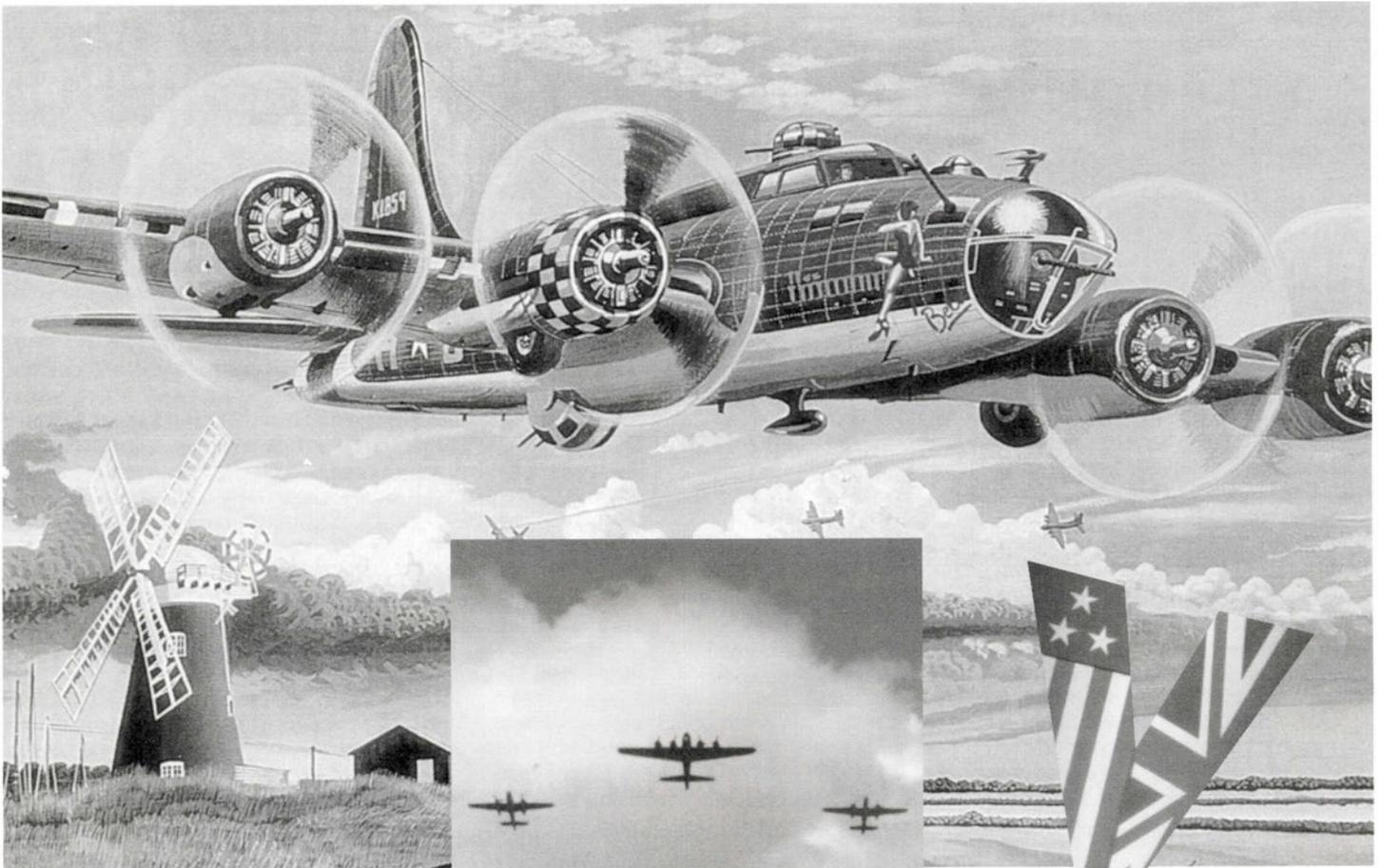
One of the grandsons is Michael Braddock, whose name will elicit memories of Maj. Hayward Braddock, who governed the Station 131 living areas as commander of the 325th Station Complement.

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THERE ARE ALWAYS a few surprises at the annual reunions, like last year at Overland Park, Kansas, when Lew Burke (left) was honored for the story he wrote for the 398th web site — 398th.org — and Allen Ostrom for his various jobs with the Association. Next reunion will be in Livonia, Michigan, Sept. 6-9, 2006.

www.398th.org



‘Member States’ Not Kind To B-17 Sally B

Sally B celebrated 30 years of “Fortress Flying” in the UK last summer with a Fly Past over Buckingham Palace.

But it wasn’t easy, and there is no assurance that it will ever happen again. Thanks to an “illogical” EU Commission ruling dictating an aviation insurance demand that could put England’s only Flying B-17 on the ground permanently.

England’s Council of Ministers appealed the ruling (which would cost an additional \$1,000 PER FLYING HOUR for Sally B to perform at air shows and exhibitions) but the EU’s “member states” were not willing to exempt vintage aircraft such as Sally B from the ruling.

As one disgruntled observer commented —

“The Fortress helped those people win freedom in World War II and this is how they say thank you.”

Many supporters are currently campaigning to change the EU regulation. This includes signatures from some 7,000 supporters from throughout the world. Meanwhile, many did come to the aid of Sally B last year so it could complete the final three months of her exhibition schedule. This included several UK insurance underwriters and brokers, individuals and a major donation by Sir Richard Branson of Virgin Atlantic Airlines.



Elly Sallingboe, head of the B-17 Preservation, said —

“We are intensely grateful to everyone who has offered us so much support in this serious crisis. But the problem has not gone away. I am counting on the powers of our government to grant us an exemption from this illogical situation.”

Help from the US came in the form of a letter to President Bush from 398th president Wally Blackwell, asking our government to intercede “on behalf of all of us who flew B-17’s.”

And one Brit living in the US, Fred Seaman, saw fit to take his appeal to The Queen.

Sally B has made several Fly Pasts over the 398th Memorial at Nuthampstead since 1982, and is always visited at Duxford during the England Tours.

The B-17 Preservation address is PO Box 92, Suffolk, IP28 8RR, England. Or www.sallyb.org.uk.

SALLY B and another B-17 from France are accompanied by a pair of B-25’s on a Fly Past over Buckingham Palace last July. It was in observance of the 60th anniversary of Victory in Europe. Future Fly Pasts are in jeopardy because of “illogical” insurance demands by EU regulations.

Remembering the Ladies of the 398th

BY WALLY BLACKWELL
President, 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association

In past columns I have updated our membership on 398th operational activities or perhaps said a few well-deserved words about individuals who earned a commendation or recognition.

Recently it occurred to me that I have been seriously delinquent in the latter part of these duties. I have not said "thank you" to our ladies! The years have passed and I never had the good sense to publicly recognize the significant role of the ladies of the 398th. I am afraid, as usual, the old fellows just take them for granted. I am really sorry about this failing! Thus, with great respect I tell them so now, while there is still time. The real fact is that we would not have prospered as we have as an organization without them.

Of course, these ladies come in various shapes, sizes and age groups. To begin with, we honor these special ladies we still have around that are called wives! They are the ladies that caught the 398th spirit years ago along with us, and often are the ones who see to it that things get planned for the next reunion. The second group is so very precious. They remain loyal members of our Group, some times being with us only in their

hearts. We must always give them a bit of extra recognition.

Sometimes these ladies come alone, although they often arrive with one of their family. They want to be with us because of the friendships and shows of love they have received in years past. It is like the old days, crew members taking care of crew members.

The third group of ladies are those we lovingly call our second generation. They are the younger ladies who listened to Dad telling about his adventures as a 398er. Perhaps they never did get to go to a 398th reunion with him because there were other more important things at the time to be cared for. These younger ladies are seen to arrive proudly with their Dad, like being sure he gets there all okay. The most precious of these are the ones that come with only the memories of their father's to share. We are so lucky to have these ladies with us.

Where would we be without all these ladies? So it is more than time to honor them and remind them how much we appreciate them. So let's celebrate and remember all of 398th ladies, young and a bit older, we love and cherish them all!

"This Was Our Favorite Group Tour"

Last year the Editor asked readers to send in comments on what they considered their favorite tour "back to the old base" at Nuthampstead. Jean Madlung, widow of the late Jack Madlung, offered this story recounting their first of several tours — 1988. It combined both Station 131 and the Continent.

BY JEAN MADLUNG
Monticello, Indiana

The first tour Jack and I made was in 1988. He wanted to go back because he needed answers ... and closure.

I do not believe he expected the reception we received in England.

The road on the way to the barn dance in Nuthampstead was lined with yellow ribbons and waving Friends of the 398th. Tony and Greta Barker's barn was decorated in red, white and blue in honor of the visitors and the band played wonderful 40s music and most everyone danced.

So many of the people were decked out in 40s garb or WW II uniforms from both the U.S. and Britain. It was just wonderful.

Our hosts and hostesses for the evening were Fred and Olive Fish, their daughter, Leslie; and Coral and Don Simpson (Don is now deceased). We also met the people who lived in the "Little Thatch" — Gus and Jenny Goymour. Jack said that "Little Thatch" was the group's landmark when returning from the missions. I still correspond with these Friends today.

Their children, Amy and James, were small at the time and were a part of the Saturday program of laying flowers at the Memorial. In later years James wrote Jack asking for some of his memories of his days at Nuthampstead. It was for a school project. That letter, according to

Jenny, is now a part of the Anstey archives. Both Amy and James are now college graduates.

Our son, Randy, is still grieving about

the untimely passing last year of his friend, Randy Stange. They had so much in common.

Many more things happened there like visiting the lovely home of Robert and Françoise Dimsdale in Barkway and having a ceremony transferring the Memorial deed from his property to the 398th.

In Luxembourg we so enjoyed the tour leadership of Tilly Kimmes, who was so knowledgeable of the Battle of the Bulge; and cruising down the Rhine River from Bingen to Boppard; and visiting Neuss, where Col. Frank Hunter and Fred Gonzales were shot down. The mayor of Neuss had a reception for us. We even visited the actual crash site and talked to people who saw the plane come down.

Col. Hunter's dear wife, Maria, was such a joy to know and I will never forget the fun we gals had shopping in Belgium.

We went to many other places that year, too, but what impressed Jack the most were the cemeteries we visited in England, Germany, Holland and Luxembourg. Many of our 398th boys are buried in these places, including the command pilot on Jack's lead ship — Ken Hastings. He was killed on the November 21, 1944, mission to Merseburg when



JACK MADLUNG
A Yank At Stratford-Upon Avon

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This Gunner Is Still On A Mission

It was simply a note written to a fellow 398th buddy, former dues manager Jim Haas, but the note told more than just a little about the man's efforts in trying to keep a bunch of his 8th Air Force friends from his Virginia area together in fellowship.

The letter was written by James A. (Al) Davidson, ball turret gunner on the 601 Paul Adams crew. (If your friends have a medal to spare, they should give it to you).

The letter —

Dear Jim,

I am now the president of the Virginia Chapter of the 8th Air Force Historical Association. I was VP and Jack Kings the president, but he passed away.

I have been trying to keep the state group together, but it has been hard to do. We have about 22 state members that meet once a month every third Thursday here in St. Albans at our Senior Center. We meet from 10:30 a.m. to noon, then eat lunch until 1:00 p.m.

I set the agenda, run the program, and show films on many subjects. We also play '40's music such as Tommy Dorsey, Harry James, Guy Lombardo, Glenn Miller and others.

I am also the music director and secretary of the Chapter. Our oldest member is 94 and very lively. We also have in our group one fighter pilot, two bomber pilots, five ball turret gunners, two tail gunners, two waist gunners and some ground guys.

We also have two English war brides and they never miss a meeting.

Have a great year.

— Al

Dues Time For 17 States

There are 17 states represented in this quarter's "Dues Appeal." They add up to about 400 of our 398th members — scattered all the way from the Southeast, South and parts of the Mid-West.

All are needed to support the Association's activities and to keep alive the spirit of the 398th. The States receiving Dues Inserts this quarter are —

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

Dues are \$20. If the insert is missing (or you want to send in some "unsolicited" support for the Page 1 color) you may send it to Dawne Dougherty, Dues Manager, Harrisburg, OR 97446-9585.



Clare Boothe Luce and Friends

Clare Boothe Luce, US Congresswoman, had the undivided attention of four sergeants during her visit to Station 131 on November 29, 1944. She was up early to see the 398th off on a mission to Misburg, and later in the day had a private B-17 ride with Kearie Berry, much to the chagrin of other congressmen who were not invited.

Now comes the question — "who were the four sergeants who had the attention of the famous writer/politician?"

The above photo was offered by the late Joe Pintek, the 398th "Defense Officer." Possibly the sergeants were in his unit. Can a FLAK NEWS reader come up with the correct names?

"AO" Back On The Tour

The "Aluminum Overcast" is ready to head back into the sky and participate in the "Keep It Flying" national tour beginning March 31.

"Aluminum Overcast" was on its national tour in May 2004 when a taxiing incident at Van Nuys, California, caused damage to the airplane's landing gear and underbelly. Fortunately, EAA was able to work out an agreement with the Wings of Eagles Discovery Center in Elmira, New York, for use of its B-17 "Fuddy Duddy" in late 2004 and throughout 2005 for the national B-17 tours. Meanwhile, EAA maintenance crews and volunteers worked on "Aluminum Overcast" to put it back in airworthy condition.

The "AO" carries the colors of the 398th Bomb Group.

The 2006 "Keep It Flying" tour begins in San Diego and spends April and much of May in California, before heading north to Oregon and Washington. The tour then heads through the Rocky Mountain states and into the Midwest before ending the spring/summer leg back home to Oshkosh, Wisconsin, for EAA AirVenture 2006.

At each stop, flight "missions" are available in the airplane, which allow people to take flights in this spectacular aircraft. For more information regarding these flights, including ground tour and flight rates, visit the www.b17.org web site or contact EAA's B-17 Tour Office at 800-359-6127.

Flight Schedule

Mar 31-Apr 2	San Diego, California
April 7-9	Long Beach, California
April 11-12	Lancaster, California
April 14-16	Van Nuys, California
April 18-19	Santa Barbara, California
April 21-23	Riverside, California
April 25-26	Salinas, California
April 28-30	Mountain View, California
May 2-3	Modesto, California
May 5-7	Hayward, California
May 9-10	Truckee, California
May 12-14	Napa, California
May 16-17	Sacramento, California
May 19-21	Portland, Oregon
May 25-28	Seattle, Washington
May 30-31	Yakima, Washington
June 2-4	Spokane, Washington
June 6-7	Billings, Montana
June 9-11	Denver, Colorado
June 23-25	West Bend, Wisconsin

Letters, Letters

"My brother was one of those who were killed in action with the 55th Fighter Group while flying a P-38 out of Station 131 (Nuthampstead). When I learned that the 398th was erecting a special memorial to the 55th I wanted to contribute. Enclosed is a check for \$300. I hope to be able to attend the ceremony."

**Duane Wikholm,
Ventura, California**

"I would like to thank all those friends of the 398th for their cards, letters and caring thoughts following the sudden passing of my son, Randy Stange. And especially Wally Blackwell, who gave closing comments at the memorial service. Randy will be missed, but not forgotten."

**Mrs. Jeanne Stange,
Westchester, Illinois**

"The sun may be setting on the Memorial, but not on the 398th."

Roger Bradley, Chertsey, England

"My husband, Bill Heathcote, passed away last year following 11 years of severe health impairment but he never complained. What a soldier!"

**Mrs. Ida Heathcote,
Cincinnati, Ohio**

"The January FLAK NEWS arrived yesterday. The front page color was really an attention getter. You continue to make the quarterly very interesting and I look forward to every issue."

Earl Hofert, Brownsburg, Indiana

"I was thrilled to see the January FLAK NEWS and the photo of Charles' A-2 jacket on the wall of the Woodman Inn. I wrote and thanked them for the tribute and how lovely it is displayed."

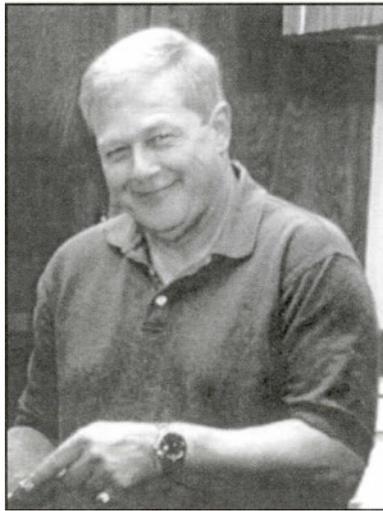
**Paulette Wasserman, Boca
Raton, Florida**

"That was an interesting story on the B-17/B-24 production of WW II, but it needs a major correction. It says that the B-24 had a 'small edge in range, speed and altitude.'

"Wrong! The B-24 got only just over 20,000 feet, whereas the B-17 could reach 30,000 feet. We used to look down and see the ragged B-24 formations struggling for more altitude. Otherwise, good story."

**Wally Blackwell,
Rockville, Maryland**

Ed's Note – The writers of the story, a pair of aviation engineers, probably gave too much credence to B-24 factory specs and handouts, plus stories from less-informed journalists, all of whom have been known to take liberties with the truth.



RANDY STANGE

"Sorry to hear of Randy Stange's death. He was so young. And he will be greatly missed."

Bob Rowland, McClure, Ohio

"The January FLAK NEWS, with the 'sunset' theme and the long Taps list did nothing to brighten my day. But, I must admit that the Page 1 colorization was fantastic."

**Ed Arbuthnot,
Baltimore, Maryland**

"I survived Katrina, a devastating storm, but I had to evacuate to northern Louisiana. My mail is only now catching up with me. My home in Metairie wasn't flooded, but we had lots of wind damage. Our city looks terrible and will take years to recover. Herman and I never made an official England Tour, but we visited in 1977 and met Ozzie Osborn and Vic Jenkins that was to prove to be the birth of the Station 131 Memorial. Herman died before seeing the completed monument and the dedication in 1982."

**Mrs. Virginia Hager,
Metairie, Louisiana**

"Just received my copy of FLAK NEWS. Congratulations on the color edition which really adds a certain sharpness to the newsletter. I voiced my opinion to Wally Blackwell that it would be great to always keep the header in color. I cannot get over the extreme sharpness of 'Clearing and Colder.' Wow!

"I hope to see many of you in June for the 'One More Peek' tour to England. My Brit buddy Roger Bradley and I will be there to check out the haystacks at Hare Street. And try a pint or two at the Woodman."

Ralph Ambrose, Burke, Virginia

Favorite Tour

(Continued from Page 6)

the squadron was hit by German fighters.

Jack and the others all bailed out and spent the rest of the war in PW camps ... or on long marches.

Hastings was buried at Holland's Margraten Cemetery and Jack had the honor of laying a wreath at his grave. Jack was very emotional, but he was able to lay to rest what happened to his friend in 1944. He was even able to tell of this experience when asked to speak at the 1988 reunion in Richmond, Virginia.

We had other "favorite" tours, too, including the 1990 visit to Scotland and the 1992 tour to the German city where Jack was shot down — Merseburg. And maybe the best of all came in 2000 when all my family was there to fly Jack's casket flag on the Station 131 tall pole.

And how could I ever forget the time Geg Ostrom and I went cruising down the Thames River to Greenwich and almost missed the last boat back? So many wonderful memories!

Thanks to the 398th for making all this possible.

Flak Leave Short:

A "Putter" Kind of Story

Bob Bowen came to England carrying a B-17 pilot's rating and a four-handicap golf rating as a left-handed player.

When it became time for his "Flak Leave," he and his 602 crew drew an English estate near South Hampton. It was plush, he remembered.

"No missions, no briefings, no training sessions, just plenty of R&R."

After trying croquet and lawn bowling, Bowen decided to hit the nearby golf course, where clubs and balls were provided for the American bomber crews.

But no left-handed golf clubs.

Not to be denied, Bowen took a right-handed putter, teed up every shot and played the round left-handed. And still shot a decent round of 45 for nine holes.

He then attacked the second nine with regular, right-handed irons, using primarily the middle irons. And still shot a respectable 48.

In the years that followed World War II Bowen became a Physical Education teacher at the University of Georgia ... and assistant golf coach.

"Yes, I used to teach these tricks to the students."

www.398th.org

ALHADEFF, RAHE 'ELDER' PILOTS

The year 1944 was a "news" year for Ike Alhadeff and Max Rahe, a pair of original 398th pilots who had interesting WW II careers.

The year 2006 also became newsworthy for Ike when he celebrated his 90th birthday in January. The same "90" will happen to Max in September.

And both, born in 1916, are still "on the job."

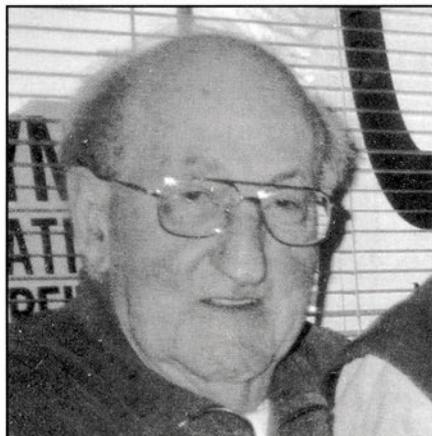
Alhadeff, a longtime businessman in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska fishing industry, remains active in several business areas in Seattle, Washington.

Rahe farms 100,000 acres from his home in Crescent, Oklahoma. His wife, Phyllis, is well known at the reunions with her organ music.

(They have been married 65 years!)

Alhadeff, who began an Army career in the Ski Troops, in 1942, applied for Cadet training and was accepted one month before reaching the cutoff age of 27. Rahe made it by five months.

Rahe, flying with the 602nd, completed



IKE ALHADEFF



MAX RAHE

his required tour of 30 missions and had visions of returning to the U.S. The "vision" was short-lived as the very next day he received orders to report to the 27th Air Transport Group in Paris. His mission — load up an old B-17 with gasoline and deliver it to the closest air base to the Third Army and Gen. George Patton, even then poised for action in what was to become the Battle of the Bulge.

He carried on with this gasoline delivery assignment in his B-17, and also in C-47's and C-64's. The latter is the Canadian single engine passenger/trans-

port known as the Norseman. Yes, it was a Norseman Glenn Miller was in when it went down in the Channel.

Alhadeff, 600 pilot, also might have gone on to delivering gas to Patton (or returned home to train on B-29's for the Pacific) but for being shot down on his 22nd mission on August 6, 1944, to Brandenburg (Berlin). He spent the next 10 months in PW camps in Sagan, Nurnburg and Moosberg. He was liberated by the Third Army, whose tanks and trucks had been fueled by his fellow 398th pilot, Max Rahe.

398th Bomb Group Memorial Association Summary Financial Report January 2005 - December 2005

Income:

Flak News donations.....	\$ 3,373
Membership dues	11,500
P.X. sales.....	10,773
Reunion	544
Memorial Fund	270
Miscellaneous income.....	46
Total Income.....	\$26,506

Expenses:

Flak News publication	\$ 9,962
P.X. restocking.....	12,655
Postage and delivery	692
Printing and reproduction	566
Reunion expenses	300
398th data tapes.....	1,522
Telephone.....	580
Web site.....	108
Gifts.....	553
Supplies.....	574
Total Expenses.....	\$27,512

Net Income \$1,006-

Assets:

A.G. Edwards account.....	\$ 22,564
Fed Credit Union savings	1,760
Fed Credit Union checking	9,444
Total.....	\$33,768

Nuthampstead Monument Fund

Portfolio value Dec 2005	\$101,765
(includes the above \$22,564)	
Interest income 2005.....	5,439
Mon maintenance paid to March 2006	

Vets To Lead England Tour

(Continued from Page 4)

And one of the sons is Bill Markley, III, whose father of the same name was commanding officer of the 600th Squadron. Also Ken Howard, son of 603 ball turret gunner Bob Howard, who will bring his wife, Trudy, and daughter, Brandy.

A non-398th couple will be Warren and Thelma Loring. They will be along to share in the dedication of a 398th sponsored memorial to the 55th Fighter Group/442nd Air Service Group, who occupied the Nuthampstead runways before moving to Wormingford, where Loring flew his P-38 tour.

An emotional visit will be in store for Russell and Faith Davie. He is retired Air Force, and Faith is the sister of navigator John Walker, who perished in the channel with the 602 Lyle Doerr crew members. He is buried at Madingley.

Memorable days are ahead for the entire group, be they veterans or family members, as visits are paid to the Memorial; Woodman Inn; Anstey Church, site of the memorial stained glass window; Duxford Museum to see a couple of B-17's; the Hertford record center, where much 398th history is preserved;

luncheon with the Friends; and Madingley, where many of the group's killed in action are buried or remembered on the Wall of the Missing.

There is also a tour of the old base, conducted by Blackwell, who during his many England visits has made a serious study of "how it was" back in 1944-45. He may be accompanied by Ozzie Osborn, the Brit who along with Vic Jenkins originated the drive to build the Memorial.

And after all that there will still be days ahead to ride on the London Eye, enjoy a Thames luncheon cruise; visit to Windsor Castle and more. Like time to browse for souvenirs at Harrod's, a show at one of the many West End theaters, or maybe a nostalgic tour through good ol' Picadilly Circus. Ah! Memories.

Friends of the 398th Chairman Wilfrid Dimsdale, speaking on behalf of the Nuthampstead group, reiterated their invitation to "return whenever you wish," to Station 131. "You will always be welcome." Dimsdale said that future every-other-year Memorial ceremonies will be held on the third Saturday of June (beginning in 2008).

Does The 398th Have A Team?

Golf Classic Due At Museum

If golf's your game, the Mighty Eighth wants you!

As part of the Museum's current funding drive, the Mighty Eighth's Golf Classic has been scheduled for Monday, May 8, 2006, at the Savannah Harbor Golf Course in Pooler, Georgia.

The Classic will be made up of four-person teams representing all branches of the military — Air Force, Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and National Guard.

Twenty-four other teams can be sponsored by individuals or 8th Air Force veterans organization (like the 398th).

Sponsorship donations will be \$500 per team, with all proceeds going to the Museum's general operating fund. Call 1-912-748-8888, extension 102 for more information. Ask for Debra Kujawa. Or write Mighty Eighth Museum, PO Box 1992, Savannah, GA 31402. Or www.mightyeighth.org.

Walter Brown, MD, editor of the Air Force News magazine, has assumed the "interim" role as the Museum's President/CEO. He said —

"Thanks to each of you for supporting the Mighty Eighth Museum. We would not be here without you."

Ed's Note — The 398th is well represented with a replicate of the Memorial at Nuthampstead, along with many other crew and individual memorial plaques. The 398th has more than 300 Museum members. Will there be a 398th team at the Golf Classic?

"Wash" Friends Visit At Nuthampstead

Our "Friends of the 398th" from "The Wash," Sonja Gifkins (also a friend of many 8th AF bomb and fighter groups) conducted a major guided tour at Nuthampstead last fall.

And they all considered the Memorial "superb." Same for the stained glass memorial at Anstey. Same for the lunch they received at the Woodman Inn.

Sonja was guiding four brothers from the U.S. on a guided tour of several old 8AF bases, plus a friend from The Wash, Stephen Clipston, and the curator of the 91st Bomb group Control Tower Museum, Ray Jude.

The four brothers were Tom, Sal, Joe and Al Craolici. "We could have never found Station 131 without you," they told Sonja, who had made many sojourns there in years past and may be there again for the 398th's "One More Peek" tour in June.

Sal served with the 95th BG and Joe with the 44th BG and Tom did his stint in the Korean War. The fourth brother, Al, was too young for either.

The group visited several other stations, including the memorial to the 55th Fighter Group at Steeple-Morden, where the group moved to after exiting Nuthampstead in early 1944.

"We are looking forward to seeing the new 55th memorial dedicated to the men lost flying P-38's while stationed there. This will take place on June 3 following the 398th Remembrance Service.

www.398th.org

Radio Operator



The radio operator was isolated from the rest of the crew in the midsection of the bomber.

One of the first jobs the radio operator did when entering his position was to tune in his equipment and make sure the frequencies were correct. All coded transmissions were sent or received by Morse code. It was the duty of the radio operator to inform headquarters in a coded message which target was bombed and the bombing results.

While the aircraft was en route the radio operator listened for any messages that might be sent from headquarters.

Another function of the radio operator was to receive a radio fix for the navigator. The radio operator would hold his Morse key down and transmit a solid signal for approximately one minute. This signal was received at widely spaced installations with highly sensitive radio compasses. This signal was then read and a line projected on a map from various installations that would intersect to indicate the aircraft's position.

The radio compartment was located between two bulkheads on the B-17: one directly behind the bomb bay and the other just forward of the ball turret. The radio operator sat facing forward on the left hand side of the aircraft with a work table



in front of him. The liaison radio receiver and transmitting key were located on the radio operator's table, while the liaison radio transmitter was mounted to the bulkhead directly behind him.

Located on the forward right side of the aircraft were two transmitters and three receivers for the command radio. Known as R/T (radio telephone), its purpose was as a short-range vocal communication with nearby air or ground stations. The pilots used the command radio by use of their controls mounted in the cockpit overhead.

Under the floor of the radio room compartment was a large camera used to take photos of the bomb run. The radio operator activated the camera during the bomb run to take photos of the target area.

The radio operator was also trained as the first aid man of the crew. Other emergency equipment and tools were located in the radio room, considered to be the safest place in the aircraft during ditching or crash landing. In the event of such an emergency all crew members, except the pilots, would come to the radio room and sit with their backs toward the forward bulkhead.

This presentation is part of a living History created by the Arizona Wing of the Commemorative Air Force, Mesa, Arizona. Other similar crew positions will be presented in future issues. Special thanks to the CAF and the Sentimental Journey.

BRIEF-things

After 62 years (and 15 crossings of the Atlantic in commercial jets) is was a revelation to the editor to reread *Earl Hoyne's* REMEMBRANCE story of his crew's 27½-hour B-17 flight to England in 1944 — Lincoln-Grenier-Goose Bay-Iceland-Wales; he was co-pilot on the *Al Stockman* crew; although out of print, REMEMBRANCES can be had in photo copy form (see PX on Page 11) ... since you asked — on the 12th landing of the Washington Monument is a prayer offered by the City of Baltimore; on the 20th is a memorial presented by Chinese Christians; on the 24th is a presentation by New York and Philadelphia school children quoting Proverbs 10:7, Luke 18:16, and Proverbs 22:6; and on the very top of the Monument, facing skyward, is an aluminum cap with the Latin inscription "Laus Deo," meaning "Praise Be To God" (so much for that separation business) ... *John McCormick* celebrated the 60th anniversary of his Berlin mission midair collision adventure (Feb. 3, 1945) with an RSVP luncheon in Sycamore, Illinois ... guests received a copy of the POW story he wrote for REMEMBRANCES (thanks to wife Phyllis) ... and a belated "thank you" from FLAK NEWS and all the 398th officers for those wonderful Christmas greetings last year; one card, from *Sir Roger duBoulay*, featured the stained glass window at Anstey ... our good friend in Germany, *Manfred Koenig*, reports that he was "plucked from death's door" by a good doctor and five bypasses ... mechanics of the Arizona Wing of the CAF (Sentimental Journey) spent 25 long years in restoring a B-25, and they will finally see it fly this year ... 603 engineer/gunner *Charles Stankiewicz* should have had his son's shooting eye, witness son *Chuck's* bagging of a 1000 pound moose and a buck deer last winter in Alaska ... the 401st B-17 Bomb Group is advertising for "younger people to fill key positions;" the 398th officers started doing this years ago and now have people like *Bradley, Krause, Gibb-Rice, Dougherty* and *Jordan* ... British war bride *Pam Sirota* chose to "keep the memory of the 398th alive" with a \$25 "extra contribution" check, for which the treasurer says "thank you" ... with each passing year, we are hearing more comments like, "I'm the only one left from my crew" ... yes, the ranks are thinning ... there is still time to send a deceased veteran's flag to Station 131 before the June tour, there to be flown "to destruction" on the tall pole near the old tower; contact secretary *Bob Bowen*, 706-543-6187; since the program began, 53 U.S. Flags have flown there, all watched over by *Peggy Wells* of Nuthampstead ... *John Bernard* of Thibodeau, Louisiana, says he suffered "some" damage from Katrina; and news is just now drifting in how other 398th Gulf Coast families fared (See "Letters") ... *Joe Joseph* reports that his "first tour" group, the 97th, will cease to exist after their 2006 reunion ... our "photo researcher," *Geoff Rice*, recently hosted a Colorado Springs get-together with pilots *Newt Moy* and *Norm Williams*, both of whom were able to help son *Don Christensen* put together some missing pieces of his father's KIA mission over the Czech Republic; "I am continually amazed and awed that after 60 years of searching I would learn so much and make contact with the men who flew with my father that last day" ... reunion chair *Sharon Krause*, who lives near Detroit, has promised that the weather in Livonia in September will be much nicer than the freeze experienced by last February's Super Bowl crowd ... of the dozen 398th men and women who toured Enland with the 8AFHS in 1978 only one, *Lou Stoffer* of Centraila, Washington, is still alive; and at the age of 81 is still on the job with his sheet metal business ... *Phyllis Rahe* said that she and her husband *Max* had been married over 50 years before he confided in her that he had earned the DFC with the 398th.

398th Bomb Group PX (The Second Generation)

ORDER FORM

QTY	ITEM	UNIT COST	TOTAL
CLOTHING			
_____	T-Shirt, black, "398th BG Flying Fortress"	\$12.00	_____
_____	T-Shirt, navy, with B-17 front view	\$12.00	_____
_____	T-Shirt, navy, with Triangle W	\$12.00	_____
_____	T-Shirt, olive, with Triangle W	\$12.00	_____
_____	Golf Shirt, mens, light blue, white, red (embroidered Triangle W, 60% cotton, 40% poly mesh, S-XL, please indicate size)	\$25.00	_____
_____	Golf Shirt, ladies, light blue, yellow (embroidered Triangle W, 60% cotton, 40% poly mesh, S-XL, please indicate size)	\$25.00	_____
CAPS			
_____	Black, with logo (indicate 600, 601, 602, 603)	\$8.00	_____
BOOKS (All books postpaid.)			
_____	Fortresses Over Nuthampstead	\$65.00	_____
_____	398th History (1946, photo copy)	\$20.00	_____
_____	"Remembrances" (1989, photo copy, Ostrom)	\$30.00	_____
_____	"WW II Odyssey" (Frankhouser)	\$19.00	_____
_____	"The Youngest Crew" (Wagner)	\$19.95	_____
_____	"Hell From Heaven" (Streitfeld)	\$19.95	_____
JEWELRY			
_____	Diecast B-17 Model (1/10 scale, green)	\$9.00	_____
_____	Squadron lapel pins (indicate 600, 601, 602, 603)	\$5.00	_____
_____	Group lapel pin (Hell From Heaven)	\$5.00	_____
LOGOS			
_____	B-17 Jacket Patch (rectangular)	\$4.00	_____
_____	8th Air Force Patch	\$6.00	_____
PHOTOGRAPHS & PRINTS			
_____	"Clearing & Colder" (8x10)	\$10.00	_____
_____	"Clearing & Colder" (14x17)	\$30.00	_____
_____	Anstey Stained Glass Window (11x17 includes list of comrades Killed in Action)	\$4.00	_____
_____	Aluminum Overcast (8x10)	\$2.00	_____
_____	"Sunset at Nuthampstead" (8x10)	\$7.00	_____
MISCELLANEOUS			
_____	Sun Catcher with logo	\$10.00	_____
_____	Bumper Sticker (black)	\$3.00	_____
_____	WW II Coloring Book (with crayons)	\$4.00	_____
_____	Tote Bag (20x15, black, with logo)	\$8.00	_____
_____	B-17 Pencil Sharpener	\$4.00	_____

Cost of Items ordered \$ _____
 Delivery and Handling add \$4.00
 or \$5.00 if order is over \$20.00 \$ _____
 Total \$ _____

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
 Telephone _____

Make check payable to "398th Bomb Group PX." Mail check and completed order form to Carolyn Widmann, Noblesville, IN 46062-7150.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY ART HOVEN

Sunset At Nuthampstead

Print available in PX.