



602



601



603



600

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

VOL. 6 NO. 3

FLAK NEWS

JULY 1991

UNSUNG HERO

I did my flying from a G.I. truck.
It was my early morning knock that woke the air crews up
Telling them who would fly a mission that day and who would not.

Some might say that my job wasn't important, that I only played a small part;
But it was HELL to take those boys to their ship.
I couldn't help to wonder for how many this would be their last trip.

I could only pray for a milk run
Then go drink to blur the faces of my friends who I'd taken for their last ride
And wait by the hour for the bombers to return.

Yes, for 18 months I drove a G.I. truck;
No Silver Star or Purple Heart; A Hero I'm not.
I just hope those Eagles look down and say that my brake light came on when
they needed a lift.

—JILL CHANDLER
Spokane, Washington

One More Mission To Merseburg And A Return To Nuthampstead

The drama of "Merseburg" and the emotional appeal of "Nuthampstead" have been combined to present a powerful attraction for the England-Germany group tour next year.

The special tour brochure has been in the mails only a couple of weeks, but already over 30 have called, written or otherwise indicated "we're going along."

Set for June 17 to July 2, 1992 — 16 days — members will be able to leave from four different U.S. gateway cities, flying via Scandinavian Airlines (SAS). The departure cities are New York (Newark), Chicago, Los Angeles and Seattle.

The flights are non-stop to Copenhagen, connecting to Frankfurt. All travel arrangements are being handled by Travel House, Inc., 5042 Roosevelt Way NE, Seattle, WA

98105. Barbara Fish is the Travel House consultant. Telephone toll-free 1-800-423-5454.

Allen Ostrom, FLAK NEWS editor, is the tour coordinator.

All details on the tour are contained in the special mailing sent from Seattle in mid-June. The first week will be spent in Germany, highlighted by two nights in Merseburg. After a number of "tourist" stops on the way, including Neuss and Waterloo, the tour will catch the Channel ferry on June 24 for eight big nights in England.

This will include five "home stay" nights at Nuthampstead, two in London and one in Canterbury.

The full itinerary, schedule and prices appear in the special mailing. Call either Fish or Ostrom for additional information.

'Ground' Reunion Theme

"Honoring Our Ground Personnel" will be the theme for the 8th annual 398th Bomb Group reunion at San Diego in November.

While the term, "ground personnel" can be described in dozens of ways ... and each one quite correct ... FLAK NEWS has selected the accompanying poem, "Unsung Hero," to be representative of all the men who labored to keep the group's men and machines in the air.

"Unsung Hero" was written by Jill Chandler of Spokane, a young medical secretary whose many poems reflect her respect for those who were a part of the WW II air war.

The reunion in the Southern California city ... November 6-7-8-9 ... is shaping up as another Big One. Maybe not so big as to overturn the record of 531 set last year in Oshkosh, but certainly big enough to make some big splashes in the swimming pools of the Town & Country Hotel.

A good many of the 398th officers and men who labored under the "ground support" label were identified with either Headquarters or one of the four squadrons. But many others were not. Station 131 had ten other non-flying organizations:

1226 Quartermaster.

206 Finance.

478 Sub Depot.

1449 Ordnance.

344 Medical

1142 Military Police.

860 Chemical.

325 Station Complement.

426 Air Service Group.

18 Weather Squadron.

Continued On Page 9

OUR FRIENDS REMEMBER



Cambridge American Military Cemetery

Lest there be those who believe our English friends have forgotten the contribution made by the Yanks in World War II, please note the 76 floral wreaths that were presented in memory of fallen Americans at the annual Memorial Day Services at the Cambridge American Military Cemetery & Memorial, England.

The annual event was held last May 19, 1991 at Madingly, on the outskirts of Cambridge. The remains of 16 men from the 398th are buried beneath the green turf.

Another 14 names are inscribed on the Wall of the Missing.

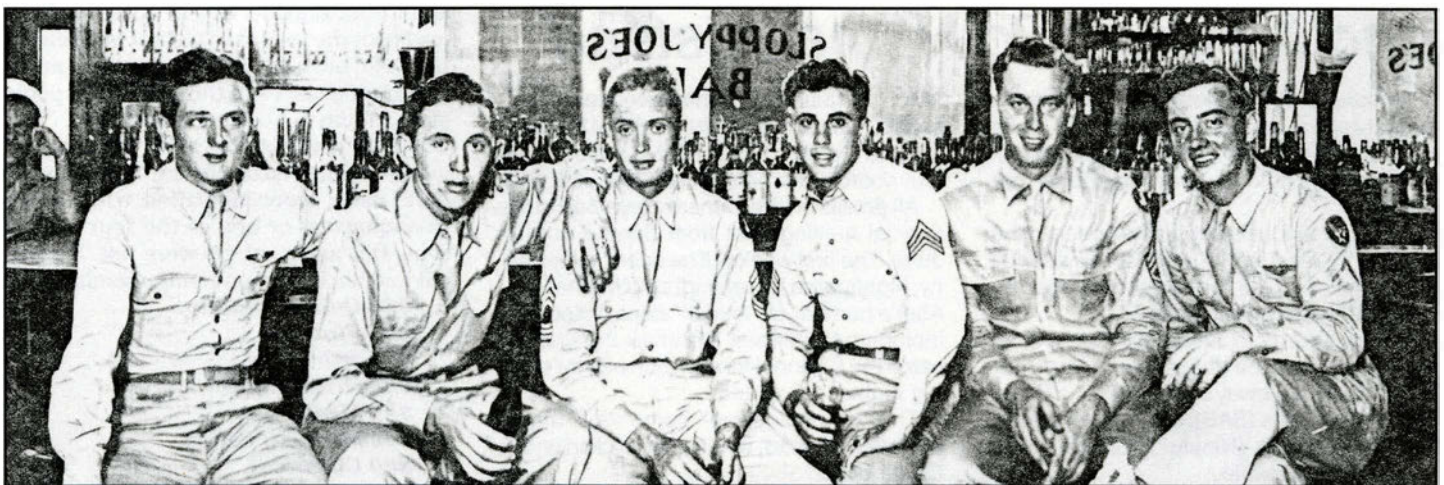
The 398th was represented at the impressive ceremony by Friends chairman Wilfred & Cathy Dimsdale; Peggy Wells; Allen & Vic Smith; and Eileen & Digger Blackwell. The special wreath honoring the 398th fallen was made by Elaine Tyler.

The wreath ceremony was led by Norbert Krieg, Consul General, representing the American Ambassador to the Court of St. James, followed by 75 others represent-

ing bomb and fighter group memorial associations and others with ties to American fighting men.

The 8th Air Force, whose fallen dominate the ranks at Madingly, suffered more than half of all Air Force casualties in World War II — 47,000 — including 26,000 dead.

The 398th, on its tour of England and Germany next year, will visit Madingly and lay a wreath in memory of comrades.



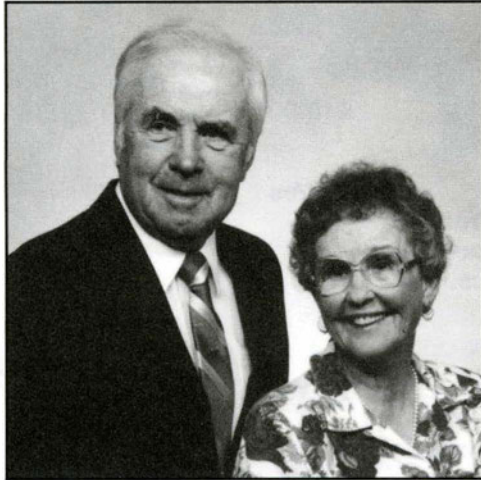
Happy, Sad Memories From Sloppy Joe's Bar, Havana, Cuba

THIS YOUNG B-17 air crew, destined for service with the 398th, had a brief respite before encountering the winds of war with a goodwill visit to Havana, Cuba in early 1944. Here the six enlisted men, members of the Donald Pettus crew, pose at the then famous Sloppy Joe's

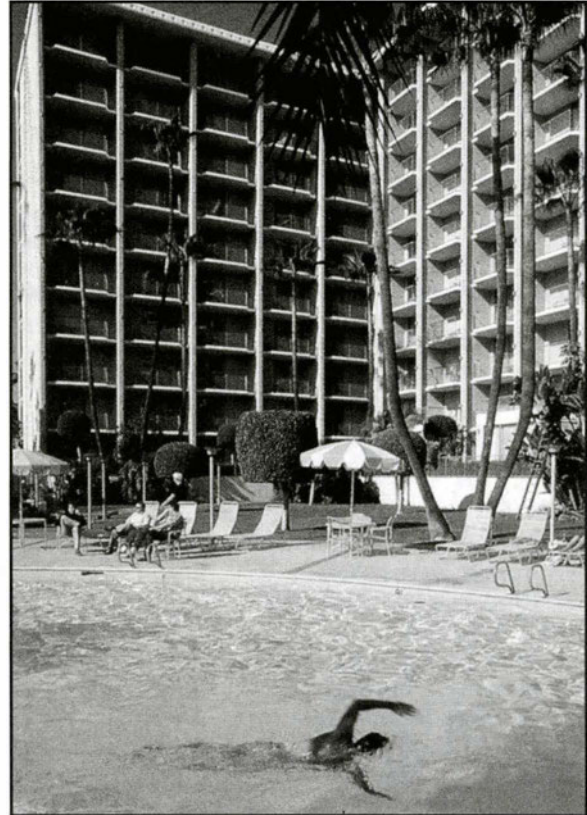
Bar. Left to right are M.H. Keegan, Wallace Kasch, Ben Winnenger, Ernie LaCoste, Bill Wickens and Roy Johnson. Before war's end, Kasch, Wickens and Johnson would be killed in action. Only LaCoste, of Modesto, CA, is a current 398th member.

A WINTER REUNION: SAN DIEGO

Next Gathering: November 6-7-8-9, 1991



BOB & VIRGINIA HOPKINS
Our Hosts in San Diego



TOWN & COUNTRY HOTEL
San Diego, California

THE HOTEL

Town & Country, 500 Hotel Circle North
San Diego, CA 92108
Telephone (619) 291-7131

LOCATION

10 minutes from downtown, Lindberg Airport and the world famous San Diego Zoo and Sea World. Yet nestled amid palm trees, swimming pools and a balmy southseas atmosphere. And with a hotel staff dedicated to making our 8th annual reunion the best ever.

HOTEL RV INFORMATION

There is ample room for parking motor homes and RV's in the Town & Country Hotel rear parking lot.

MOTOR HOME PARKS

The nearest motor home parks are "Campland On The Bay," 221 Pacific Beach Dr., San Diego, CA 92109. Telephone (619) 581-2400 and "De Anza Harbor Resort," 2727 De Anza Road, San Diego, CA 92109. Telephone (619) 273-3211.

LOCAL CITY TOURS

Special 398th group tours are scheduled, but in addition members may pick up "Old Town Trolley Tours" every 30 minutes from the hotel lobby.

TRAVEL ASSISTANCE

The 398th Bomb Group has contracted with VIP Travel to handle the travel needs of its members, who are assured the best available prices. Contact Ellie Turner, VIP Travel, 100 No. Royal St., Alexandria, VA 22314. Telephone 1-800-451-5439.

GOLFERS

Golf starting times have been secured for 8 a.m. on both Wednesday and Thursday, November 6 and 7 at the Miramar Naval Air Station course. Golfers should arrange their own car pools for the 20-minute drive to the course and be prepared to leave at 6:30 a.m. Breakfast will be available at the clubhouse.

FREEWAY LOCATION

On the north side of east-west I-8, between north-south I-5 and I-163.

AIRPORT SERVICE

"Super Shuttle" service from Lindberg Airport. Dial #69 on the hotel courtesy phone board located in the baggage claim area.

*Turn the page for the reservation form.
Clip out or make photocopy.*

OFFICIAL REGISTRATION FORM

398th Bomb Group Memorial Association Eighth Annual Reunion
San Diego, California November 6-7-8-9, 1991

Please return no later than September 30, 1991

NAME _____ WIFE _____ SQD: _____
ADDRESS _____ PHONE (_____) _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

NAMES OF OTHERS IN PARTY. PLEASE PRINT FOR NAME TAGS

Registration Fee (PerPerson, 2 Maximum Per Family) \$10.00 x _____ \$ _____

WEDNESDAY, November 6:

Golf - Miramar NAS 8:00 AM Tee Time Yes No
Registration 1 PM - 5 PM Sunrise-Sunset Rooms
Memory Room 1 PM - 5 PM Sunrise-Sunset Rooms
No organized activities today. Dinner at the restaurant of your choice.

THURSDAY, November 7:

Local City Tours all day from Hotel Lobby
Golf - Miramar NAS 8:00 AM Tee Time Yes No
Registration 9 AM - 5 PM Sunrise-Sunset Rooms
Memory Room 9 AM - 5 PM Sunrise-Sunset Rooms
Officers Meeting 10:00 AM Comstock Suite
Ladies' Activity 3 PM Tiki Hut
398th Business Meeting 3 PM Golden West Room
Cash Cocktail Bar 6 PM - 7 PM South Atlas Foyer
Welcome Dinner 7 PM California Room \$22.00 x _____ \$ _____

FRIDAY, November 8:

Local City Tours all day from Hotel Lobby
Memory Room 8 AM Sunrise-Sunset Rooms
Enjoy California Bus Tours:
Sea World Tour 9 AM - 1 PM \$37.00 x _____ \$ _____
Wild Animal Park Tour 9 AM - 3 PM \$37.00 x _____ \$ _____
San Diego Zoo Tour 9 AM - 1 PM \$29.50 x _____ \$ _____
Cash Cocktail Bar 6 PM - 7 PM South Atlas Foyer
Dinner and Dancing 7 PM California Room \$22.00 x _____ \$ _____

SATURDAY, November 9:

Local City Tours all day from Hotel Lobby
Memory Room 9 AM Sunrise-Sunset Rooms
Cash Cocktail Bar 6 PM - 7 PM South Atlas Foyer
Farewell Dinner & Entertainment 7 PM San Diego Room \$22.00 x _____ \$ _____

SUNDAY, November 10:

Memory Room 9 AM - Noon
Check-Out Time 12 Noon

398th Memorial Association dues for 1991 (f applicable) \$5.00 \$ _____
(Not required for Lifetime Members; not required if 1991 dues already paid. Check your card.)

Check payable to: 398th Bomb Group Reunion TOTAL \$ _____

I/We will work two hours in Memory Room if needed Yes No

Please complete form and mail to:
Robert Hopkins
398th Bomb Group Reunion
San Diego, CA 92111

Received \$ _____ Date _____

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

TO THE OUBLIETTE, MR. EDITOR!

Gremlins "Eat Up" Several First Pilots' Names

*What doth it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?
(Mark 8:36)*

*What doth it profit a first pilot, if he shall gain a name in the January centerfold, and lose it in the April centerfold?
(FLAK NEWS 6:1,2)*

Yea verily, I say unto you; he who crosses the shepherd of the FLAK NEWS whether by choice or chance, shall himself be crossed from the list of honored first pilots. It is written. So be it.

*Everyone will have ten minutes of fame in his life.
(Andy Warhol)*

*Up your nose Andy. Mine only lasted one issue.
(Jack Lee)*

When we were Aviation Cadets, if someone did something real bad, all cadets were called out to the parade ground and made to form a hollow square. The charges against the "bad" cadet were read, he was read out of the Corps of Aviation Cadets, and we were told to never again mention his name.

Obviously I have committed a serious sin. Now I am worse than a has been. According to the list, I'm a never was.

*Blow, blow, thou winter wind!
Thou art not so unkind
as Ostrom's red pencil.
(Jack Shakespeare)*

What hath Ostrom wrought? Though I may stroll in my Reebok mall walkers through the Valley of Shadows, I shall feel no animosity towards he who has done me well in the past and may yet regain the memory, the mind, and the magnanimity of yore.

*For whom does the bell toll?
It tolls for the unlisted first pilot.*

On the other hand,

Let he who is without sin cast the first stone.

*Could the problem of the unlisted first pilot be due to yet another goof on the part of the Postal Service and/or your humble has been, and current never was, first pilot?
Hmmm?*

—JACK LEE
(A "first" in war but not in peace)

P.S.
Be not concerned about a continuation of these slings and arrows. To quote a famous statement by Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce Indians when he surrendered to the U.S. Army, after a brilliant 1000-mile fighting retreat: "I will fight no more forever."

THIS IS ONE of the many sights to be visited by members of the 398th Germany-England tour next year. This is the "Neuer Lantag" tower in Dusseldorf, now one of Europe's most modern cities. Located just across the Rhine River is Neuss, where the 1988 tour group met with many Germans who remembered the crash of Col. Frank P. Hunter's B-17 in January, 1945.

Alas! Alack! Another Whack!

Woe to the editor of FLAK NEWS.

Great shame has befallen the poor editor because of a name. Not misspelled, not misused, not misquoted.

Simply left out of the listing of 398th first pilots in the April issue of FLAK NEWS. And it had to be the name of a first pilot who also doubles as a contemporary William Shakespeare. A present day California humorist.

(Thankfully, not a prosecuting attorney.)

Ten thousand apologies, John Lee.

I can hardly believe such a thing could happen to such a nice guy, a guy we brought a measure of "fame" to in the January issue of the newsletter when we told the story of Jack and his Miss X.

No, you did not cross the "shepherd of FLAK NEWS," either by choice or by chance. You were crossed by the unseen gremlins who

Lee Missing From Pilots' Listing; Also Elwood, Hancock, Davis, Briggs, Shafer.

lurk in the shadowy oubliette of the print shop. Even after many sweeps by many pairs of eyes they defy capture.

One found the name "John Lee" and ate it up.

Another found the name "John Davis" and ate it up.

Another found the name "Ken Elwood" and ate it up.

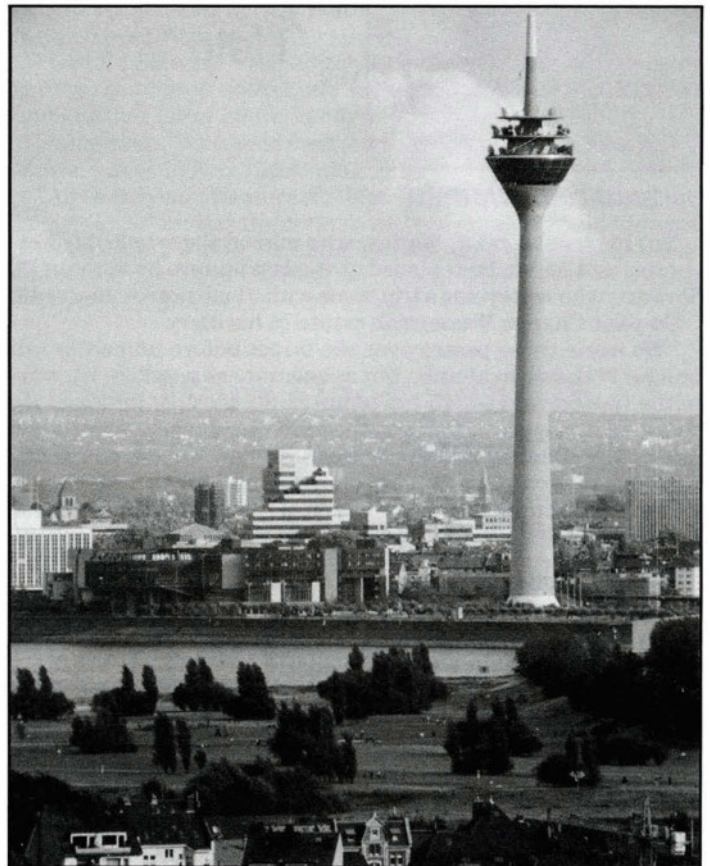
Another found the name "William Hancock" and ate it up.

Another found the name "Arthur Briggs" and ate it up.

Another found the name "John Shafer" and ate it up.

Zounds! Only an editor with tail-gunner mentality would leave out the name of "Hancock," who just happened to arrive at Nuthampstead as the first pilot in the same cockpit with Bill Comstock. Who just happens to be the president of this outfit!

The editor may join the print shop gremlins in the oubliette.



His DFC Fell Through The Cracks

Injured Pilot Remembers Gunner's Heroism

Sanford Lee Warren of Jacksonville, AR spent a lot of time as a gunner in the United States Air Force. Not only in a 398th B-17, but also in a B-29, B-36 and B-26.

All the time being shot at, either over Germany as a member of the 603 Willard Worley crew or over Korea with a variety of bombing crews.

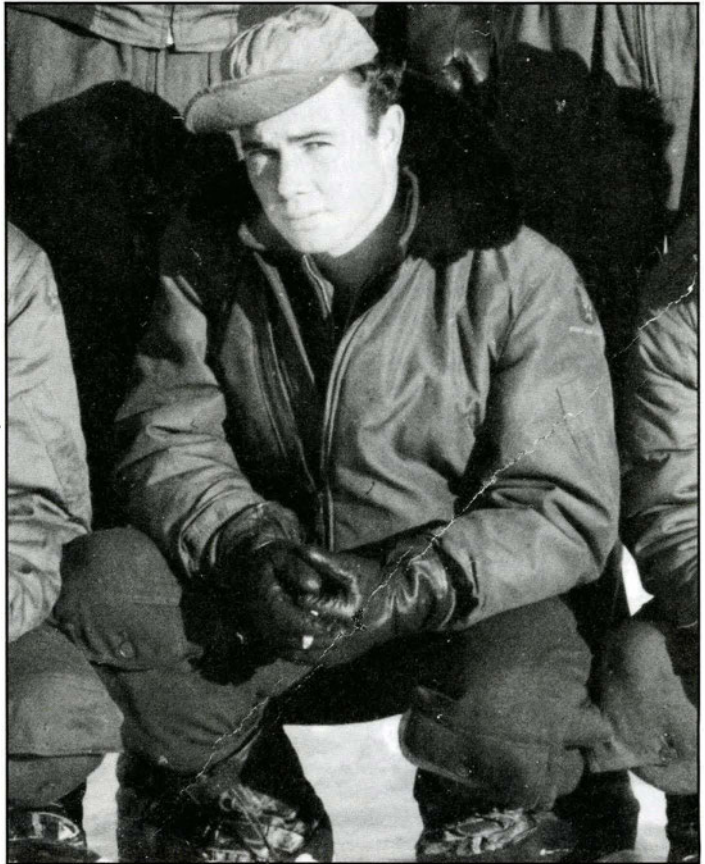
He retired from the Air Force after a 30-year career that began at Nuthampstead with his first combat mission on February 27, 1945 to Leipzig.

At that point in 1945 the talk was more about the war being over than being difficult and dangerous.

"Well," said Warren, "it might have been close to being over, but somehow they kept shooting at us and we kept losing air-planes.

"I see in our history book, *Remembrances*, that our group lost 19 planes in the last four months, seven in the last couple of weeks plus several more which made crash landings. I would say the war was still on," added Warren.

It was the mission on April 8, 1945 that Warren remembers in vivid detail, although he never did receive the "knot in his Good Conduct Medal" that was promised him by the substitute pilot whose leg was shattered by a piece of flak. Nor by his co-pilot, who brought the DFC paperwork for him to sign after the day's harrowing experiences.



SANFORD WARREN
"They Are Still Shooting At Us"



SANFORD WARREN

"Our Pilot's
Been Hit ...
Come And
Help"

Nor his regular pilot, Worley, who missed the whole day's activities and had to be replaced at the last minute by veteran Ed Stewart, who was eyeing a trip home with 31 missions to his credit.

Co-pilot Charles Wasserman wrote in his diary —

"We made three passes over the target before unloading our bombs. Flak was moderate, but as accurate as possible. We were in the flak barrage for 15 full minutes. Stewart got his lower leg smashed by a piece of flak and the nose was showered with fragments. Excellent work done by waist gunner Warren, who treated the wounded pilot. Will recommend him for the DFC."

The intercom rattled as crewmen were calling out planes in trouble, recalled Warren. "I heard 'the pilot's been hit,' and assumed it was the pilot of the B-17 falling out of formation.

"No, it's our pilot," they said. "Somebody come and help."

Warren left his position in the waist and found Wasserman struggling to control the aircraft while engineer-gunner James Lintern was trying to assist the bleeding pilot.

"We managed to get Stewart down to the ramp behind the nose section. I cut open his lower pants leg and saw a chunk of flak clear through his leg. I doused the wound with sulfa powder, dressed it, and then gave Stewart a shot or two of morphine.

"He was sort of in and out of it for the rest of the way home. I finally left him when they needed me in the cockpit. Wasserman

was in the pilot's seat and Lintern was in the co-pilot's seat. When we neared the English coast we were pretty much all by ourselves."

The William Wells crew had gone down over the target at Derben with only one survivor. The 600 low squadron leader, with CA Bruce Daily and lead pilot John Hahn, lost most of their plane's tail section. Including the tail-gunner, Wallace Kasch, but brought the plane home.

Kasch's friend from their original Donald Pettus crew, Bill Wickens, was among those killed on the Wells B-17. Each was near the end of his respective tour, flying as spare gunner.

Upon reaching Nuthampstead, Warren subbed as engineer by calling out the air speed for Wasserman, who had limited experience in landing a Fortress. Lintern, the acting co-pilot, hollered "go around!, go around!" on the first landing pass.

Stewart, able to understand the anguish in the cockpit, remembers calling up from his resting place with these words —

"It looks higher from the left seat than the right." He doubts that anyone heard him.

Wasserman made it just fine on the second pass and the tormented aircraft was soon met by the group ambulance.

Warren had found the Very pistol and fired red-red flares indicating wounded aboard.

Stewart was shipped to the Division hospital at Basingbourne, where he spent the first month of many following months recovering from his flak date.

The news that he had been hit had been incorrectly interpreted as having been killed. By the time he arrived back at Station 131 all his belongings had been removed.

Continued On Page 7

Formations April 8, 1945 Mission

Lead Squadron—602nd

	ENGISN Shafer	
Lamiell		HAYS Thompson
Saferite		Heathcote
	Miller	
Elwell		Petska
Ferguson		Coffee

Low Squadron—600th

	DAILY Hahn	
Woodmansee		Nolan
Watson		Wells
	Runnion	
Eisele		Hill
McAfee		Shimek
	Hoelzel	

High Squadron—603rd

	HANAUER Guice	
Douglas		Stewart
Branyon		Alwood
	Overton	
Rosenberg		Lollar
Greenwalt		Gieryn

Beyond The Call Of Duty

Continued From Page 6

"Including my prized Lugar," said Stewart.

In the hospital, someone removed the zipper from his heated suit.

"In all that excitement, and with the war so close to being over, I guess I never did follow up with my efforts to get the DFC for Warren. What he did for me was surely over and beyond the call of duty."

Others flying with Warren, Lintern, Wasserman and Stewart on the fateful April 8, 1945 mission were R.E. Herkenham, navigator; C.E. Corcoran, bombardier; E.B. Pulley, radio; W.J. Ivy, ball turret; and W. Holz, tail gunner.

The 603rd high squadron was led by CA Jim Hanauer and pilot T.L. Guice. The lead 602 squadron was led by Group CO Lewis Engsign and pilot John Shafer.

Jean Miller was commanding officer of the 603rd at the time.

Derben was the location of an important oil dump, situated 45 miles west of Berlin between the Elbe River and Havel Canal.

The War Was "Almost Over," But Closing Weeks Also Were Tough

Stewart, who was drafted for the mission at the last minute, and hardly knew the names of any of the crew, lost complete track of the air drama details as he was hospitalized and then shipped home as the war ended.

Warren, similarly, lost track of his crew in the ensuing years and could not remember the name of the pilot he aided. A letter to FLAK NEWS asking for information about the 1945 incident prompted a recall by the editor, who remembered talking to Stewart years ago about the story.

"Call Ed Stewart," the editor told Warren. And sure enough, the two compared notes and they matched! Thus, FLAK NEWS had another bit of 398th history.

Wasserman, who died last year, lived in Delray Beach, FL. Stewart lives in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

"All these years Wasserman lived just up the road from me and I never knew he was the co-pilot on that mission," said Stewart.

Wasserman's widow, Paulette, likewise lamented the "too late" discovery. "Think of the time they might have had re-living that episode. Oh, if they only had known."

Three More Flags Sent To Be Flown At Nuthampstead

Tim Wells, who along with his mother, Peggy, deliver milk to several hundred customers in and around Nuthampstead, England, also doubles as the "flag man" for the "Friends of the 398th."

Taking over from his father, David, who died suddenly two years ago, Tim faithfully raises both the Stars & Stripes and Union Jack on special days at the 398th Memorial.

He also is entrusted with raising the flags of deceased members whose heirs chose to remember their respective loved ones with this rare, but significant act. Most recent flag arrivals were those given by the families of John Colwell, a 602 flight chief; Peter Latrenta, 601 crew chief; and Charles Wasserman, 603 co-pilot.

They will all be flown at a pole located near the site of the old tower, especially purchased and dedicated for this purpose.



TIM WELLS
He Has The Flag Duty At Station 131

The Story of "Campbell Falls"

Forest Service Named Falls For 398th Pilot

Only God knows what really happened to Robert G. Campbell during the frantic moments after his B-17 was plucked from the skies over Merseburg by sharp-shooting Flak gunners.

His broken body was recovered from a river nine miles southwest of the Leuna oil refinery target and buried in an isolated grave in Mucheln.

The mission was on November 2, 1944, a day that also recorded the downing of two other 398th crews — Herb Newman of the 603rd and Russell Reed of the 602nd. All aboard Reed's plane survived, but four on Newman's ship, including himself, met death after bailing out. This story at another time.

That Campbell, of the 601st, was a quality pilot and highly respected by his crew and fellow pilots, was a known fact.

That Campbell was liked and respected by his fellow Forest Service Rangers in southern Oregon during his pre-war days, also is a known fact. He had graduated in Forestry from Oregon State University and was well-embarked on a promising career with the Forest Service when he entered the Air Force.

Campbell, of course, was only one of thousands of airmen who gave his life for his country. But he must be the only former B-17 bomber pilot to have a falls on a major river named in his honor. This occurred in 1949.

A bronze plaque was donated by contributions from Forest Service employees throughout the Pacific Northwest. It was placed on a huge boulder in the center of an island in the middle of the South Umpqua River some 12 miles upstream from Tiller, Oregon, which is 25 miles east of Interstate 5 between Roseburg and Grants Pass.

This special place is known as Campbell Falls.

It is a fitting location for such a memorial, as it is near to the fire lookout stations where Campbell first served before becoming Assistant Ranger for this forest region.

The falls were officially named by the U.S. Board of Geographic Names in honor of Campbell upon the recommendation of the local Forest Service personnel.

Over 75 persons attended the dedication in 1949, including members of Campbell's family, friends, Forest Service personnel, local people who knew him at Tiller, a representative of the OSU School of Forestry and veterans from the American Legion and VFW. Flags were presented by Boy Scouts from Canyonville.

Forty-two years later, in 1991, the FLAK

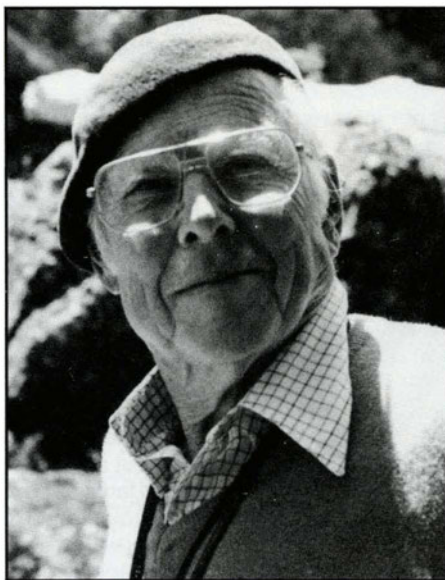


ROBERT CAMPBELL

NEWS editor and his wife journeyed from Seattle to Tiller to view the memorial that perpetuates the memory of this obviously well-loved Robert Greenlee Campbell. They were accompanied by brother Homer Campbell and his wife, Meg, of Corvallis, OR. Homer is a retired Fish & Wildlife biologist.

Campbell Falls was easy to find, requiring but a short walk to the river from the road. The prominent signs stirred 398th pride as the walking part of the pilgrimage began. But the Umpqua River was in a defensive mood on visitation day. Its rushing waters were too deep and dangerous and a deep, new channel between the river bank and rock prevented any safe crossing and access to the bronze plaque.

A hastily built "dam" proved too flimsy in the eyes of the veteran outdoorsman



HOMER CAMPBELL

Oregon River Site Of Plaque For War Action

Homer. But not for the fearless Meg. She negotiated the crossover and proceeded to photograph the plaque and falls. She also presented a bouquet of flowers on behalf of the 398th Bomb Group.

At the 1949 dedication another woman, Robert Campbell's mother-in-law, Edith Cotter of Portland, offered this poem —

MEMORIAL TO FORESTER PILOT
He would have said, three elements
comprise material worth
When catalyzed or fused by fire:
water, air and earth;
And threefold is the character
of man's mysterious whole,
Made vital by the inner spark:
body, spirit, soul.
Earth cherishes his virile frame
and waters chart his prayer;
His spirit ranges unconfined,
free as mountain air.

Claire Campbell and little daughter Nancy also attended to mourn their husband and father. Claire, who still lives in the Portland area where she and Bob grew up, later re-married ... to a former B-17 pilot, Bob Schneider. Nancy is married and living in California.

Several members of Campbell's crew have remained "in touch" over the years. These are Fil Arbogast, co-pilot; Herb Licker, bombardier; Andrew Coatley, engineer; Ben Core, radio; Duane Cassidy, Arch Floyd and Ralph Loss, gunners.

Joe Coopet, navigator, and Andrew Jones, gunner, are deceased. Loss was grounded for medical reasons and was replaced by Charles Hammonds. The latter's whereabouts is unknown.

"Campbell Falls" honors the pilot who "displayed outstanding heroism by staying at the controls of his crippled bomber allowing his entire crew to escape."

That he was the last man out is a known fact, attested to by members of his crew.

But did he jump and land safely?

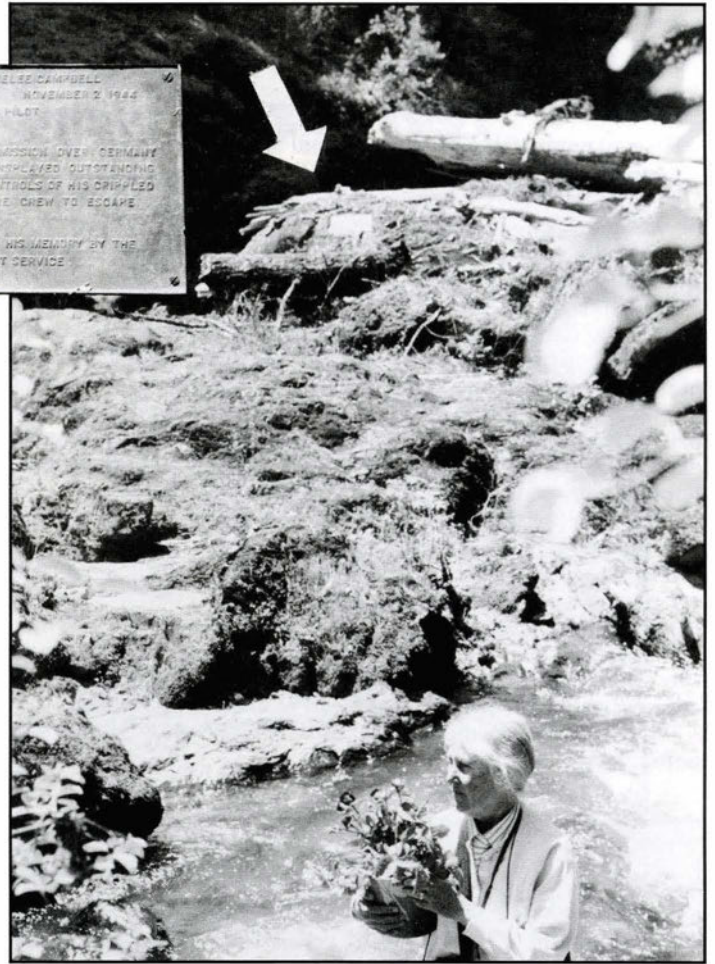
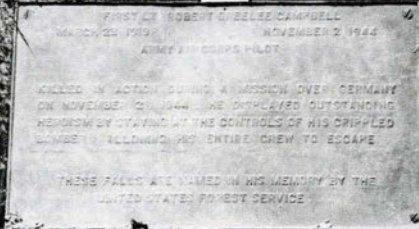
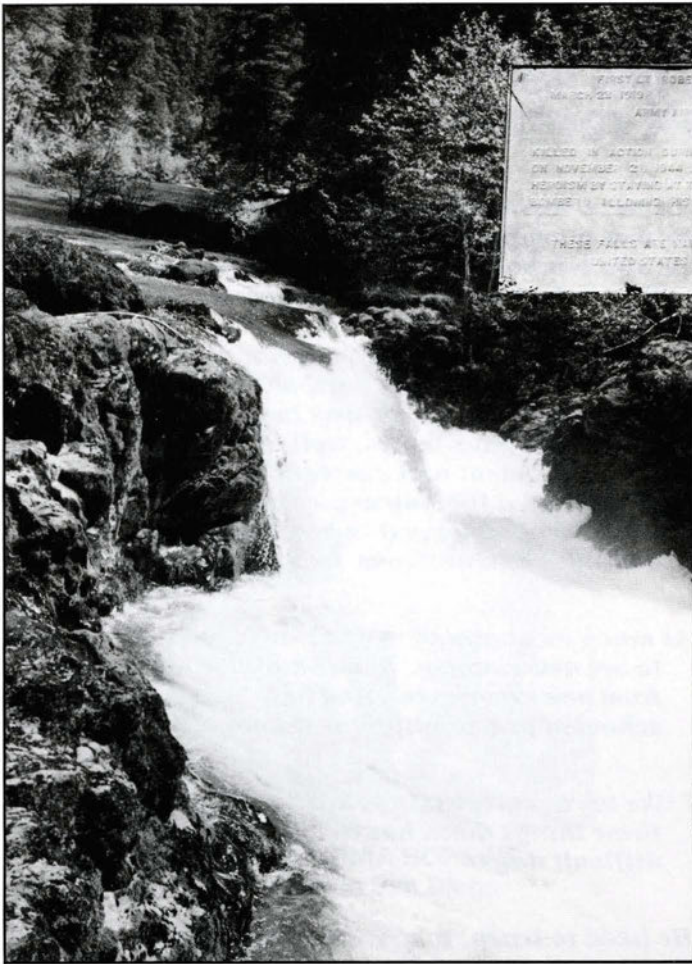
Could he have been hit by another aircraft as he bailed out?

Could his chute have failed to open?

Core, a prosecuting attorney in Fort Smith, AR, submits the thesis that Campbell, because of so many broken bones and crushed skull, could have been beaten to death by civilians and dumped into the nearest river. His body was not found and buried until four days later.

Homer Campbell, reading the Missing Air Crew Report about his brother for the first time, was visibly shaken by the conjecture on the nature of Bob's demise.

Continued On Page 9



Campbell Falls On The South Umpqua River, Oregon

Meg Campbell Placed Flowers At Bronze Plaque For The 398th

Continued From Page 8

He thought for a moment, and then said: "I cannot believe that a beating could have caused his death. It had to have been that his parachute failed to open."

Homer and Meg, noting that the group's 1992 tour to Germany and England will include Merseburg, could not help but see that the site of his brother's crashed B-17 is close by. Are there people still living in the area who might remember?

The records accumulated by members of the crew reveal more than a few leads that could, conceivably, lead to answers. It is known that the B-17 crashed at Grumpa, a mile from Mucheln. The crash was investigated by a Captain Haun from the Air Field HQ at Kolleda.

The local Grumpa police under 1/Sgt. Bleiz, guarded the crash site. And the Bürgermeister at Mucheln would have known about the burial of Campbell.

In that Campbell's body and the plane came down in the same general area, several miles from the other flyers who successfully bailed out, it was reasoned that Campbell had plummeted, rather than parachuted.

All records indicate that the plane was 98% destroyed by the impact and fire. Obviously, Campbell had jumped. But beyond that, only questions.

Class of 44-A Had Station 131 Flavor

Robert Campbell was a graduate of Class 44-A, Stuttgart Army Air Field, Arkansas, qualifying for multi-engine assignment.

Also graduating from this same class were Ray Armor, Wally Blackwell, Robert Brown, Nigil Carter, William Evans, William Engel, John Lee, Roy Leukardt, John McArthur and Mark Magnan.

Remarkably, all were assigned to the 398th Bomb Group, scattered among the four squadrons.

Carter, of the 601st and McArthur of the 603rd, both were shot down on a mission to Peenemunde, Germany on August 4, 1944. Carter and his crew bailed out after being hit by flak and spent 10 months in prison camp.

McArthur's B-17 was consumed by flak fire after the target and plunged into the sea. There were no survivors.

Thus, three of the eleven "44-A" Stuttgart pilots were lost in combat. In addition, Blackwell also was shot down over France, but managed to return to duty. All the others, except Engel, are current members of the 398th Association.

Campbell's first mission was on July 29 to Merseburg. His last mission on November 2 ... to Merseburg!

Reunion

Continued From Page 1

San Diego will be THEIR reunion!

Chairman Bob Hopkins and his wife, Virginia, have been on the job for two years preparing for their guests. They have lined up a variety of exciting tours and events to assure everyone of something special. Not the least of which is that the weather will be warm and sunny — in November!

The Official Reservation form is printed on Page 4. Clip it out (or make a photocopy) and mail it in as soon as possible to Hopkins. Send the Town & Country Hotel reservation form directly to the hotel.

Hopkins has already received word that our "Friends of the 398th" from England will be represented by Johanna Sienkiewicz of Oxford and Ron Setter of Beaconsfield. These were the two who arranged the ceremonies last year honoring the members of the 601 Searl crew who perished in a crash west of London while on a bombing mission.

Among those waiting in San Diego to greet Sienkiewicz and Setter will be Charlotte France, the sister of Searl. Plus many of the others who took part in the two-week Scotland-England group tour.

General information on the reunion may be found on Page 3.

A Tribute To All The 398th "Bill Joneses"

"We Will Dearly Miss Him"

His real name was a bit more formal in its entirety, but he was known as plain ol' Bill Jones.

Both in the 601st Squadron of the 398th and in later years as he worked in the various echelons of heavy construction.

Our 398th has had a lot of "Bill Joneses." Spelled differently, perhaps. Some younger, some older, some richer, some poorer.

But at least two things in common. They were members of the 398th, and they had come to the end of their lives here on earth.

Bill, like all the others, didn't plan it that way. But fate brought him to the 398th at an early age and he passed away at an age his family and friends thought was much too young. The 398th Taps list, printed in FLAK NEWS every January, continues to grow each year with the names of men who also seemingly were called home much too early.

Many grieve for their own "Bill Jones." Others will join them this year and in the years to come.

Bill, like so many, left a loving family. One of these members was a son, who like sons everywhere who just lost a Dad, was moved to pay a tribute. To be sure, this tribute was penned for a very special Bill Jones. But it is printed in FLAK NEWS as a tribute to all the "Bill Joneses" of the 398th Bomb Group who served their country and then answered the call of Taps.

Bill was from Olympia, WA, and the following tribute was penned by his son, Randy.

A Tribute To My Father

*He was a loving, committed, intimate husband.
He was a loving, caring, tender father.
He was compassionate, especially to those in need,
those who may have had less, and to all children.
He was honorable.
He was a proud American veteran.
He was sensitive, with a hard-shell facade.
If he was your friend, he was the best of friends. If
he was not your friend, well, he was just quiet.
He was consistent and constant and steady.
He possessed a lifelong dedication to the
betterment of himself in his learning, in his
attitudes and outlooks, and in his work.*

*As much as anything, he was an explorer. He liked
to see new country. To feel and live and learn
from new experiences. And he was well versed in the
school of practicality; the school of hard-knocks.*

*I like to remember things he liked. Just writing
these things down has helped me during these
difficult days.*

*He liked to teach, to write, to play cards.
He liked to tease and to laugh.
He liked "gadgets" for his RV.
He liked a well-running, dependable truck.
He liked to fly.
He liked a sharp axe and to cut wood.
He sure liked to cut wood.
He liked to watch a good cutting horse.
He liked to sing and listen to ballads.
He liked to make his meals "come out even," so
that he would have equal amounts of the last
bites at each meal.
He liked dogs and some cats.
He liked to read.
And he liked to look over far and open spaces.*

*Most of all, he loved his family: His wife, his
daughters, his sons, his grandchildren.
Making and keeping strong family bonds was
immensely important to him.*

And he loved his friends.

*We can rest assured knowing that he doesn't suffer
now from his breaks and bruises, arthritis or
angina.*

*He passed on during a time when he was doing just
exactly what he enjoyed most: spending time
with Mother, traveling, exploring, and meeting
and talking to people.*

We will dearly miss him.



THIS IS HOW the main runway looks at Station 131 today, looking northeast. A small hanger accommodates the private planes that now use the end of the old field. It is from here that next year's tour members will be taken by coach to be given rides by "Friends of the 398th."

Going To England-Germany? Please Give Us A Call Now

Are you "positively" going on the 1992 England-Germany tour, or at least "quite sure" you will be going?

If so, please call our travel consultant now so we can begin to prepare a count. It is important for our "Friends of the 398th" to know how many "home stays" they can expect. Also, it will be helpful for planning for our three-day visit in eastern Germany, where Merseburg is located (suburb of Leipzig).

It is hoped that enough members will sign on to qualify for the spectacular 75-passenger tour bus as we motor through Germany and Belgium.

Please call Barbara Fish, Travel House, Inc., Seattle. Her toll-free telephone number is 1-800-423-5454.

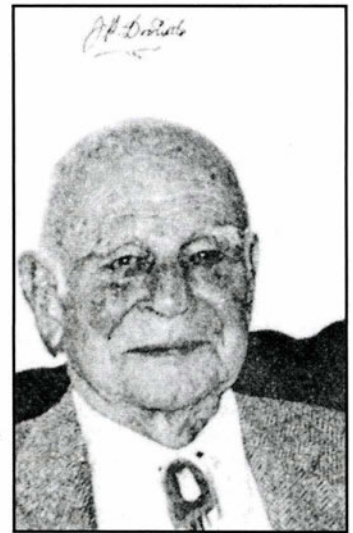
Reservations are not required immediately, but a friendly phone call now would be so helpful.

BRIEF-things

John McMenamin was laid to rest in May, one of several members of the 398th to pass on in recent months. However, **John** got a B-17 "fly-by" for his parting. After the burial, his son heard this piston engine aircraft. Looking up, a B-17 flew over heading for North Philadelphia. "I never saw anyone using that approach before," said son **Dan**. "It was eerie!" ... among the personal effects left by **Robert Campbell** (Campbell Falls) was a short snorter, signed by fellow 601 pilots **Hollis Dalton** and **Phil Stahlman** ... treasurer **Ralph Hall** gets a lot of mail (dues time in October) and one of his "treasurers" is a note and check from **W.A. (Mac) McLaughlin** of Mineral Wells, TX. "I am sending the 398th a check for \$100, only because this is May 3rd, and it comes only once a year. See you in San Diego" ... seeing the letter from **Gen. Jimmy Doolittle** recalls the headline in an L.A. newspaper the morning after the Tokyo raid — "DOOLITTLE DOOD IT" ... or do you recall **Red Skelton** and his "mean little kid" skit that always ended with "I dood it!" ... thanks to **Wally Blackwell**, who helped search out many of the first pilots' names and squadron affiliations in the April issue ... (no, he was not responsible for the goofs) ... **Chaplain Duvall's** Persian Gulf prayer, as printed in the January issue, was re-printed in the 8th Air Force News ... **Don Menard**, who survived his bail out over Holland in 1944, returned to the "scene" this year and met with many residents who remembered his 1944 jump and also with **Karl Lusink** and **Rudie Polman**, self-appointed researchers of WW II Allied air crashes in Holland ... OK, who out there remembers the details of the incident that occurred at Monohan's Bar in Pyote, TX in 1943? ... **Lloyd Stovall** has a friend who is a B-52 pilot and is quite proud of his brand new A-2 jacket. **Lloyd**, noting that his friend was heading for combat in the Gulf, offered the pilot the use of his "battle proven" 1944 version. "I would be honored," said the B-52 pilot. Just when the exchange was to be made, the war ended ... it took almost four years, but the B-17 that was badly damaged at an air show in Pennsylvania in 1987, has been repaired and is back in the air. This is the Fort known as "Nine-O-Nine" ... one of our "Friends of the 398th," **Tony Clark**, writes to suggest that "**Stormin' Norman**" should have finished off Saddam Hussein like **Admiral Nelson** finished off **Napoleon's** fleet at the Battle of Trafalgar (1805). **Nelson** ignored an order from the Admiralty by putting his telescope to his blind eye, saying, "I see no ships" ... the "Friends" had thought of making Station 131 operational again for the Gulf war, "but we found we would have had to bring the B-52's to the field in small pieces, on trucks" ... **Tony & Beryl** have hosted many a 398th traveler who came back to the old base to re-live a few missions ... another **Hall** "treasure" came from **Joe Roberge**, who sent in a contribution ("use as you see fit") of \$100.00, with the following note — "Just think, 47 years ago tomorrow (6 June, 1944) we flew in support of the invasion. We dropped our bombs at 0656 and the troops hit the beach at 0700 hours" ... in case you were wondering, the average cost per day for the England-Germany tour next year is \$175.00 ... the legacy left by **Richard (Rocker) Mills**, who went down for the count in recent weeks, was the 398th flag program at Nuthampstead ... he started it all with a simple, "I've got an idea."



COL. FRANK P. HUNTER
And Gen. Doolittle



GEN. JIMMY DOOLITTLE
Now In His 90's

J.H. Doolittle
Pebble Beach, CA 93953

April 5, 1991

William G. Comstock, President
398th Bomb Group
Fairfax, VA 22031

Dear Mr. Comstock,

I was informed recently that the 398th Bomb Group made a generous gift, in my name, to the Association of Graduates Building campaign. I am certainly honored. I will definitely never lose my enthusiasm for the Air Force, its people and its traditions.

I am extremely pleased that the graduates have bestowed upon me the honor of naming their Headquarters/Alumni House the Doolittle Building.

Please extend my thanks to the members of the 398th Bomb Group for their generous support of this important project.

Sincerely,

J.H. Doolittle

"It is not the critic who counts, or how the strong man stumbled and fell, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes short again and again, who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotion, and spends himself in a worthy cause; and if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly; so that he'll never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat."

— Theodore Roosevelt



ROGER BRADLEY of London, a "Friend of the 398th," leaves no question as to which B-17 outfit he supports. Even to the tune of his special "HBG 398 W" license plate. Roger and his buddy, Ralph Ambrose, "grew up" at Station 131 during World War II years.