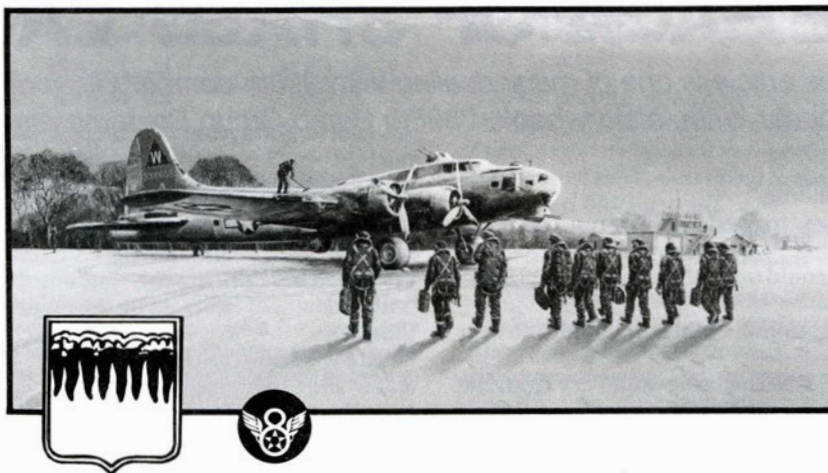




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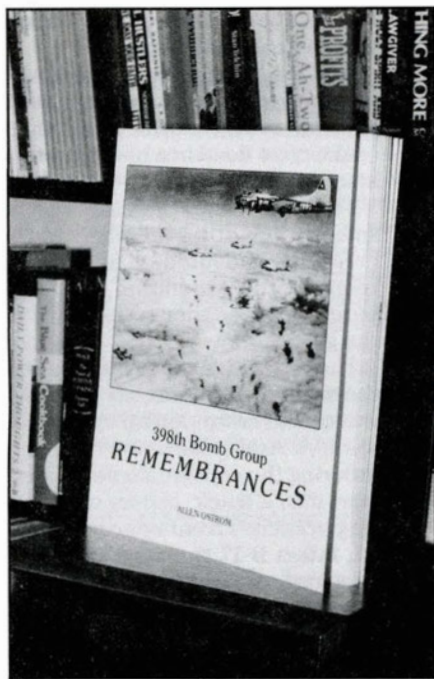
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398TH BOMB. GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION • 8TH AIR FORCE • 1ST AIR DIVISION • NUTHAMPSTEAD, ENGLAND

VOL. 8 NO. 1

FLAK NEWS

JANUARY 1993



Remembrances History Book Now Available

The third printing of "398th Bomb Group Remembrances" is now off the press and available for shipping. The book contains a general history of the 398th, including names of those killed in action, PW's, evaders, wounded, missing air crew reports, combat mission list, maps of Station 131, plus a great variety of stories and photos of air battles and ground support activities. (See Page 2).

Cost of the book is \$22.00 each, postpaid.

Send orders to Ralph Hall, treasurer, 398th Bomb Group, New Bedford, MA 02740.



JAMIE MARYOTT

Who is this young man and why is his picture on Page 1 of FLAK NEWS? For answers to these questions, please turn to Page 4.

Another Group Awaits Dues Call

The "staggered" 398th dues system, put into place last October, moves into the second phase with this issue of FLAK NEWS. Members living in the following states are asked to use the enclosed dues slip and mail to Ralph Hall, treasurer, 398th Bomb Group, New Bedford, MA 02740 -

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

Please fill in all information on both sides.

Aura of Merseburg?

Hansard Made A Date With The Chaplain

THE MISSION:

Merseburg, Nov. 25, 1944

It might have been the aura of "Merseburg."

Or a hunch, or an airman's "gut feeling."

Whatever brought him to this point only he really knew, but apparently he was compelled to seek out Chaplain James Duvall one day shortly before what was destined to be his final flight for the 398th and the 600th Squadron.

"Chaplain, I wish to be baptized," was the request of V.A. Hansard, Jr. a B-17 pilot soon to set out on his 20th mission for the group.

And soon to be buried at Cambridge American Military Cemetery along with his two fellow flying officers, Robert L. Davis and William H. Baker.

The Hansard crew had 17 missions recorded by November 1, 1944. On November 2 they went to Merseburg. On November 8 they went Merseburg.

Shortly thereafter Hansard, accompanied by Davis and Baker, presented himself to the chaplain. And right there in the Group Dispensary bathtub, Chaplain Duvall immersed the young pilot, the son of a Texas minister, with the words - "I baptize you, Vellardell A. Hansard, Jr., in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

The mission to Merseburg on November 25, 1944 was the usual long haul, the antitheses of "Milk Run." It was eight hours from Station 131 to the Leuna plant and back again. Maj. Jean Miller and Mark Magnan were in the 603 lead ship, followed by Bill Hancock and Roy Leukhardt

Continued On Page 6

THE SAGA OF SHADY LADY

This article is one of many dealing with 398th combat missions that appear in the history book, "398th Bomb Group Remembrances."

"That was a magnificent landing."

Said the co-pilot, Ted Prevost, to the pilot, Warren Wade.

And the circumstances at that moment represented the only high water mark in a day that could only be described as bizarre, wild, fearsome ... and deadly.

The landing was made slightly uphill, slightly downhill and over a fence.

"Give we wheels and flaps," was the last-second cry from the pilot as he made a wing-up, 180-degree turn and set "Shady Lady" down on this unlikely landing field with a touch normally reserved for the movies.

And the setting for this fiction-like episode was in an area of France steeped in the history of World War I, the Alsace-Lorraine region of Verdun, Metz and St. Mihiel.

But this was World War II and the day was September 8, 1944.

The target had been a chemical plant at Ludwigshaven, a city well-known to the 398th Bomb Group. Wade and Prevost were on their fifth mission out of Nuthampstead, with a crew of Burton Bream, navigator; William Howell, bombardier; Robert Ritter, engineer; John Rex, radio operator; Wilbert Burns, ball turret gunner; Harrison Brooks, waist gunner; and Eugene Gamba, tail gunner.

Their Fortress was No. 42-97385, a combat veteran of 43 missions. She had left the Seattle Boeing plant in 1942 with just a number. Arriving at Station 131 she took on the letter "X" for easier identification and the number "3-0" to indicate she belonged to the 601st Squadron.

Somewhere along the line a lovely lady was painted on her star-board nose, identified as "Shady Lady."

Ludwigshaven never appeared in the bomb sight of bombardier Howell. Before approaching the IP (Initial Point) No. 1 engine failed and "X" began drifting behind his formation, already "out there" all alone as the squadron's "tail-end Charlie."

Moments later No. 2 was out and Wade was on the radio appealing for fighter support as he was unable to maintain either altitude or speed. Wade struggled to not lose sight of the group, led by Major Bruce Daily. He would drop his bombs with the group, if at all possible.

"We kept on as best we could on two engines," said Prevost, "but when No. 3 failed we salvaged somewhere in the vicinity of the target. Burt then gave us a heading of 235 degrees, the fastest route toward friendly territory. As I recall, we were heading toward Nancy, which was the area of the front lines at the time."

At this point the mission turned from simply dangerous to dangerous and bizarre. It was into a heavy cloud cover as the lone operating No. 4 engine did its best to maintain some flight integrity. It was a losing battle, complicated further with the loss of most of the instruments operated by vacuum pumps in No. 2 and 3 engines.

The plane was going down, but nobody really knew how fast or how far. A flash of inspiration led Wade to order engineer Ritter to hold up his ear phone cord to help establish some kind of an artificial horizon. Not much help. The plane struggled to stay alive as it wallowed in the murky skies.

"Sometimes we were upside down, sometimes diving and some-

times near stalling," recalled Prevost. "It was wild, and the tremendous downdrafts had us all guessing. And then our pitot tube had frozen over so we had no idea of our air speed."

Somewhere during this descent the bombardier chose to bail out and he was followed by the engineer. Both went out the nose hatch.

The wild ride continued for about 40 minutes, when all at once came the "moment of truth."

A church steeple appeared just ahead. And they were flying upside down!

"Warren and I put our legs on the yoke and pushed, just barely clearing the steeple as we turned the plane right side up.

"Now we were on the deck and the next thing I heard from Warren was 'wheels and flaps!' "

And the "magnificent" landing ... and the beginning of another adventure that would conclude with three of the crew dead in a bloody escape attempt.

The emergency landing was so smooth, the other members of the crew who had huddled in the radio room for the impending crash jolts hardly realized they were safely on the ground.

The job of the super landing was short-lived, however, as the crew was quickly rounded up by German soldiers. And as these soldiers were ordering the captured seven Americans into a truck, others were cutting branches from nearby trees in

an effort to conceal the prized, intact B-17 from the air.

U.S. fighter pilots had standing orders to destroy any bomber that might have survived such a crash landing. It didn't take them long to find the B-17 and render it junk.

The landing had been successfully negotiated somewhere southeast of Nancy.

"We landed somewhere about half way between Nancy to the west and Sarrebourg to the east," said Bream. "At least it was 12 kilometers to Nancy, according to a sign post."

The seven Americans were loaded into an open truck, guarded by five SS troops in the back and two more in the cab. It was now quite dark and soon to begin was a conflict befitting World War I trench warfare of a generation before.

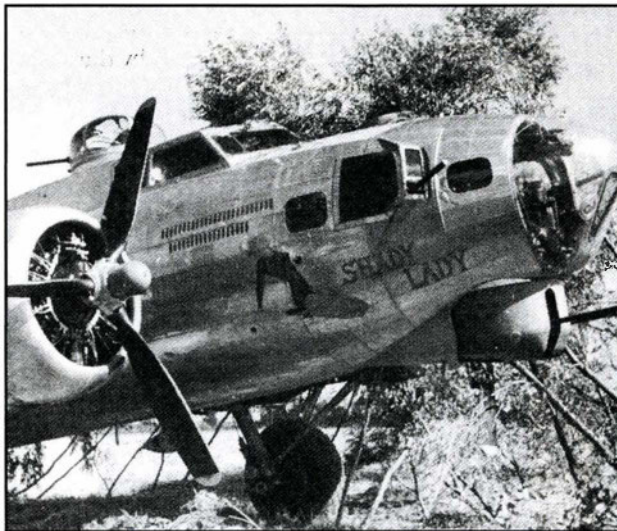
Wade passed the word that they should make an escape try, even in the face of seven armed guards. In the dark, he reasoned, they could make a run for it and reach Allied lines before dawn.

At Wade's signal, they all jumped the guards and the battle ensued. Tail gunner Gamba threw himself at a guard, only to catch the muzzle of a machine pistol in the stomach. He took "many" rounds and died quickly.

In the wild thrashing to bodies, bullets began flying in all directions. The two guards in the cab also opened up with their machine pistols, their spray firing cutting down one of their own men. But also caught were Wade and Burns.

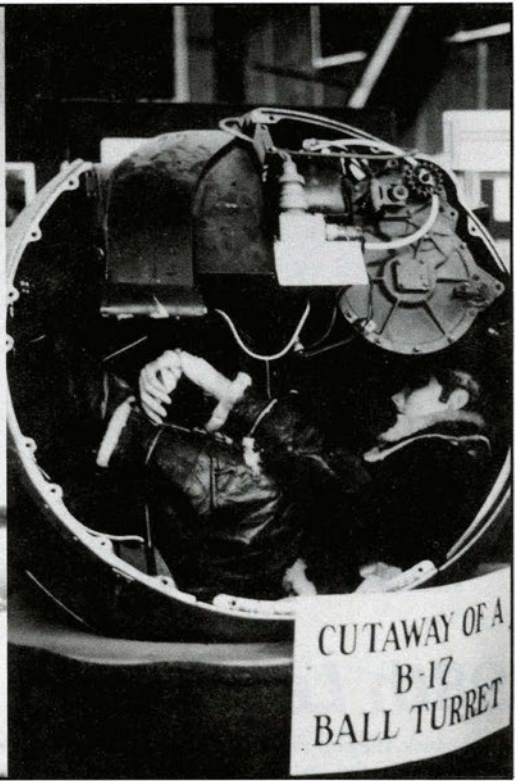
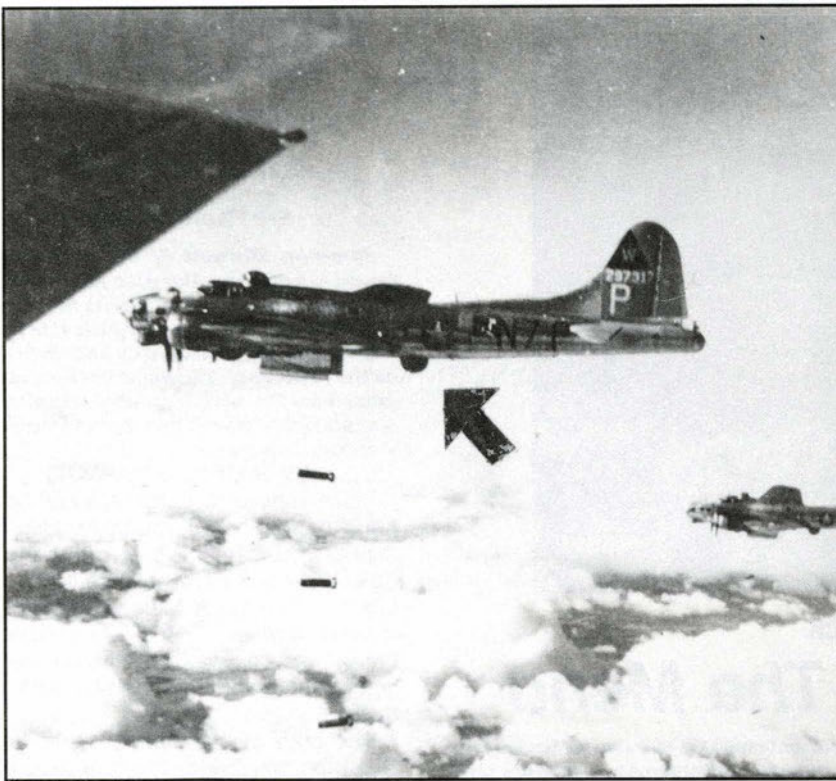
Prevost was then blinded by a stray bullet and Bream was wounded in the hip. While still standing, a guard landed a rifle butt to his face.

Rex also was flattened with a rifle butt to the face, knocking out many of his teeth.



The Germans tried to camouflage Shady Lady after her spectacular landing.

Continued On Page 3



“Grandpa, How Did You Ever Fit Into The Ball Turret?”

IT IS NEVER EASY for a ball turret gunner to explain to his grand kids how he spent his time on those long missions over Germany. Maybe this composite photo will help. The arrow points to the little ball where Grandpa curled up for hours at a time. The cutaway of the turret, pictured at Duxford Air Museum in

England, gives a better hint of the ball turret gunner’s little home on the B-17. Missing from the photo are such things as gloves, helmet, oxygen mask and even the twin-50’s. But at least it is a photo that Grandpa can use to say, “that was me.”

“It Was A Bloody Truck”

Continued From Page 2

Thus, the little war was over.

“It was a very bloody truck.”

The living — Bream, Brooks, Prevost and Rex — were herded to a nearby “dungeon,” as Bream called it. As he tried to convince the soldier that he was too weak to walk, he was told flat out — “Walk or die!”

He walked, but soon almost passed out from loss of blood. Thinking he was about to die he told the others — “So long guys. Nice to have known you.”

Later, in a hospital in Strasboug being treated for his bullet wounds and lacerations, Bream offered high praise for his treatment at the hands of the German medical staff.

They asked him if his wounds were from flak or fighters.

Cautiously, remembering his remarkable air and ground dramas of the preceding hours, he said —

“I’m not sure.”

Bream and Prevost spent the rest of the war at Stalag Luft I at Barth. Rex and Brooks were sent to Kief Heide at Pomeria.

Howell and Ritter, who bailed out, made contact with the French Underground, led in that area by Paul Bodot. They were joined by a pair of P-51 pilots, Pierce MacKennon and Ray Reuter, and the four spent several days in an abandoned salt mine. On September 18, guided by Bodot, they made contact with the U.S. 4th Armored Division and soon afterwards were rotated home.

1994 England Tour Planned

Although no “contracts” have been signed, the 398th Bomb Group and the UK Friends of the 398th have agreed that there will be a tour to England in 1994, probably in mid-June. Additional details will be forthcoming in the April issue of FLAK NEWS.

To help us determine group interest we would ask that those who would consider such a tour to place a toll-free call to our travel consultant, Barbara Fish. Call her at 1-800-423-5454.



Reunion Site For 1993

Circle the dates, folks, the next 398th reunion is coming up in Buffalo, New York, on Wednesday-Thursday-Friday-Saturday, September 15-16-17-18, 1993. Headquarters hotel will be the Sheraton Inn, Buffalo Airport, 2040 Walden Avenue Exit at I-90. Complete registration forms will be published in the April issue of FLAK NEWS. Reunion chairman will be Larry Paul, Williamsville, NY 14221.

Tucson In 1994

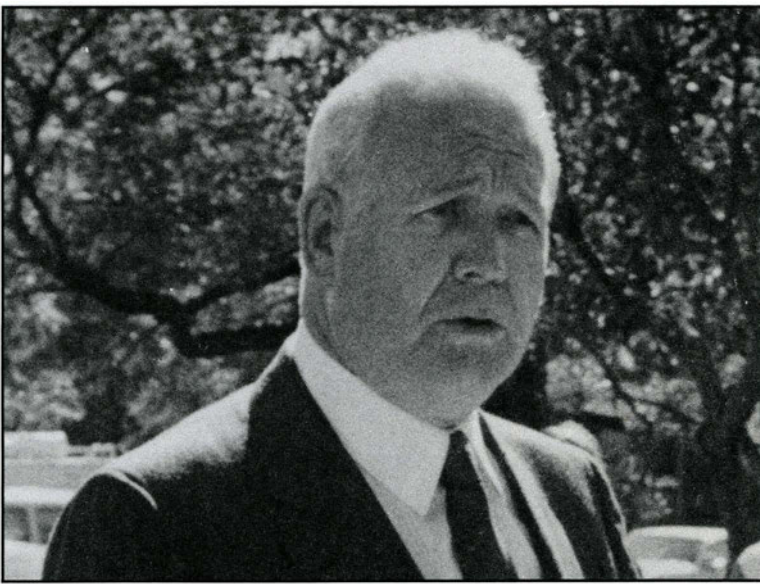
The Southwest desert city of Tucson, Arizona has been selected as the reunion host city for 1994.

A committee of VP Ted Johnston, Secretary Wally Blackwell and Contact Officer George Hilliard, plus reunion coordinator Allen Ostrom, combined to make the decision.

No dates were selected, but it was agreed that four days in either October or November, 1994, appeared the most likely to be picked.

Hawaii Tour Off

Unable to raise the required number of participants, it has been necessary to cancel the plans for the proposed 398th Hawaii Tour planned for February 9-18, 1993.



BILL COMSTOCK

398th Leader On The Mend

Bill Comstock, the only president of the 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association has ever had since its inception in 1976, turned himself in for a bit of "Sub Depot" repair last month, but has since been discharged with a "fit for action" report.

The "Sub Depot" in Bill's case was Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, DC, and the "engineers" who sent him out with the "fit for action" report were the surgeons and oncology specialists who removed a large part of Bill's malignant Sigmoid colon.

"I was not feeling all that well," said Bill, "so I decided to let the doctors have a look. What I thought might be a small problem turned out to be a rather big problem.

"The cancer had spread through the wall of the colon and adjacent tissues. They kept me at Walter Reed for 12 days."

398th Operations Group Now Part Of 97th Mobility Wing

The first Air Mobility Command wing was activated in October at Altus Air Force Base, Oklahoma. Three major units merged to form the 97th Air Mobility Wing.

The 443rd Airlift Wing and the 340th Air Refueling Wing, both at Altus, and the Airlift Wing and the 398th Operations Group, Castle AFB, California, will make up the 97th.

The activation complies with Air Force initiative to form composite wings at certain locations.

The new Altus wing provides the Air Force with its first Air-Mobility packages.

The reorganization will consolidate C-5, C-141 and KC-135 training programs under one wing. Previously, the 443rd AW trained all C-5 pilots and the 398th Operations group trained the tanker pilots. The 97th AMW will provide both operational and training commitments.

The 97th was first formed in 1942 as a B-17 bombardment group at MacDill AFB, Florida. The group moved to England in August 1942 as part of the 8th Air Force.

On September 1, the 97th wing, formerly the 97th bombardment wing, was deactivated at Eaker AFB, Arkansas.

Brig. Gen. Walter S. Hogle will command the 97th Air Mobility Wing.

Bill, after being home for two weeks, said the latest reports from the pathologists are most positive.

"If it develops that I need further treatment with radiation or chemotherapy they are certain they can stop any new cell growth," said a very thankful Comstock.

He has returned for part-time work at the business management research firm where he serves as Director of Education.

Comstock, who served the Air Force in a number of positions after his 35-mission tour with the 602nd Squadron, was a professor and dean at the Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright Patterson Air Force Base at Dayton shortly before his official retirement.

While still the dean at the Institute, Comstock was elected president of the 398th Memorial Association during the group's first reunion, held at Dayton. He was one of 30 members who chipped in \$1.00 each to establish the initial treasury.

VA Reminds of Flag Program

We are reminded by the VA that an American flag is available to drape the casket of a veteran who was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. After the funeral service, the flag may be given to the next of kin or a close associate of the deceased.

The VA also will issue a flag on behalf of a service member who was missing in action and later presumed dead. Flags are issued at any VA regional office or VA national cemetery and most Post Offices.

The 398th, working with the "Friends of the 398th" at Station 131, has arranged for many deceased members' flags to be flown at the Memorial at Nuthampstead and later at a specially erected flag pole near the site of the old control tower.

Tim Wells supervises the flag program and also issues a certificate indicating the

"BOMB RUN"

See Photo on Page 1

Jameson Maryott is the nine-year-old grandson of Dana Maryott, who served the 398th as a bombardier on the 603 Francis Farenthold crew. The Maryotts live in Spokane, Washington, an area known to many as the "Palouse." The imaginative Jameson must have listened to some of "Grandpa's" war stories, witness this yarn turned in as a class assignment.

BY JAMESON MARYOTT

"Get ready for takeoff! Get ready for takeoff!" As the men heard the loudspeaker, they rushed to their B-17's and climbed in. America was at war with Germany and the brave B-17 pilots and their crews were going to bomb Bremen. As the B-17's roared off, the ground-crews at the airbase were all hoping that their big birds would all come back.

The crew of a certain B-17, the *Wikka Takka Ton*, watched as they passed over the English coast. Their B-17 was cruising at 30,000 feet. The men aboard the B-17 turned on their electric heating suits and prepared to meet the enemy.

They flew for a while and then the top turret gunner spotted some small dots in the sky. As the dots grew larger, the top turret gunner could make out the shapes of ME-109's! The gunner warned the pilots and crew. Just then 30 caliber shells ripped into the B-17. A puff of black smoke appeared. "Flak!" said the pilot. One of the B-17's went down in flames. Then two ME-109's went down in smoke. Another B-17 folded up from a direct hit and went down like a rock.

The crew was scared. They couldn't wait for the war to be over because they wanted to get home safely to the Palouse. Just then, the lead B-17 dropped its bombs and the remaining B-17's dropped theirs. A burst of flak knocked out the right wing's engines. The B-17 turned around and headed home. Then a fighter appeared that the B-17 crew had never seen before. It had the German cross on it.

"Oh no!" said the bombardier as he squeezed off his guns. It's a Focke-Wulf 190. The Focke-Wulf 190 was Germany's first radial engine fighter. A bunch of 40 millimeter shells knocked off the wing tip of the B-17. Then the Focke-Wulf flew into the distance as it was low on fuel.

The men saw the English coast and their home base at Nuthampstead. Only fifteen out of the eighteen B-17's remained, but the 603rd had made it back again.

THE END

date the flag was raised. The certificate is signed by 398th president Bill Comstock.

Arrangements for shipping flags to Nuthampstead may be made through Wally Blackwell, 398th secretary, Rockville, MD 20850.

See "TAPS" on Page 10.

MANAGING WITHOUT A MANAGER

B-17 Restoration Project In Seattle Is Like Eating An Elephant: You Do It One Bite At A Time

BY TOM ELLIOTT
Boeing Company, Seattle

"When goals are clear, when people accept work tasks and schedules they believe in, there's a spirit of enthusiasm that transcends the needs for managing them."

Pat Coluccio, engineer in Test Integration in Seattle, likes to say the B-17 restoration is a completely non-managed project.

"Oh, sure, we have a schedule deadline of April 1993 for rollout, but we're taking this restoration day by day. Just like any major systems integration project, we can eat this elephant only one bite at a time!"

As his fellow crew chief, I am concerned that the enthusiasm for the elephant chops, roasts and even burgers doesn't diminish among the restoration crew. Between the two of us, we must find a special sauce that keeps the volunteers coming back for another bite.

The role of crew chief (aka management's special sauce) is to lay on the praise and encourage volunteers so they can complete their tasks without delaying other coworkers.

However, every job, even restoration of a B-17, needs a goal, a plan and, like Boeing, a 'skilled and motivated work force.' Motivation helps us span nearly any gap left by the absence of formal management.

Understanding this, someone can look at our non-managed project and see how these elements — goal, plan and volunteers — work together in a delicate natural balance. Observing how this non-managed project works furnishes significant insights into what's important in a manager's day-to-day work and what isn't. The key is to establish a goal and to let the goal drive the project. A simple but ambitious goal got the restoration off on the right foot.

Back in 1985, the Richardson family of Seattle gave the Museum of Flight a much-modified B-17. The port-side waist-gunner position had been replaced by a cargo door and the ball turret was a Hollywood prop installed when the plane portrayed the *Memphis Belle* in the movie of the same name. The bomb bay doors had been replaced by a solid panel; the exterior looked authentic enough, but the interior had been stripped.

We decided that rather than restrict ourselves to cosmetic changes, we would restore the plane to its original condition. We didn't want a static display like *Shoo Shoo Baby* or *Swoose*, two famous B-17s that will probably never fly again. Everything would be operable: the turrets, the bomb release racks, the radios, even the bomb-sight. The Richardsons had donated a flyable plane. The Museum would receive a flyable plane back.

Once the Museum and the Boeing Management Association accepted our repair goal, we decided we'd treat the B-17 as if it were an Airplane on Ground project. After all, Boeing is an international AOG expert.

Phil Kane of AOG Planning surveyed the airplane station by station to develop work packages to bring it up to original specs. Because our goal was a flyable, certifiable plane, our replacement parts not only had to appear like the originals, they had to perform like them. Because heat-treating or other manufacturing processes aren't visible to inspection, Kane had to research the process specs as well.

Finally, we had to sequence the work pack-



FRANK WEEKS, JR.

He worked as a crew chief on the old B-15 for the then Capt. Curtis LeMay, and later wrote tech manuals for Boeing. But of late he has been rebuilding the tail gun position on a venerable B-17. He is one of hundreds of volunteers working to put the Fortress into first class, flying condition.

ages so the restoration wouldn't do more harm than good. For example, we have to replace the oversized cargo door opening with the smaller waist-gunner's window before we can cut away the extra strengtheners in the floor to install our newly restored ball turret.

If we cut the strengtheners first, we could weaken the entire fuselage, doing more structural damage than a war and four decades as a crop duster and a forest fire bomber ever did.

The goal established what we wanted to do, It led to the AOG technique as a tested way to do it. The technique evolved requirements and a sequence of events. Throughout, keeping our eyes fixed on the goal took the place of management direction.

But the major reason for not needing managers is the self-motivation of the crew. We may be short on tools and documentation, but we're definitely not short on enthusiasm. Our volunteers have a job as long as they want one, and everyone gets paid the same.

B-17s inspire an incredible amount of camaraderie. No other aircraft commands the same kind of loyalty from former crews, airplane buffs, or amateur historians. Probably more books have been written about the B-17 than about any other airplane.

Pat Coluccio was at the B-17 50th anniversary celebration at the Museum. He tells of one former pilot, there in his WW II uniform, who said he had run 15 miles a day so his uniform would still fit. One entire crew was present except for the tail gunner. He'd died, but one of his daughters was there, selected by the crew to represent him at the event.

The restoration crew is just as involved in the plane. We decided that because B-17s were so important to so many people, we wouldn't limit

Here is a story on how the Boeing Management Association set about to rebuild a B-17-F for the Seattle Museum of Flight. Among other professional techniques, they used a "very special sauce" — praise for a job well done.

volunteers to just Boeing employees. Any adult who wanted to work on N17W would be welcome.

This open-door policy brought us valuable technical help and restoration know-how. Volunteers included our turret mechanic and a crew chief from United Airlines who has restored everything from Douglas Avengers to Mitsubishi Zeros. Volunteer Don Clark came with the plane. He'd been her pilot during 25 years of forest fire fighting.

But not everyone who loves B-17s is a technical expert. Opening up the project brought us a number of volunteers whose mechanical skills were limited, including engineers who had designed planes and who now wanted the opportunity to actually work on one. Still, it was the romance and the history of that B-17 that drew them to the project.

A vice president from Mary Pang Foods said he'd spent a good part of his Air Force career towing B-17s out to the bombing range to be targets for B-26s. He chose to volunteer as his way of apologizing. A student enrolled in an aeronautical maintenance school spent his time between his job and the beginning of classes working on the crew that identified and tagged the collection of odd parts from which we salvaged items. Many volunteers find their own more technically advanced project to whet their enthusiasm and challenge them.

A former Boeing crane operator who had never assembled a commercial airplane spent six happy weeks rebuilding bomb-release racks from salvaged parts. People like these are too valuable to the success of the project to lose.

I began as one of the Boeing representatives who must be present whenever non-Boeing people are working on company property, but the more I was there, the more I did. I've always liked working with my hands, and it felt good to get back out on a job, rub elbows with fellow workers, and use a rivet gun again. Many of the retirees on the project are there for the same reason. We find motivation in doing what we've spend most of our careers learning to do.

My joining Pat as a crew chief happened by default. Because I was usually there, people came to ask me for assignments. Actually, a lot of them suggested jobs they'd like to do. But whether I assigned a task or just said, "Hey, if you think you can do it, go ahead," they'd be back whenever they wanted more.

Nowadays it generally takes Pat and me about an hour to expedite things and get people started. Then I'm out there with my drill motor in hand, working on my own self-assigned job.

The restoration is about 25 percent finished. My best guess is that sometime next April it should all come together. When N17W rolls up to its hardstand at the Museum of Flight, most people will see a memorial to those who fought in World War II and to the ideals for which they fought. A few of us will also see a testimonial to non-management, made possible by the power of motivation and that special sauce — praise for a job well done.

So Near, Yet So Far

Continued From Page 1

of the 602nd and V.G. Pappas and Herb Mann of the 600th.

Even before reaching the Channel no less than four Forts had returned to Nuthampstead, either because of mechanical or personnel problems — deputy lead Vince Moore and Ernie Spitzer of the 603rd and Leland Zimmerman and Burl Beam of the 602nd.

Nevertheless, the mission was declared successful even if the bombing results were “unobserved.” Any escape from Merseburg was always termed “successful.”

All the way back to England there was a growing feeling that “we had lucked out.” The descent from altitude was more or less uneventful until the sun disappeared and the merky clouds closed in. Then soon it was every plane for itself, each plunging into a veritable unknown. A thousand or more heavies all coming home from their respective targets and each looking for a landing spot.

And no cooperation from the weatherman.

Hansard, leading a four-ship tail-end Charlie element, was all alone by the time he was over England. Navigator Baker had brought the plane to where Station 131 “should have been,” but there was nothing but fog to be seen. Hansard then asked radio operator Robert Cantwell for a “QDM.” Still nothing.

Now on the deck and groping for any sign of a runway...and the gas gauges flickering near the “Empty” marks...the husky B-17 suddenly smashed into tree branches as the ground came into dramatic view for a few heart-stopping

seconds!

That near-miss convinced pilots Hansard and Davis that it was bail-out time. They ordered Baker, togglier Ken Hesterly and engineer-turrent gunner William Lake to the waist, there to join Cantwell and gunners Ed Briskie, Willie Colclough and James Fowler.

Officer Baker insisted that he take over the radio and intercom from Cantwell for any last minute instructions from the cockpit. Meanwhile, Hansard had reached 1,000 feet of altitude and ordered everyone to jump. All exited from the waist door and all landed safely in the area of Reed Hall Farm.

Not so fortunate was Baker. After finally disconnecting himself from the intercom he hurried to the waist door and threw himself into the murky sky. Too late. The plane already had begun its death plunge and the ground came up too fast for Baker's chute to unfurl.

Cantwell, descending slowly at about 500 feet, heard the plane circle back at a very low altitude and seconds later heard the crash several hundred yards distant. Upon landing, Cantwell shed his parachute, gave it to a farmer who greeted him, and immediately headed for the now burning remains of his B-17. And the two pilots entombed therein...

...a scant four miles or two B-17 flying minutes from Nuthampstead and the runways of Station 131.

He said a prayer on behalf of his comrades.

“Reed Hall Farm,” in which all this drama concluded in a fiery crash...and death of three Americans...was then



DOUGLAS CROWTHER (seated) and Chris Handley pose with the B-17 propeller blade they unearthed on the Handley farm after the crash of the Hansard Fortress in 1944. Last year they presented the prop to the 398th Memorial Association.

being farmed by Ed & Sonia Handley and sons Chris and Mark. The elder Handleys have passed away, but the sons, along with their long time friend, Douglas Crowther, all recall the eventful day.

And to help them remember, they salvaged one of the propeller blades from one of the four engines. It had buried itself in the soft soil some distance from the crash site. It went unnoticed when crews came to haul away the pieces of the once-proud bomber.

They found the prop some two years later and it had remained in the Handley or Crowther family until 1992 when they presented the blade to the 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association in a ceremony on the final evening of the group tour last summer.

For Chaplain Duvall, inspired by the determination of a young officer to seek a meaningful relationship to God in the form of baptism, only sorrows awaited him at the conclusion of the crew's third straight mission to Merseburg.

It fell to the chaplain to lead burial services for Hansard, Davis and Baker at the Cambridge cemetery. Hansard and Davis remain buried there. Baker was sent home following the war.

Hansard never lived to hear the news that he would become a father on December 7, 1944. A daughter was born less than two weeks after he perished. The daughter, Sandra Gambill, lives in Memphis, TX. Hansard's sister, Bea Sparks, lives in Coleman, TX.

Navigator Baker's proud niece, Sandra Averhart, lives in North Fort Meyers, FL. She says her uncle's wings and medals are framed and displayed in her home.



The Crew: Some Lived, Some Died

V.A. HANSARD, Robert Davis and William Baker (left to right, front row), were the last three aboard Hansard's B-17 before crashing four miles from Nuthampstead. All three perished, but the others, Ed Briskie, James Fowler, Kenneth Hesterly, Robert Cantwell, William Lake and Willie Colclough (inset) all survived. The crew was returning home from a mission to Merseburg when their B-17 crashed in “ceiling zero” weather near the town of Reed.

FORMATIONS

November 25, 1944

Lead Squadron — 603

MILLER
Magnan

Tarr MOORE
Gonzales

Stockman Spangler
Powell Spitzer Lee Steele

Blackwell
Morrison Smith

High Squadron — 602

HANCOCK
Leukhardt

Comstock Hall

Zimmerman Evans
Radnedge Kunkel Beam Shaffer

Doerr
Erickson Andrako

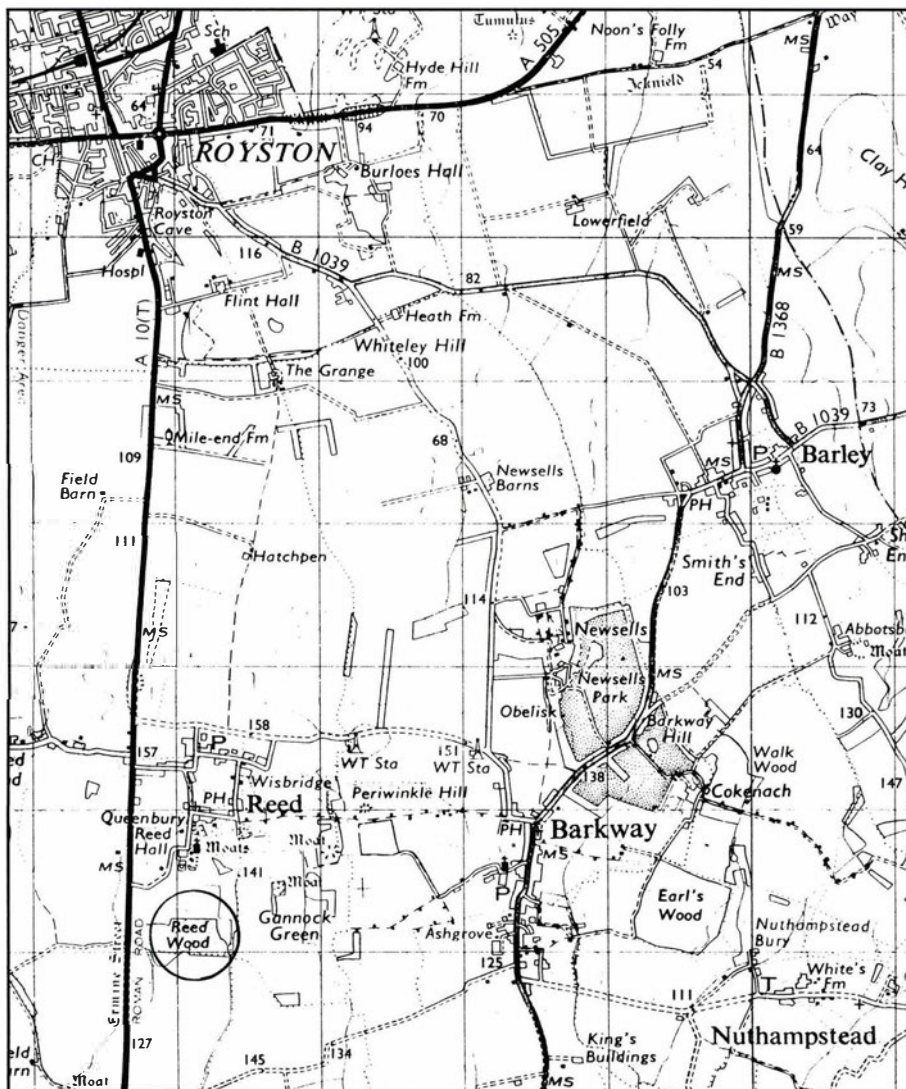
Low Squadron — 600

PAPPAS
Mann

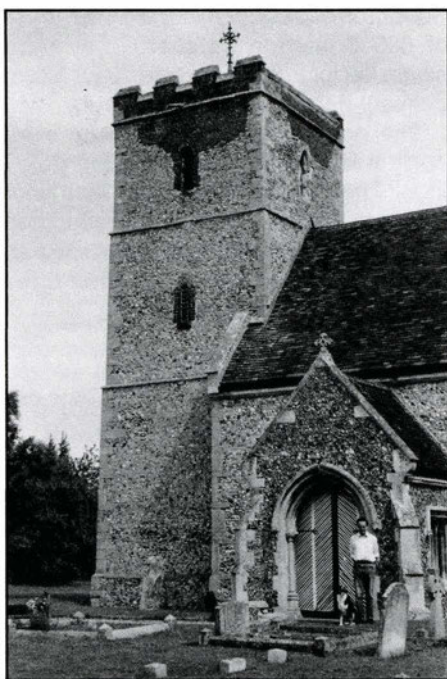
Riley Armor

Weum Hansard
Tolochko Johnson, T.M. Dean Grinter Johnston

Johnson, J.M.
Runnion Sponholtz



THE CIRCLE around "Reed Wood" indicates the site where the V.A. Hansard 600 Squadron B-17 plunged to earth upon returning from a mission to Merseburg on November 25, 1944. Hansard and two crewman were killed. Six others bailed out as the plane groped in heavy fog trying to locate the field at Nuthampstead, less than four miles to the east.



WILFRID DIMSDALE, chairman of the "Friends of the 398th," stands at the front door of St. Mary's Church at Reed. It was this church that the V.A. Hansard B-17 narrowly missed seconds before the plane's death plunge a few hundred yards distant at "Reed Wood."



V.A. HANSARD

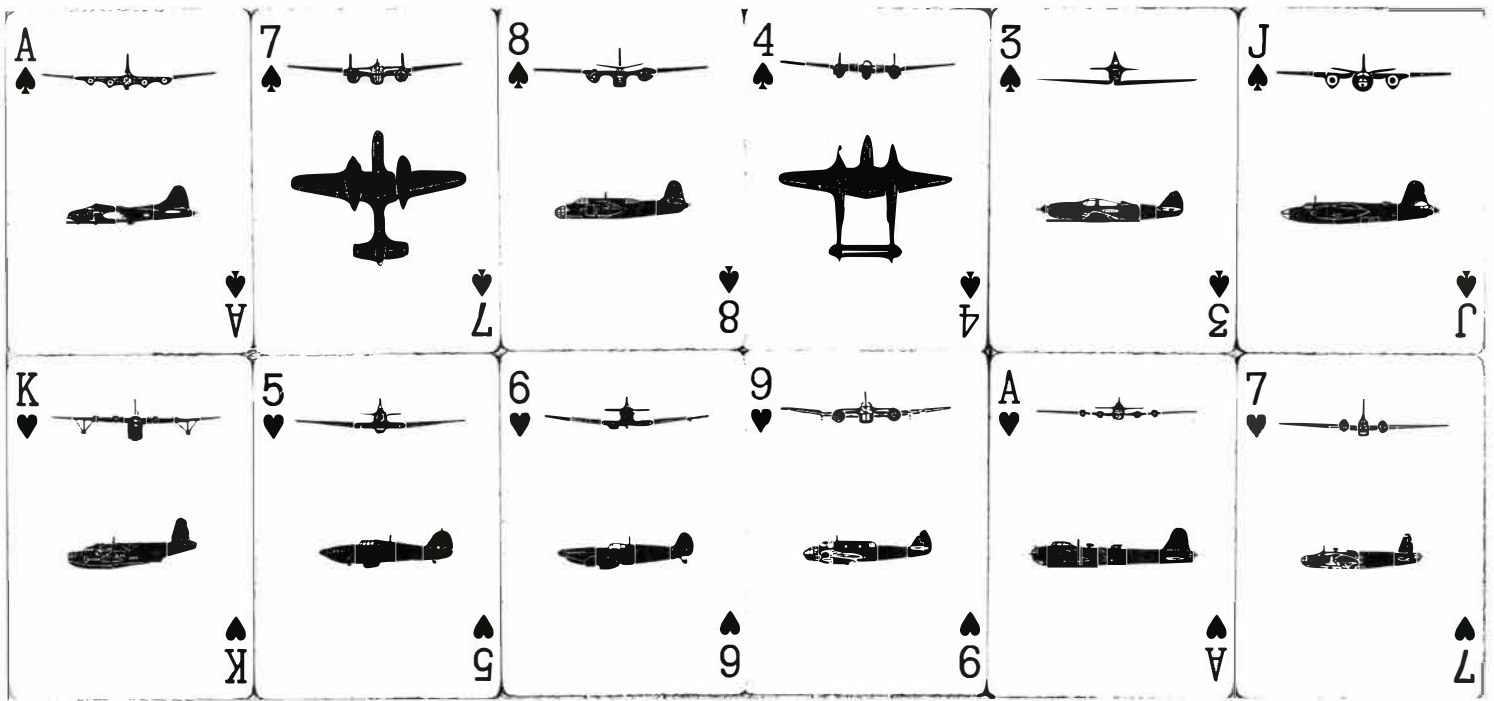
398th Scores In Air & Space Issue

The Smithsonian's Air & Space Magazine for December-January presented an excellent article on the return of 8th Air Force veterans to England last summer.

The ten-page spread covered the activities of many groups and squadrons. It was written by Stephen Bloomfield and photographed by Patrick Ward. It was Ward who paid a special visit to Nuthampstead while 80 398th members were there on tour. The photo/layout includes the Memorial service with the Woodman Inn in the background; the bandstand at the Anstey 40's dance; and four "photogenic" members, who just happened to include Wally Blackwell, Dick Frazier, Phil Stahlman and Danny Leyva.

The A&S issue also includes an article on the recovery of a P-38 from a Greenland ice cap where it had laid since 1942.

Air & Space is available at most major magazine newsstands for \$3.50.



OK, You Gunners, How Many of These Early WW II War Birds Can You Name?

While you were "over there" during World War II, some of the folks "back home" were trying to keep abreast of the Allied fighters

and bombers. One method they used to help identify the planes were these playing cards. Remember, all these silhouettes represent

American and British planes built in 1942 or earlier. Answers below.

WHAT IS IT?



Define This Part And Win A Prize

A SINGLE PRIZE of the book, "398th Bomb Group REMEMBRANCES," will be awarded to the person who sends in the best description of this part, used for a specific, important function on the B-17 during combat days. Send your entries to the FLAK NEWS editor.

ANSWERS —

Left to right, top row — B-17, B-25, A-20, P-38, P-39, B-26.

Left to right, borrom row — Sunderland, Hurricane, Spitfire, Beaufort, Sterling, Wellington.



PETE ROONEY

One of the most popular members of the 398th staff was Pete Rooney, 602 squadron commanding officer. He served as 602 CO for two years, rotation home only a month before war's end.

603 SQUARDON LOGO WATCHES AVAILABLE

The P-X at Nashville ran out of 603rd Squadron caps (again) but did not run out of 603 Squadron watches. They have seven left for immediate sale (or for future delivery if the seven are sold out.)

The popular watches (63 were sold) carry a face of the 603 "Peg-leg Pete" logo. They sell for \$40 each. Mail your orders to Robert T. Hart, Wilmington, OH 45177. Hart will also accept orders for any of the other three Squardon logo watches.

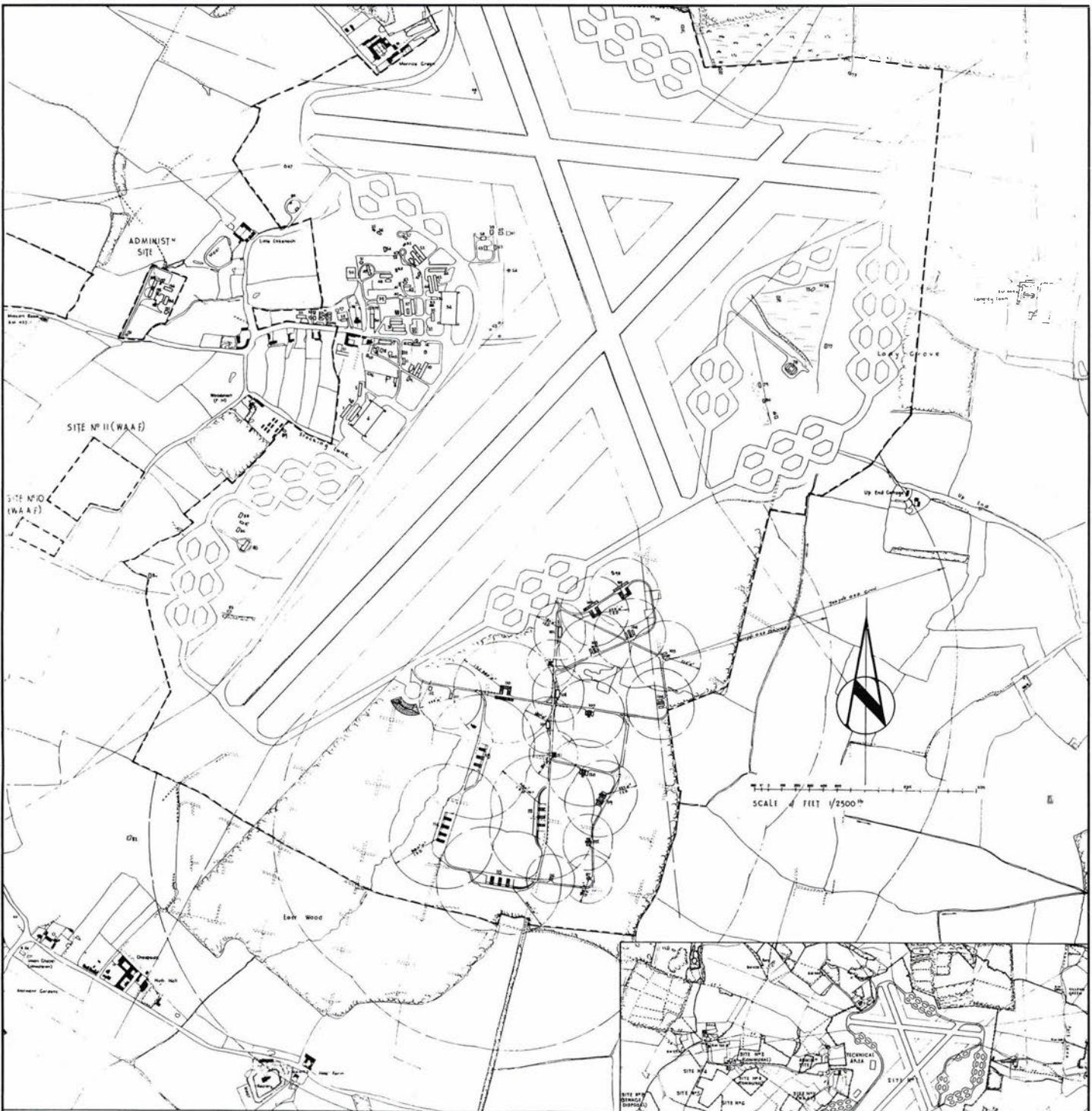
STATION 131

Nuthampstead

This is the "Record Site Plan" for Station 131 built in 1942-43 by the British Air Ministry, which originally designated this drawing as "secret."

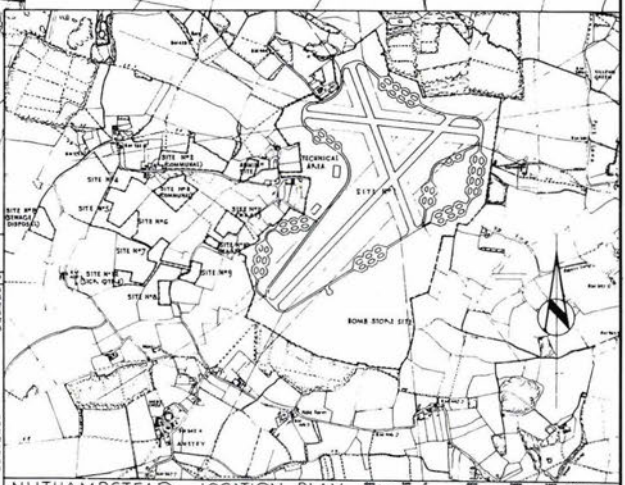
Since most of the runway concrete has long since been removed to serve as foundations for the new British motorways, and nearly all the structures removed or torn down, the "secret" was long ago downgraded by the air Ministry.

Although the type is small, it is hoped that the map will assist former 398th men in locating specific areas. And to stimulate memories on what it was like at the old base in 1944-45.



SCHEDULE of BUILDINGS.

NO.	BUILDING	CONSTR.	TYP.	DRW. NO.	BLDG. NO.	BUILDING	CONSTR.	TYP.	DRW. NO.	BLDG. NO.	BUILDING	CONSTR.	TYP.	DRW. NO.
1	SITE NO 1	W	1			GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	41	S. & S. STORE 1	W	1	1/2500
2	ADMINISTRATIVE SITE	W	1			GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	42	S. & S. STORE 2	W	1	1/2500
3	WHOLESALE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	43	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	43	BOOM STORES	W	1	1/2500
4	TECHNICAL STORES	W	1	1/2500	44	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	44	PARADOXIC STORES	W	1	1/2500
5	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	45	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	45	COMMONWEALTH STORES	W	1	1/2500
6	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT (WITH DR. BOWERS)	W	1	1/2500	46	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	46	S. & S. STORES	W	1	1/2500
7	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	47	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	47	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
8	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	48	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	48	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
9	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	49	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	49	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
10	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	50	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	50	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
11	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	51	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	51	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
12	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	52	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	52	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
13	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	53	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	53	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
14	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	54	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	54	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
15	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	55	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	55	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
16	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	56	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	56	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
17	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	57	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	57	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
18	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	58	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	58	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
19	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	59	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	59	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
20	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	60	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	60	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
21	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	61	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	61	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
22	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	62	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	62	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
23	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	63	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	63	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
24	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	64	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	64	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
25	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	65	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	65	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
26	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	66	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	66	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
27	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	67	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	67	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
28	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	68	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	68	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
29	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	69	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	69	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
30	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	70	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	70	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
31	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	71	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	71	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
32	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	72	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	72	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
33	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	73	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	73	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
34	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	74	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	74	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
35	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	75	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	75	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
36	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	76	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	76	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
37	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	77	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	77	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
38	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	78	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	78	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
39	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	79	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	79	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
40	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	80	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	80	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
41	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	81	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	81	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
42	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	82	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	82	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
43	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	83	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	83	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
44	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	84	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	84	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
45	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	85	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	85	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
46	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	86	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	86	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
47	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	87	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	87	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
48	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	88	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	88	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
49	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	89	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	89	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
50	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	90	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	90	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
51	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	91	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	91	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
52	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	92	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	92	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
53	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	93	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	93	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
54	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	94	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	94	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
55	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	95	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	95	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
56	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	96	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	96	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
57	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	97	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	97	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
58	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	98	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	98	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
59	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	99	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	99	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500
60	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE UNIT	W	1	1/2500	100	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500	100	GENERAL PURPOSE HUT	W	1	1/2500



NUTHAMPSTEAD

RECORD SITE PLAN.
SITE NO 1 AIRFIELD SITE
FOR DISPERSED SITES NOS 2-13
SEE A.M. DRG. NO. 467644

NOTE: THIS PLAN IS A PRELIMINARY DRAWING AND IS NOT TO BE USED FOR CONSTRUCTION. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE USER TO VERIFY ALL DIMENSIONS AND LOCATIONS ON THE GROUND. THE AIR MINISTRY IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY ERRORS OR OMISSIONS.

DATE: 15/11/44
BY: J.M. [Signature]
CHECKED: J.M. [Signature]

4675
44
AIR. MINISTRY

TAPS: Final Roll Call For 398th Veterans

Swift to its close

Ebbs out life's little day;

Earth's joys grow dim,

It's glories pass away;

Change and decay in all

Around I see;

Oh, Thou who changeth not,

Abide with me.

Aleman, Milo
Agnew, Harry
Agnew, Robert
Alexander, Claude
Anderson, Emil
Anderson, Roy L.
Anderson, William G.
Andrews, Kenneth E.
Ariin, Allen A.
Armstrong, Sidney A.
Armstrong, Walter G.
Ashworth, Dean H.
Atkins, James R.
Audet, Paul E.
Aukerman, John V.
Austad, Kermit

Bagley, Bernard
Bailey, Ray E.
Baird, Harold
Baker, Albert A.
Bancroft, Joseph (Dave)
Baptist, Claude A.
Barkovich, Fred
Barnhard, Joseph E.
Bartimus, Neil R.
Basco, John J.
Bash, Claire C.
Basham, James
Baxter, Richard
Beattie, Hugh Don
Beatty, Oscar L.
Beavers, Cecil
Becker, John J.
Beckley, Robert J.
Belcher, Jess
Bell, Marvin
Bell, Robert
Benefiel, Phillip L.
Bennett, Norville
Berry, Kearie L.
Berthoud, Charles
Bewley, James A.
Biancardi, Andrew
Bingle, Henry
Bird, John C.
Blanda, Guido
Blankenship, G.W.
Bley, Winston
Bonjani, Bruno
Bosshart, Herbert
Bourke, Joseph E.
Bowman, Leonard L.
Braddock, Heyward M.
Brady, Jack
Breault, Al
Brewer, Darrell F.
Breymer, Royal
Briody, J.
Brown, E. Logan
Brown, Lawrence
Brown, Samuel M.
Brown, Sidney
Brunke, Earl
Burke, Al
Bushle, Louis
Butler, John
Buvinger, David
Buzza, Kenneth
Byrne, Felix E.

Callahan, Noel
Campbell, Tom
Campbell, Van B.
Carter, Nigel
Cason, Alfred
Chase, Lewis D.
Chesshir, Kenneth
Christofer, George
Church, Fred M.
Churchill, Wesley H.
Civitarese, William A.
Clafford, Lloyd
Clark, Benjamin L.
Clark, Francis C.
Clarke, Walter F.
Cochran, Curtis
Coene, William
Colburn, Warren
Cole, Harold
Coleman, George F.
Colvin, Charles E.

Colwell, John
Coombs, William F.
Coomes, Ralph E.
Cooper, D.G. (Bud)
Coopet, Joseph L.
Corcoran, Joseph W.
Corry, Fr. George
Corsuti, Anthony
Cote, Arthur
Coupert, Bernard
Cowen, Harry
Cowley, Jr., John J.
Cox, Norman
Crouch, James
Cummings, D.L.
Cutcher, James L.

Dacon, Charles H.
Dalton, Hai
Dames, John J.
Danner, Leroy
David, Paul M.
Davidoff, Herman
Delbart, Raymond S.
Delorier, Joseph
Devan, Samuel
Dexter, Robert L.
Dierolf, Claude E.
Dippel, Francis
Dixon, Gerald
Douglas, Gene
Downing, Robert A.
Dreyer, Charles G.
Duncan, John W.
Dunne, Bill
Dwyer, Jr., William J.

Edgell, Harry
Edgington, Gilbert
Edwards, John H.
Ehil, Edward
Ehret, Clarence
Elsrod, Orville
Elwood, Kenneth
Engard, Robert
Faber, Herbert G.
Farenthold, Francis L.
Farrell, William A.
Faughn, Joe
Fernandez, Frank
Fletcher, Richard E.
Folger, Robert
Foraker, Kenneth H.
Franciscine, Gino
Freel, Lawrence A.
Frew, George
Fritog, Arthur
Fritz, Jack
Froelich, James S.

Garland, Jack S.
Gerber, Tom
Gerloff, Harry
Gibb, Robert
Gillenwater, Joseph A.
Ginsburg, Joe
Gloor, John
Godfrey, John
Goldbach, Ernest
Grant, Sam
Green, Norbert
Greenberg, Abraham
Gresh, Steve
Griffo, Arthur
Grossman, M.
Grothues, Al
Gruber, Fred
Gulledge, Thomas G.

Hager, Herman L.
Hakomaki, Floyd
Hancock, William C.
Happgood, Alfred
Hardy, Arnold
Harmon, Carl H.
Harrington, Cornelius
Hartwell, George W.
Hatch, Dwight
Hatcher, Robert
Hatten, Harold R.
Hedeem, Melvin
Heitman, Paul F.

Hendrickson, William
Herbert, Earl
Herbert, Robert G.
Hernden, Raymond A.
Herrera, Pedro
Hesterly, Kenneth
Hicinbothem, Franklin
Hickey, Charles
Hinkle, Dwight
Hogrefe, Carl H.
Holloway, Edwin C.
Holloway, James B.
Hopp, Frank J.
Houchins, Harry
Howard, Grant
Hreachmack, Joseph
Hudson, Herman D.
Hunnicut, Elzie
Hunsaker, Edwin F.
Hunter, Dr. Lewis G.
Huntington, Sam
(Associate)
Hutchinson, John L.
Hyland, Gervase (Gerry)
Inman, Willie H.
Isdahl, Chester R.

Jackson, Leroy K.
Jackson, Paul K.
Jarman, Gordon
Jellison, Elwell S.
Jendrezewski, Ray
Johnson, Gene
Johnson, Warren
Jones, Andrew
Jones, Ira
Jones, William H.
(Olympia)
Jordan, Edward
Jordan, William F.

Kay, Allen
Kearney, Earl
Keene, Raymond
Kelly, Jerome C.
Kilby, William C.
Kiser, Kenneth
Klimaszski, Victor (Klemens)
Klingenhoffer, John
Knife, Percy
(Honorary Member)
Knight, George N.
Kolafa, John
Kolb, Kenneth
Kotte, Norman E.
Krause, John J.
Kroh, Charles H.
Kuck, Homer R.

Labat, Lionel L.
Lachman, Russell
Lamar, John W.
Land, Don
Lang, Fredrick
Langford, Ray
Lassegard, Leroy
Latrenta, Peter
Latson, Harvey
LeDoux, Ray J.
Leemon, Don
Leonard, Gene
Levy, David L.
Like, Waldean
Linke, Walter J.
Long, Douglas
Loveless, Harold
Lowe, Donald B.
Lowe, Lloyd F.
Lundy, Charles M.
Lutz, Joseph

Madden, Edward F.
Mahlum, Clayton
Mann, Douglas
Marchbanks, Tom
Marfilus, Elmer H.
Martorelly, Angelo
Massey, Frank
Masters, Marvert
Matheson, Burton
Matthews, Tom
May, John M.

Mayers, Joseph W.
McCoy, Wayne
McCurdy, Robert G.
McDougall, Harry T.
McLaughlin, Robert J.
McLughlin, Ken E. (Bud)
McMenamin, John A.
McMurray, Quentin
Melis, Charles
Melson, Rufus
Meyers, Revel J.
Meyers, Russ
Miller, Lewis M.
Miller, Paul
Mills, Richard (Rocker)
Mitchell, George
Moore, Randolph
Moore, Vincent
Morris, Jr., Stacey
Moss, Latrelle R.
Motsenbocker, H.D.
Mottet, William F.
Mummert, William S.

Namey, John
Naragon, Daniel J.
Nash, George N.
Nejaski, Leroy
Nelson, Gene
Nelson, Orville
Noble, Earl
Norby, William
Notarpole, Robert J.
O'Brien, Robert J.
O'Connell, Danny
Ongley, Bert
Overton, Vernon
Owens, Blaine

Painschab, Joseph H.
Pappas, Venizelos G.
Parrish, Lewis E.
Parsons, B.H.
Payne, Claude N.
Peach, Tom
Peek, Kenneth R.
Perry, Arthur M.
Peterson, Christian
Peterson, Raymond
Petska, Albert M.
Pierson, Donald
Pintek, Joe
Poston, Carl W.
Powell, Sam
Puthoff, Lewis A.
Pyles, Robert F.
Pysson, Albert

Radnedge, William B.
Redican, Francis M.
Reid, Perry
Rex, John H.
Riccio, Michael
Rich, James T.
Rickabaugh, Ronald
Roberts, Jack
Robinson, Robert
Rockstroh, Kenneth J.
Rogers, Linn R.
Rolfe, George
Rooney, Pete
Rose, Arthur
Rosenzweig, Harold
Rossi, James H.
Ryan, Michael O.

Sachs, Stanley
Sawyer, Hiram N.
Schmidt, Richard H.
Schneider, John
Schoener, George W.
Schofield, James
Schwerer, George J.
Scott, Ernest D.
Scott, Jr., Talma A.
Seaver, Warren
Seibert, Earl W.
Selevan, Arthur
Selgrath, John
Shadroui, Alfred
Shaffer, W.A.
Shaw, Donald

Sheely, Roy M.
Shimek, Albert J.
Shirk, Charles W.
Shott, Edwin E.
Sigsworth, John R.
Simeral, Robert
Skarda, Joseph
Skellinger, Wait
Smith, Coy
Smith, Harold
Smith, Herbert E.
Smith, John E.
Smith, Ralph D.
Snyder, Frank A.
Snyder, Harold E.
Southwick, Earl J.
Spain, Edwin F.
Sponholtz, Milo
Stallings, Harold
Stanbrough, Claude
Stankiewicz, Charles
Stephens, James
Stickel, Robert F.
Stombaugh, C.E.
Stone, Warren
Stripling, Aaron M.
Strnad, Frank
Strohschein, Wallace
Struckmeyer, Tom
Studor, Howard P.
Suggett, Walter
Sullivan, The Rev. Walter B.
(Catholic Chaplain)
Swan, Jr., Neil
Sweet, Dr. Robert

Taylor, Franklin
Terbieten, Dr. Urban
Terrion, Leo W.
Thomas, Henry
Thompson, Oakley J.
Thompson, Robert
Tillman, Wally
Tomaino, Antonio J.
Townsend, Kenneth
Tracey, Claude W.
Triebwasser, Sidney
Troost, H.M.
Trotter, Joseph H.
Tryon, William V.
Tucker, Frank
Turner, Mark
Unkel, Rudolph E.
Upmeier, Tom
Vale, William G.
Vanderlick, William
Vela, George E.
Vernet, Jr., Waldemar
Vicha, Raymond A.

Waarama, Arthur
Waldbauer, Charles A.
Walkup, Jr., Charles A.
Walrath, Raymond
Walter, R.N.
Walthall, Ernest
Waring, Leonard H.
Wasserman, Charles
Wells, Burton B.
Wells, David
(Honorary Member)
White, Victor H.
Whitehead, Fred A.
Wickam, James E.
Wierney, Joseph
Wilde, George J.
Williams, Frank J.
Wilson, William R.
Wolfe, Leonard
Woodcock, William
Woodmansee, D.A.
Woodring, Dave
Woodruff, Clinton L.
Woodson, Harold
Woodson, Woodrow
Wright, Ellsworth S.
Wymer, Kenneth M.

Zagelow, Larry
Zampetti, Dr. Herman

THE McAULIFFE Christmas Card — 1944

What's Merry about all this, you ask? We're fighting — it's cold, we aren't home. All true, but what has the proud Eagle Division accomplished with its worthy comrades of the 10th Armored Division, the 705th Tank Destroyer Battalion and all the rest? Just this: We have stopped cold everything that has been thrown at us from the North, East, South and West. We have identifications from four German Panzer Divisions, two German Infantry Divisions and one German Parachute Division. These units, spearheading the last desperate German lunge, were headed straight west for key points when the Eagle Division was hurriedly ordered to stem the advance. How effectively this was done will be written in history; not alone in our Division's glorious history but in World history.

Allied Troops are counterattacking in force. We continue to hold Bastogne. By holding Bastogne we assure the success of the Allied Armies. We know that our Division Commander, General Taylor, will say: "Well Done!"

We are giving our country and our loved ones at home a worthy Christmas present and being privileged to take part in this gallant feat of arms are truly making ourselves a Merry Christmas.

(Signed)
McAULIFFE, Commanding,
December 22nd 1944

"To the U.S.A. Commander of the encircled town of Bastogne.

"The fortune of war is changing. This time the U.S.A. forces in and near Bastogne have been encircled by strong German armored units. More German armored units have crossed the river Ourthe near Ortheville, have taken Marche and reached St. Hubert by passing through Hombree-Sibret-Tillet. Libramont is in German hands.

"There is only one possibility to save the encircled U.S.A. Troop from total annihilation: that is the honorable surrender of the encircled town. In order to think it over, a term of two hours will be granted beginning with the presentation of this note.

"If this proposal should be rejected one German Artillery Corps and six heavy A.A. Battalions are ready to annihilate the U.S.A. Troops in and near Bastogne. The order for firing will be given immediately after this two hour's term.

"All the serious civilian losses caused by this Artillery fire would not correspond with the well-known American humanity".

— The German Commander
22 December 1944

"To the German Commander: N U T S !"

—The American Commander

Finding 398th Lost Souls: A Lesson in Persistence

It is just one line of "9 pt font #112" under the heading of "Additions & Corrections" —

"**Harold E. Snyder, Jr., Las Vegas, NV 89119.**"

A "lost soul" had been found. Looks so easy. But like so many others who have returned to the 398th, this one also has a story.

Here is what it took to find just one "lost soul" —

Percy Paget of the Bill Comstock crew began looking for Snyder in 1986, beginning in Dallas. No luck, He tried the VA. No trace. He contacted motor vehicle departments in many states, finding many with the same name. But not the right one.

Another check with the VA turned up a lead in Ithaca, NY. Yes, he did attend Cornell University there, but no current address. In desperation (now six years later) Paget contacted the Ithaca Journal, who printed a little story about a gunner who was seeking the whereabouts of a B-17 buddy. Wow! Six letters came in, furnishing information that Snyder was living in Las Vegas.

So 45 years later Paget, the toggler, finally caught up with his waist gunner, Snyder. A "lost soul" had been found.

A lesson in patience and persistence.

BABY BULLETIN

FLAK NEWS is pleased to report that UK Friends of the 398th chairman Wilfrid Dimsdale and wife Kathy became parents of a baby girl, Hannah Mary, last September, their third child. And Linda Ellis, who guided the last two England tours, gave birth to a baby girl, Stephanie Marie, last December.

Letters To The Editor

"Please convey the heartfelt thanks of Evelyn and myself for the many cards and letters ... and prayers ... we received while I was undergoing and recovering from surgery last December. It was most heart-warming to realize how many good firends we have. God bless you all."

— Bill Comstock, president
398th Bomb Group Memorial Association

"I received the October issue of FLAK NEWS and was deeply touched by the article on my brother, Lyle Doerr. The research on his crash in the English Channel has answered all the questions that have existed these 48 years. A feeling of calm acceptance is finally mine. Thank you.

"Joe Mansell and the other surviving members of Lyle's crew have been so warm and caring. I truly appreciate all the contact with them. I am enclosing a contribution to the 398th Memorial Fund."

— Sylvia Law, Huntington Beach, California

"Thank you for the group letter inviting 398th widows to accept a free lifetime membership. Having recently lost my husband, Francis Clark, I was deeply touched by Mr. Blackwell's letter.

"Fran had met some wonderful new friends at the reunions. He renewed and relived some of the experiences that had formed a bond between he and his crew.

"I look forward to seeing his flag flying at the memorial at Nuthampstead when I visit there next year. I will be accompanied by Fran's navigator, Dick Fox, and his wife, Nell."

— Rita Clark, Florissant, Missouri

"Thank you for the gorgeous gift you sent. It is almost the perfect photographic composition. I will certainly treasure it and be grateful to the 398th for the kind thought. It was a delight to speak to your group and I hope that your whole trip went well."

— Roger Freeman, Colchester, England

EDITOR'S NOTE: Roger Freeman, the 8th Air Force historian, was a guest of the 398th at a special banquet at Duxford during the group tour to England last June. The photo mentioned was taken by Ralph Ambrose during the 1982 memorial dedication.

"That \$1,000 ride in the B-17, Aluminum Overcast, at Nashville last September was worth every penny. I now know why I was so thoroughly exhausted after three 10-hour missions in a row! I had forgotten how much effort it took to move those controls. Over and out."

— Howard Traeder, West Allis, Wisconsin

"Thank you all for making my Nashville trip so wonderful. I loved every action-packed minute. I really laughed when I saw the front page of the October FLAK NEWS. I can truly say that the B-17 flight was an event I shall never forget. What an experience!

"I feel as if I am part of big, happy family and that all you of the 398th are my extended family. The US & UK side are bonded by affection that has strengthened with the years. We will be looking forward to welcoming you all in Nuthampstead in 1994, and indeed a group of us are already getting excited about the Buffalo reunion next September."

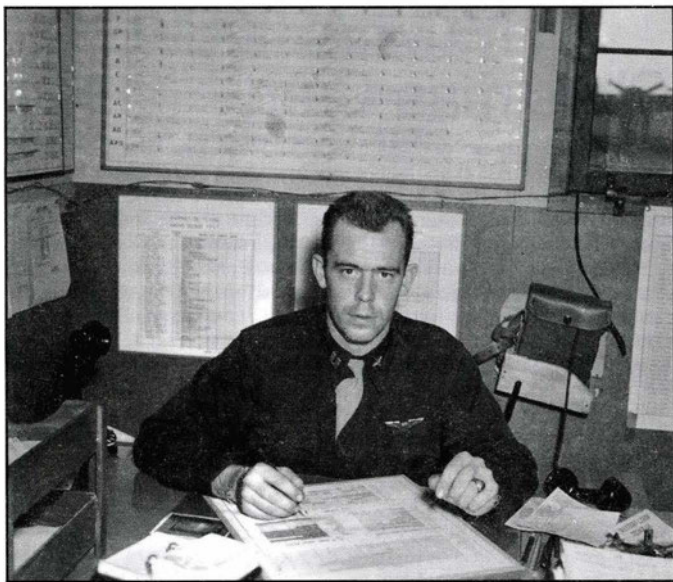
— Elaine Tyler, UK Friends of the 398th

"Once again, thank you for sending us copies of FLAK NEWS. Our people really enjoy the newsletter. Things continue to go well here at Castle AFB. From time to time members of your 398th association stop by for a tour of the base. We are most happy to greet any and all who drop by. We are located near Merced, California, on 'Old 99' some 100 miles south of Sacramento."

— Col. Stephen Lorenz, CO, 398th Operations Group

"Your FLAK NEWS editor would like to extend a sincere word of thanks to all the members who sent Christmas cards to him and the other members of the 398th Board of Directors this past holiday season. We all thank you for your thoughtfulness and expressions of appreciation and support."

— Allen Ostrom, FLAK NEWS editor



“OPERATIONS OFFICER”

HERE IS A PHOTO that just had to be published, as it so completely depicts the classic World War II B-17 “Operations Officer.” The squadron air crew personnel behind him, field phone at his left, regular phone to his right, flight charts before him on the desk and behind him. Even the wing and engines of a B-17 pictured in the window frame. Do you suppose he is addressing a new pilot about his formation flying, or perhaps explaining the difference between a relief tube and a pitot tube? This stern air warrior with the piercing eyes is Bruce Daily, then a captain and the 600 operations officer.