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

VOL. 9 NO. 2

FLAK NEWS

APRIL 1994

A TIME TO REMEMBER D-Day — 50 Years On

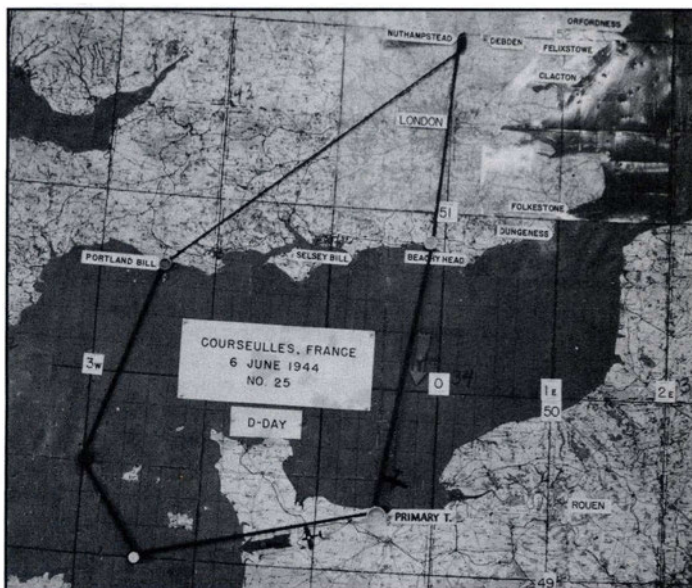
June 6, 1994, is the 50th Anniversary of D-Day. On this day in 1944 the Allied Armies embarked from harbors and beaches of England, forming the largest invasion fleet ever seen. Air, sea and land forces of Britain and the Commonwealth, and the United States, combined with units from France, Poland, Norway, Greece, and the Netherlands to achieve a unique military victory on the beaches of Normandy.

In the final weeks before June 6, 1944, Southern England saw 3½ million men gathered, 1½ million Americans and 2 million British, Canadians and other nationalities. On D-Day itself 156,000 troops with supporting armor by sea and air were landed on five beaches over a 50 mile front between Le Havre and Cherbourg. The operation was supported by 1,213 warships, 4,123 landing craft, 1,600 other ships, 11,500 aircraft, and 3,500 gliders.

The 50th anniversary in 1994 will commemorate one of the most difficult military operations ever undertaken and in view of the age of the veterans will probably be the last major D-Day anniversary.

See Pages 5 and 9

Were You There?



398th Flight Plan For D-Day



All Contributors Received This Patch

FUND RAISING WAS ROUSING SUCCESS

The fund raising project for the Aluminum Overcast "corrosion control" was indeed a success. The men and women from the 398th Bomb Group not only raised the \$12,000 requested for the EAA's B-17, but kicked in another \$3,000 for good measure.

"The 398th is extremely proud of the fine relationship that we have with the EAA and the Flying Fortress that bears our colors," wrote president Bill Comstock as he sent off a check for \$15,000.

"We look forward to seeing this splendid aircraft during the coming tours this year," he added.

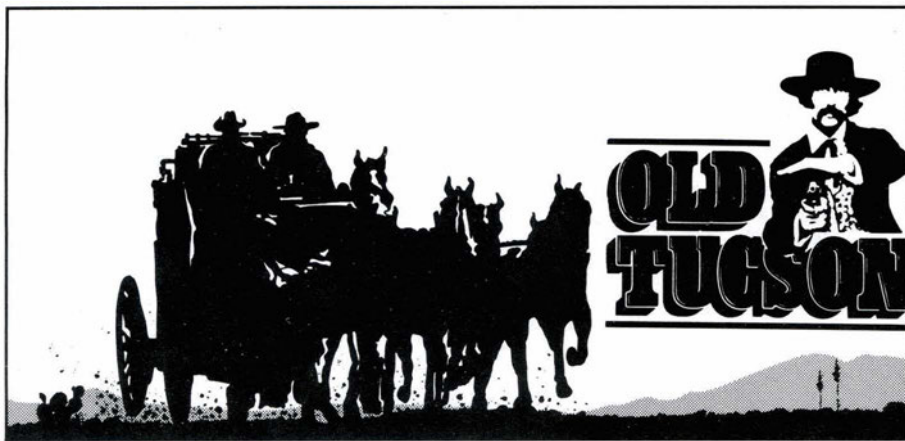
But that's not all.

Our members raised an additional \$5,000+ to simply demolish the initial target figure. At FLAK NEWS press time, treasurer Ralph Hall and campaign chairman Hal Weekley reported a grand total of \$20,610.17!

There were 415 individual contributions, many sent by family members in memory of loved ones killed in action or who passed on in more recent years.

There were many first time contributors and there was one person who claimed a "BENEFACTOR" label with his gift of \$1,000.

Continued On Page 10



REUNION FACTS

EVENT—11th annual reunion, 398th Bomb Group.
WHEN—Wednesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday, September 21-22-23-24, 1994.
WHERE—Tucson, Arizona.
HQ HOTEL—Doubletree Hotel
 445 S Alvernon Way
 Tucson, AZ 85711-4198
 Telephone (602) 881-4200.
BACKUP MOTEL—Aztec Inn
 102 N Alvernon Way
 Tucson, AZ 85711-3458
 Telephone 1-800-227-6086.
 Mention "398th" for special \$50 rate.
CHAIRMAN—Clyde Sebastian
 Tucson, AZ 85730-1773

COWBOY COUNTRY REUNION

So you want to buy a sombrero in Mexico? Enjoy "Bunkhouse Potatoes" and "Judge Roy Beans" and see an Old Tucson gun fight?

You will come to the right place for all this if you sign up for the 11th annual reunion of the 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association.

Some 400+ are expected at the four-day meeting in the lovely Southwest city of Tucson, Arizona.

This is the land of cowboy history, warm sunshine, Saguaro trees, cactus, Pima Air Museum and golf courses. Not to mention tamales, enchiladas, guacamole and chili peppers.

Working with the city's leading tour specialist, Southwest Arrangers, the 398th has selected a variety of programs, coach tours, banquets, and entertainment that will surely have something for everyone.

All this will happen September 21-24, 1994.

Including a Farewell Banquet 40's dance, thank you!

The headquarters hotel will be the Doubletree, just 10 minutes from the airport. They are reserving 250 rooms for the 398th, plus the spacious Boojum and Bonsai rooms for our Registration and Memory Room activities and Jack Wintersteen's PX.

All the activities, times and costs are printed on the next page. You may tear out the registration page or make a photocopy to send to Reunion Chairman Clyde Sebastian.

A Doubletree reservation mailer, to be sent directly to the hotel, has been inserted in FLAK NEWS.

There are so many "highlights" attached to the reunion, it is difficult to dwell on anything in particular. The following are descriptions of the many choices available:

SABINO CANYON TOUR

A breathtaking outdoor tram ride through the Santa Catalina Mountains. Streams, majestic mountains, nature lovers' delight. Also a visit to DeGrazia's Gallery in the Sun. A most unique place to explore, browse and shop. And then lunch at Hidden Valley, a town complete with store front banks, livery stables and teepees. A miniature museum with

400,000 hand-carved animated pieces.

SONORA DESERT MUSEUM

The most distinctive zoo in the United States. Combination zoological park, botanical garden and geological interpretive center. View and enjoy the area desert wonders — animal, plant, reptile and insect. Lunch on Sonoran chicken breast or Mesquite Smoked Chicken.

MISSION-MEXICO-TUBAC

A three-way view of the great Southwest. Visit the beautiful San Xavier Mission, claimed to be one of the finest examples of mission architecture in the world. Still being used for daily Mass by native Americans. Then on to Nogales, south of the border. Go shopping for just the "right" souvenir from Mexico. Don't forget to "dicker" over the prices. Plenty of time to shop ... and enjoy lunch at El Greco's ... before returning to the U.S. And another stop for the benefit of the "ultimate shopper" at Tubac, Arizona. An original artist colony offering the finest in arts and crafts in the Southwest.

PIMA AND DAVIS-MONTHAN

See more than 130 military and civilian aircraft at Pima Air Museum, some displayed indoors and many others outdoors. The 390th Bomb Group has its own hanger on the grounds, which houses only one plane — a B-17 called *I'll Be Around*. We will be invited to look it over, and also their unique library/museum. The tour also includes a look at the thousands of old aircraft on a huge area called Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Center. All this topped off with lunch at the Davis-Monthan Officers Club.

OLD TUCSON

Here is where Hollywood has turned out hundreds of Western movies. A recreated 1860 Tucson town that relives the danger and excitement of the Old West. Take a stagecoach ride, or train, or have a gun fight with one of the tough dudes waiting to intimidate you. All this, plus Country Western entertainment and a Southwest cowboy dinner of Barbecue Beef Ribs or Barbecue Chicken.

EVENTS—See Official Registration Form, this issue of FLAK NEWS.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS—Doubletree Hotel reservation form inserted in this issue of FLAK NEWS.

GUESTS OF HONOR—All of us!

GOLFING

Two championship courses across the street from the Doubletree. Morning starting times have been reserved for both Wednesday and Thursday. Restaurant available. Call Clyde Sebastian for information on other courses on other days.

BANQUETS

There will be banquets on both Thursday and Saturday nights at the Doubletree's huge ballroom. Special entertainment for Thursday and dancing on Saturday. Remember, table reservations will be required each evening. Get these when you register.

POST-REUNION TOURS

Southwest Arrangers has made available a six-day post-reunion tour for 398th members. This is to include many famous Arizona landmarks, like the Grand Canyon. A brochure will be mailed to all members sending in their reservations. The tour has a 26-person minimum requirement.

Time Now For A Travel Check

Traditionally, a good percentage of attendees drive their own automobiles to reunion cities. This figure might be a bit smaller for Tucson, considering the far distance from the East.

So, for those who will be leaving their cars at home and will be needing travel help, they are invited to use the expertise of Travel House, Inc., 5042 Roosevelt Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105-3634.

Call toll free 1-800-423-5454.

Many special economy air fares are currently being marketed, so now is the time to lay up reservations.

Ask for Barbara Fish.

OFFICIAL REGISTRATION FORM

398th Bomb Group Memorial Association Eleventh Annual Reunion
Tucson, Arizona September 21-22-23-24, 1994

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN AUGUST 26, 1994

NAME _____ WIFE _____ SQD: _____
 ADDRESS _____ PHONE (_____) _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP+4 _____

NAMES OF OTHERS IN PARTY. PLEASE PRINT FOR NAME TAGS

WEDNESDAY, September 21:

Golf	6:30 AM	Meet in Lobby	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Registration	1 PM - 5 PM	Bonsai/Boojum Rooms		
Memory Room & PX	1 PM - 5 PM	Bonsai/Boojum Rooms		
Welcome Reception	6 PM - 8 PM	Poolside		
(No Host Bar, Chips & Dips, Mariachi Band Entertainment.)				
Board Officers Meeting	8 PM	Ironwood Room		
(Dinner at your selection.)				

THURSDAY, September 22:

Golf	6:30 AM	Meet in Lobby	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Registration	9 AM - 5 PM	Bonsai/Boojum Rooms		
Memory Room & PX	9 AM - 5 PM	Bonsai/Boojum Rooms		
Sabino Canyon Tour	10 AM - 3 PM	Leave From Lobby \$37.00 x _____	\$ _____
(Tour includes DeGrazia Studio and Lunch at Hidden Valley Inn.)				
Group Annual Meeting	3 PM - 4 PM	Ballroom		
No Host Bar	6 PM - 7 PM	Ballroom		
Welcome Banquet/Entertainment	7 PM	Ballroom \$26.00 x _____	\$ _____
(Table Reservations Required. See Registration Desk.)				

FRIDAY, September 23:

Registration	9 AM - 5 PM	Bonsai/Boojum Rooms		
Memory Room & PX	9 AM - 5 PM	Bonsai/Boojum Rooms		
Sonora Desert Tour	9:30 AM - 2 PM	Depart From Lobby \$37.00 x _____	\$ _____
(Includes Museum and Lunch.)				
Davis-Monthan AFB Tour	9:30 AM - 1:30 PM	Meet in Lobby \$34.00 x _____	\$ _____
(Includes Pima Air Museum and Lunch at Officers Club.)				
Old Tucson Western Dinner	5:15 PM - 9 PM	Old Tucson Studios \$43.00 x _____	\$ _____
(Includes Gunfight Greeting, Cowboy Hats, Western Trio.)				

SATURDAY, September 24:

Registration	9 AM - 1 PM	Bonsai/Boojum Rooms		
Memory Room & PX	9 AM - 5 PM	Bonsai/Boojum Rooms		
Nogales, Mexico Tour	9 AM - 5 PM	Leave From Lobby \$38.00 x _____	\$ _____
(Includes San Xavier Mission, Tubac, Arizona, and Lunch.)				
No Host Bar	6 PM - 7 PM	Ballroom		
Farewell Banquet/Dance	7 PM	Ballroom \$28.00 x _____	\$ _____
(Table Reservations Required. See Registration Desk.)				

Registration Fee (Per Person, 2 Maximum Per Family) \$10.00 x _____ \$ _____
 1994 Memorial Association dues (if applicable). Check your dues card. \$5.00 x _____ \$ _____
 Check payable to: **398th Bomb Group Reunion** **TOTAL** \$ _____

I/We will be staying at the Doubletree Aztec Other.

Please complete form and mail to:

Clyde Sebastian
398th Bomb Group Reunion
TUCSON AZ 85730-1773

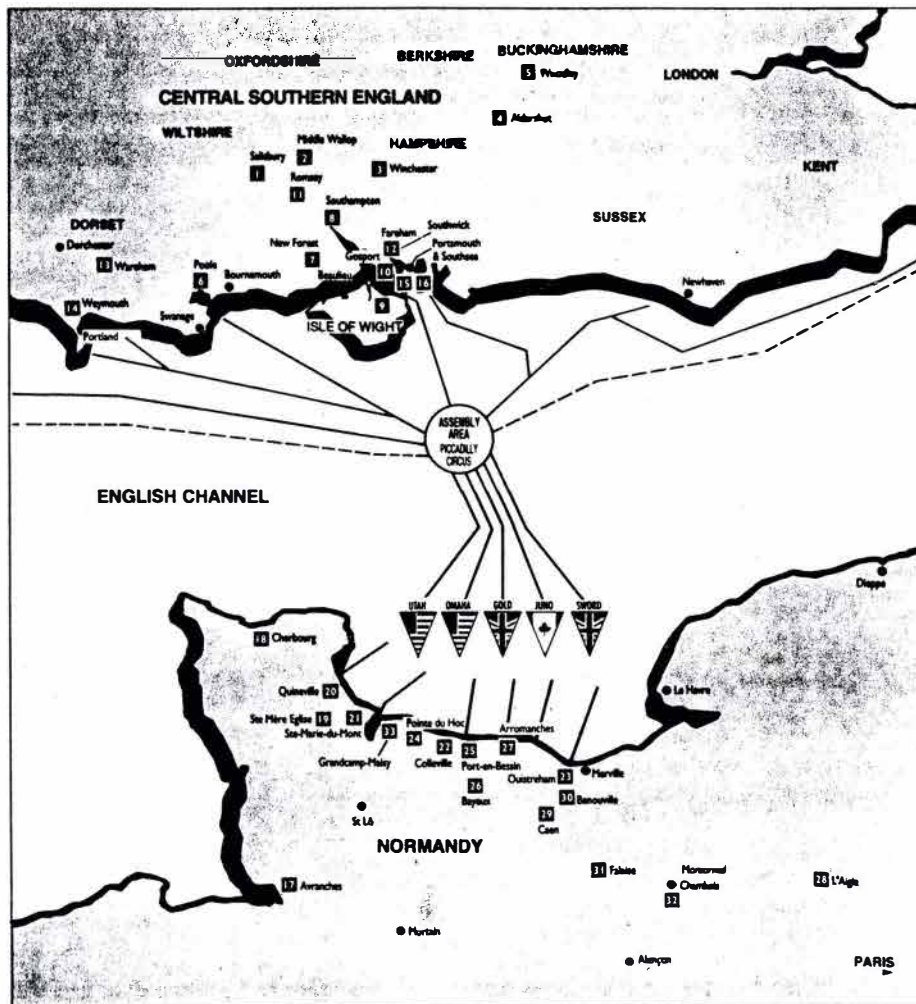
*Cut Out Page Or
Make Photo Copy*

Received \$ _____ Date _____ <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Clyde Sebastian A copy of this form will be mailed to registrants upon receipt of check or money order, payable to 398th Bomb Group Reunion.</p>
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GUIDE TO D-DAY SITES AND MUSEUMS IN CENTRAL SOUTHERN ENGLAND AND NORMANDY

CENTRAL SOUTHERN ENGLAND

- 1 Salisbury
- 2 Middle Wallop
- 3 Winchester
- 4 Aldershot
- 5 Berkshire/Buckinghamshire/Oxfordshire
- 6 Poole
- 7 The New Forest
- 8 Southampton Hall of Aviation
- 9 Isle of Wight
- 10 Gosport
- 11 Broadlands
- 12 Southwick
- 13 The Tank Museum
- 14 Nothe Fort
- 15 Royal Marines/Naval Museums
- 16 D-Day Museum and Overlord Embroidery



NORMANDY, FRANCE

- 17 Avranches
- 18 Cherbourg
- 19 Sainte-Mère-Eglise
- 20 Quineville
- 21 Ste-Marie-du-Mont - Utah Beach
- 22 American Cemetery
- 23 Ouistreham
- 24 Pointe du Hoc
- 25 Port-en-Bessin
- 26 Bayeux
- 27 Arramanches
- 28 L'Aigle
- 29 Caen
- 30 Benouville
- 31 Falaise
- 32 The Memorial of Coudehard at Montzormel
- 33 Grandcamp Maisy

D-Day View From The Glass Nose; He Was Part Of Historical Event

BY MEL WOLF

I was the bombardier on a crew piloted by Robert Kaufman for the D-Day mission on June 6, 1944. Bill Durtschi, our regular pilot, flew with another crew on another mission later that day.

Our regularco-pilot, Don Rush, did not fly, but we had another officer as air commander in our six-ship formation.

We had a target right on the beach and we carried bombs with 1- to 18-second delays. It was poor visual bombing weather, but we were aided by the good ol' British "Gee" box. Herb Troost got us on course and as we approached the I.P. At 16,000 feet the clouds thinned out a little and with the aid of briefing photos I was able to see our target on the beach.

Our squadron's bombs hit perfectly and had an odd pattern going off with the delayed fuses. The Germans had land mines set to go off on the first jolt through five jolts. With our bombs going off in 1- to

18-seconds it just pulverized the beach. Off to my right during all this I saw hundreds of landing craft.

Sitting in a glass nose, I had a front row seat. Battleships, cruisers, and light cruisers all firing as fast as they could. Bright orange centers and jet black smoke just pouring off their decks. It was unbelievable seeing all the ships that took part that day.

I have always felt fortunate to have been a part of this great day in history.

EDITOR'S NOTE — The obvious lack of "brass" on this mission can be explained by the orders from the 8th Air Force Bomber Command that no group-rated or operational staff or squadron leaders would be permitted to take part.

The group sent up 55 aircraft, with at least some of these crews coming from one or both of the other groups in the 1st Combat Wing, 91st or 381st.

Memory Dim, But He Remembers The London Area Barrage Balloons

After 50 years my memory of D-Day is not all that clear. But one thing I do remember well is that all the first pilots, navigators and bombardiers were called to a special meeting with Colonel Hunter on the evening of June 5, 1944.

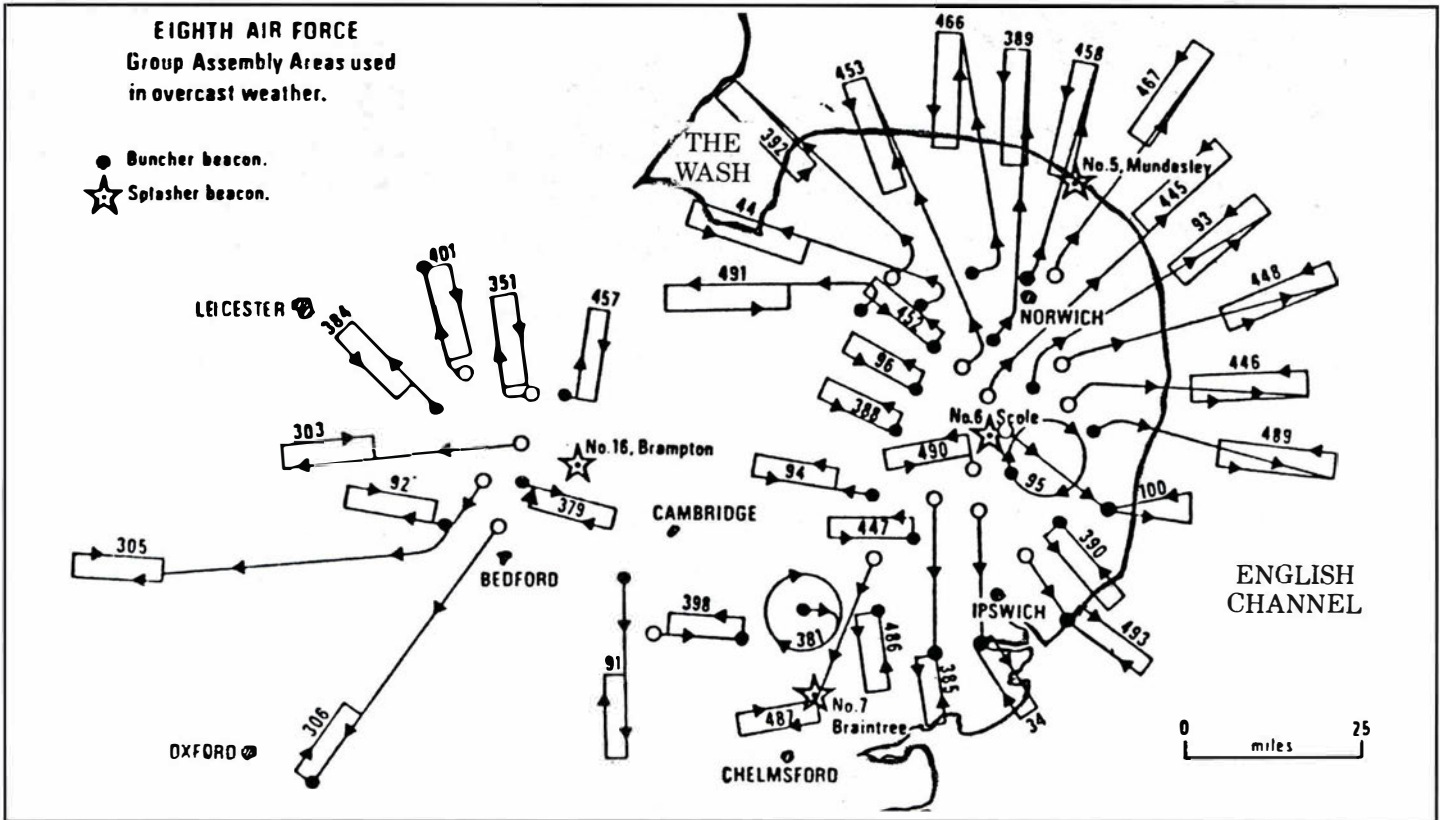
He told us that D-Day would be the following morning and then he swore us all to absolute secrecy. We were not to say a word to our crew or anybody else. Then he gave us the target — Courseulles, France.

When we were on the bomb run the Channel was black with incoming invasion force ships. We didn't open the bomb bay doors until the last minute and then we bombed PFF on interval release.

And then I recall the barrage balloons in the London area as we headed for the target.

LES VELEY
601 Squadron Bombardier

A Gathering Of Eagles — 8th Air Force Style



50 YEARS LATER most of us have forgotten the magnitude of assembling a thousand and more B-17's and B-24's into 36-plane formations, all accomplished in the span of a few hours. And then getting them on their way to targets on the continent. It really was not by accident (even if it seems that way to some of us) but by 8th Air Force Bomber Command design. Each group had its own assigned "turf" over which

the group leaders would fly in a "racetrack" or circular pattern until the exact minute they needed to join other groups in the Wing or Division. There was no waiting for "stragglers," who had to fend for themselves if late or lost. The area depicted in this layout represents an East Anglia area of about 75x100 miles, or just slightly larger than the state of New Jersey.

Daily Recalls Days Of "Debden Buncher"

BY BRUCE DAILY
Group Operations Officer

The accompanying diagram of the Eighth Air Force assembly areas was recently published in a 385th Bomb Group newsletter. I checked with some of the other former 398th pilots in the Sacramento area to see if this diagram served to remind them of any assembly stories.

The unanimous consensus was that sometimes it got a little "hairy".

None of us remembered the "racetrack" pattern indicated for the 398th on the diagram, although, as Bob Templeman said — "In some high wind situations, the circular assembly pattern became a race-track pattern."

We also referred to a copy of the 398th Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) SOP III-1, The Assembly of the Group, 1 Nov. 1944 states "Use of the Buncher — Normally the Group will assemble circling Southwest of the Debden Buncher."

The SOP also reminded us that the Group and Squadron lead and deputy lead ships would take off 10 minutes before the remaining aircraft to enable them to get

in position in the assembly before the rest of the group arrived. Identification of the lead ships was assisted by firing "assigned" colored flares and by extending landing wheels. Then, the remaining aircraft, climbing individually to the assembly area would take position in the group formation.

I think that the real significance of this diagram, regardless of whether our assembly patterns were circular or racetrack, is that it indicates the magnitude of the problem of assembling a large bomber force, particularly in bad weather. For instance, on April 10, 1945 the 8th Air Force launched what was probably the last "maximum effort" of the war. In this case bad weather was not a factor. However, over 1,500 heavy bombers had to fly carefully programmed routes to climb to their assigned assembly areas, then to fall in a line of groups to fly a common route into and out of the Berlin area.

The 398th was the fifth group in the line on this day so we could see the first four groups turn into the target area. Then, since the return to England was on a parallel route, we were able to see the other

34 groups on the way to the targets.

Because of the parallel routes, this would mean that it would take the bomber stream about four hours, coming and going, to pass over any given area. I often wondered about how the prolonged drone of over 6,000 aircraft engines would psychologically impact the German people below when they had no idea of where a lot of bombs were going to be dropped.

Minnesota, Indiana, Texas
Michigan, Illinois, Ohio
Wisconsin

It is now 1994 "Dues Time" for the 398th Bomb Group members living in Texas and the Mid-West states of Minnesota, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Dues reminders are included in this issue of FLAK NEWS for these seven states only. They should be mailed to our treasurer, Ralph Hall, New Bedford, MA 02740-1915.

Members are reminded that they should include their nine-number ZIP+4. Your local Post Office can provide this number.

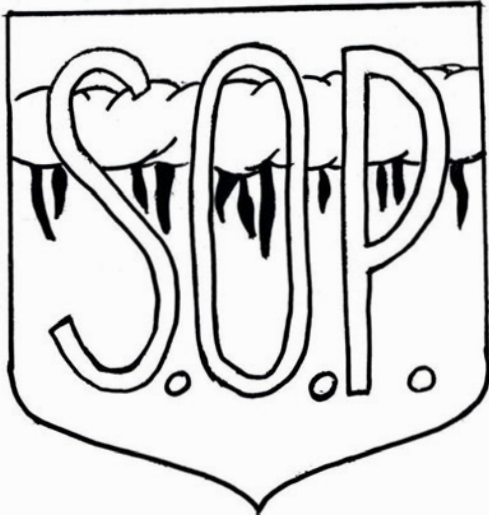
S.O.P.)
III-1)

1 November 1944

398th BOMB GROUP (H)



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE



PREPARED BY
GROUP OPERATIONS

The Assembly of the Group

1. The assembly of this group will normally be accomplished at high altitude to eliminate last minute changes in briefed altitude because of clouds, and to save time and fuel by climbing individually. A course for climb will be assigned airplanes at briefing. This course will be so drawn that aircraft flying it and climbing at prescribed rate and speed will reach the assembly altitude five minutes before reaching the point of assembly.

2. All aircraft of this group will set altimeters at 29.92 inches of mercury for assembly and leave them there until just before landing.

3. The lead airplane of the group will circle the assembly point with wheels extended 150 mph. I.A.S. and will fire **assigned** flares from time to time to aid arriving aircraft to identify him. The Squadron leaders will take up their proper positions on the leader and the remainder of the formation will take up their proper positions **only** after the leaders are in position.

4. Use of Buncher — Normally the group will assemble circling South West of the Debden Buncher; allow power radio beacon transmitting call sign 8U8, and a 25 second dash continuously on a frequency of 1028 KCS. Aircraft may home to this beacon using radio compass.

5. Changes in Altitude — Whenever it becomes necessary to make a change in assembly altitude after take off, it will be accomplished as follows: All aircraft will be called on V.H.F. channel A and given the change by adding or subtracting from the briefed assembly altitude of the Combat Wing. This altitude is called "Base Altitude". The code word, "Angel" will indicate a change upward, and the word "Devil" will indicate a change downward or decrease in altitude. Thus the message "Assemble at Six Angels" would mean that the assembly altitude has been increased six thousand feet above the base altitude given at briefing. The message "Assembly at Four Devils" would mean that assembly altitude has been decreased four thousand feet below that given at briefing.

6. In the event an airplane is detained on the field due to mechanical trouble, or a last minute airplane change, the navigator will give the pilot a course to fly immediately after take-off to intercept the formation.

7. No pilot will attempt to intercept this group's formation if it has passed mid-channel but will join any wing formation that might be behind this group's formation if he is positive that the formation he joins is enroute to a target not beyond the endurance of his particular gas load.

By order of Colonel HUNTER:

JACK S. GARLAND
Major, Air Corps
Adjutant

OFFICIAL:
EDWIN B. DAILY
Major, Air Corps
Operations Officer

CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS 398TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Operations Officer
APO 557, U.S. Army

S.O.P.)
III-3)

1 November 1944

Operating Speeds

1. The following operating speeds will be used on operational missions:

- a. Climb by individual A/C to Assembly
 - (1) 150 IAS 300 Feet Per Min Below 15,000 Feet
 - (2) 150 IAS 200 Feet Per Min Above 15,000 Feet
- b. Climb in Formation
 - (1) 150 IAS 300 Feet Per Min Below 15,000 Feet
 - (2) 150 IAS 200 Feet Per Min Above 15,000 Feet
- c. Cruise
 - (1) 150 IAS
- d. Descent
 - (1) 170 IAS 500 Feet Per Min
- e. Bombing
 - (1) 150 IAS

By order of Colonel HUNTER:

JACK S. GARLAND
Major, Air Corps
Adjutant

HEADQUARTERS 398th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Operations Officer
APO 557, U.S. Army

S.O.P.)
III-2)

1 November 1944

The Assembly of the Wing & Air Division

Wing Assembly

1. It is the responsibility of the 1st Wing "A" Group Air Commander to coordinate the forming of the Force from the 1st Wing. Air Commanders of the 1st Wing "B" and "C" Groups will stand by on A Channel, VHF, for instructions and the purpose of helping effect the assembly of the Groups in the 1st Wing Force.

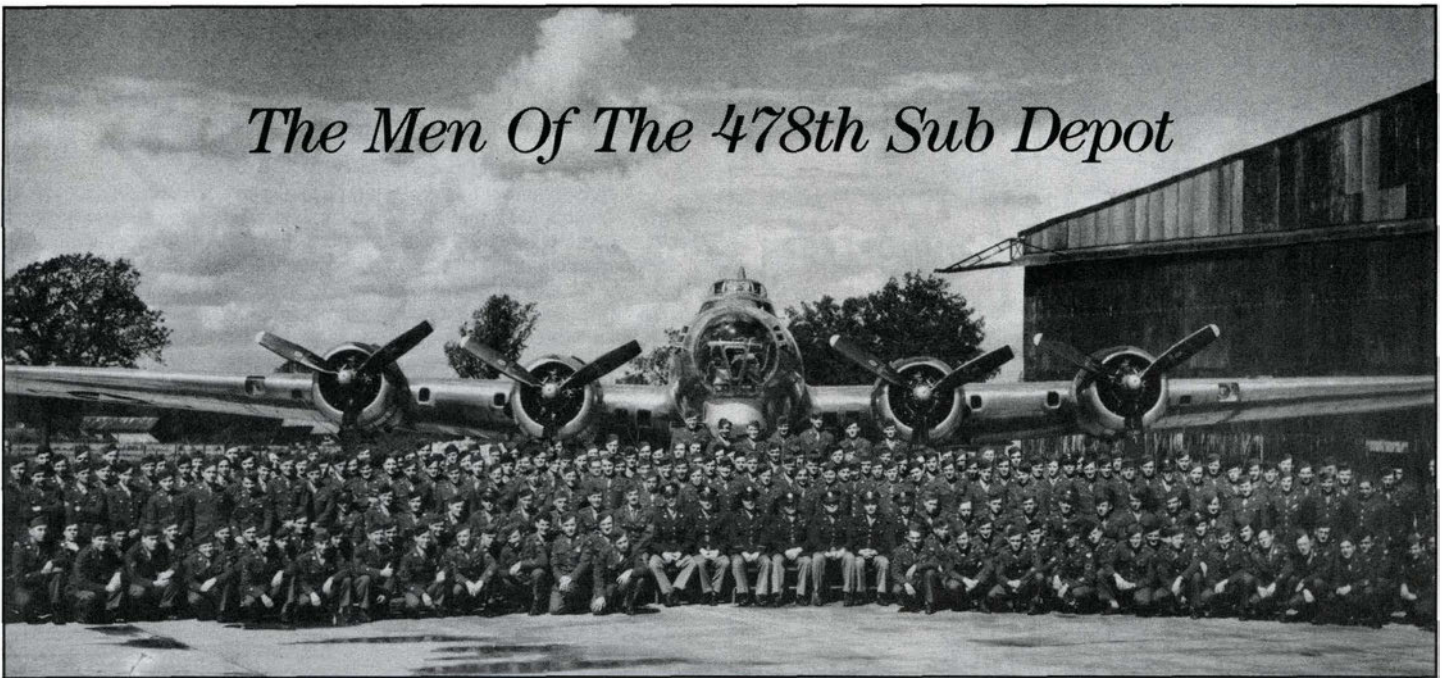
Air Division Assembly

2. The several Groups of the Air Task Force will assembly along a line between two points designated in the field order for that purpose. The Air Task Force will usually consist of eight to twelve groups and may be subdivided into smaller task forces designated as "A", "B", etc., which will be flown according to instructions in the field order.

By order of Colonel HUNTER:

JACK S. GARLAND
Major, Air Corps
Adjutant

The Men Of The 478th Sub Depot



“The Little Engine That Could And Did”

BY GEORGE HILLIARD
Flight Chief, 603rd Squadron

When the subject of aircraft performance is discussed we seldom hear about the power plant that propelled our Flying Fortresses through the air.

The B-17G was equipped with a Wright Cyclone R-1820-97, a nine-cylinder radial engine with 1,000 HP. With the addition of the turbo supercharger, Honeywell controls and the paddle propeller the B-17G with a full bomb load could reach an altitude of 35,000 feet.

Under ideal conditions, the B-17G could reach a maximum speed of 302 MPH and cruise at 160 MPH with a range of 3,750 miles.

The Wright Cyclone R-1820-97 could take a lot of punishment as long as it had sufficient oil in the tank. Sometimes the rocker boxes would take a hit and when it landed the oil would squirt from the damaged rocker box each time the piston would come up on the compression stroke.

When the engine ran out of oil the crankshaft would get so hot that it would break off on landing and send the propeller skipping across the runway.

The R-1820-97 was not considered a frugal engine for fuel, although fuel consumption during those World War II days was not a factor as it is today. Records show that the 398th Bomb Group, during a

one-month period, from May 6 to June 6, 1944, consumed 901,994 gallons of 100 octane gasoline.

Wright Cyclones also powered the B-29 Superfortress with

the R-3350. This was a 2,000 HP, 18-cylinder Duplex. Later came the R-4360, a 28-cylinder engine turning out 3,500 HP used on the C-124 Globemaster.

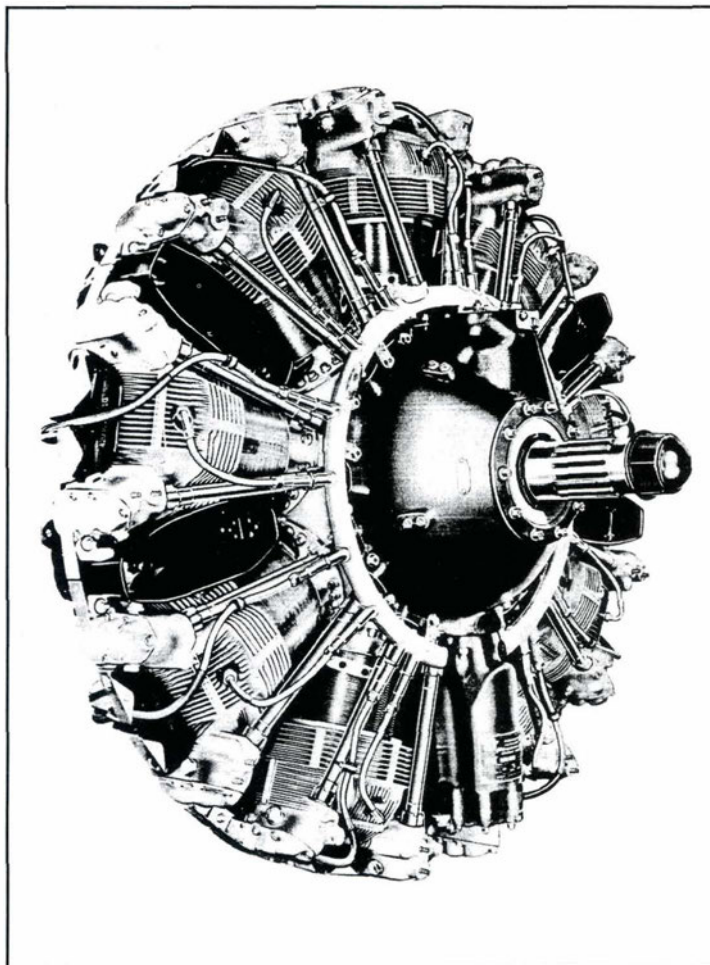
But for those of us who flew or serviced the B-17G, we can all be grateful for the technical knowledge and research that went into “the little engine that could and did.”

The many of us who had the job of working on the R-1820's all felt that it was the right engine for the right airplane at the right time.

And this went not only for the engine, the airplane, and the time, but also for the men who were there to maintain, service and change those Cyclones. Whether they were out on the line in the various squadrons or at the 478th Sub Depot, they all took great pride in keeping them running.

And not to forget the others on the ground who did their parts in the overall picture of winning the war. These would be those from the 325th Station Complement; 1142nd MP Squadron; 860th Chemical; 426th Air Service Group; 1149th Ordnance; 18th Weather Squadron; 244th Medical; and 1226th QM.

They all could ... and did.



Wright Cyclone R-1820-97

THE 1994 TOUR TO ENGLAND:

“Fast Track, Surprises”

This summer's tour to England by members of the 398th Bomb Group is shaping up like “varied, fast and exciting.” Into a span of two weeks will go a great mixture of activities that surely will satisfy even the most seasoned “back to England” traveler.

While some travel packages promise such things as “free time,” and “on your own today,” the 398th promises only a fast track and lots of surprises.

The return to Nuthampstead and Station 131 is the highlight of the tour, with the guests from the U.S. becoming “Brits” for the five-day home stay period. The Memorial programs, the small plane flights from the old runway, the “hog roast,” the 40's dance, Madingly, hotel banquet and more are destined to keep the Yanks on their respective travel toes.

But before all this happens, the Angela Holidays coach that will meet the party at Heathrow Airport will cover a lot of miles and pull in at many interesting places. Stops all along the circuit have been designed especially for the 398th tourists. Stops for shopping and sightseeing will be there, but also stops that have special 398th meaning, such as visiting the actual crash site of one of our B-17's near Macclesfield. And meeting Britain's leading RAF Spitfire ace, Johnnie Johnson.

And being guests of the Parish Council of Wildboardclough.

Oliver Bradford, John Bourquin and Oral Birch, who were original members of the Hastings-deCleene crew of the 603rd, are expected to be at the deCleene crash site, although they and Dale Brown will not be with the official tour party.

Others traveling on their own to England at this time will be Charles Anderson, Tom Dougherty, Joe Spechulli and Walt Marsh. Keith Anderson's family will join him for the home stay at Nuthampstead.

The official 1994 tour party —

*Bill & Evelyn Comstock
Marcus Woods
Ralph & Marjorie Hall
Wayne & Ruthanna Doerstler
Ray & Marilyn Talbott
Wally & Teedy Blackwell
Don & Dorothy Sable
Charles Sutton
Russ Reed & Millie McMillan
William & Patricia Dean
Robert & Elaine Knowles
Dorothy Crouch & Butch Crouch
Marilyn & Bob Gibb
George & Norma Engle
Joe & Willetta Mansell
Keith Anderson
Howard & Jane Traeder
Allen & Geg Ostrom
Barbara Fish, CTC
Ray & Jeanne Stange
John & JoAn Thaxton*

A TRIBUTE FROM ENGLAND

By Janet Chambers

In the dark days of the forties
In the middle of the war
Those young men from America
Arrived upon our shore.

The locals were suspicious
Of this unfamiliar breed
Who filled our towns and villages
Helping Britain's hour of need.

But as the months progressed
Their cheerful, friendly way
Began to charm the natives
And brightened those dark days.

They looked so young and handsome
In their uniforms so smart;
No wonder many a maiden
Completely lost her heart.

And when they left on bombing raids
There were sad farewells and tears,
But on returning safe and sound
There was happiness and cheers.

The many who did not come back
And sacrificed their lives
Are remembered through the ages
By girl friends, mums or wives.

Now, half a century later,
We're looking back with pride
As the Yanks are on the wing again
They will come from far and wide.

Welcome back to all our allies
To an England now at peace;
We'll forever pray together
That all the wars will cease.

Next FLAK NEWS Will Feature Colonel Hunter

The next issue of FLAK NEWS, July, 1994 (Vol. 9 No. 3) will be a “Colonel Hunter Special.”

The issue will be expanded to 16 pages, containing many features on the 398th Bomb Group commanding officer, his career and family.

In addition, other stories will center on the history of the 398th. It is hoped that the July issue will be treated as a “collectors' item.”

An additional several hundred copies will be printed and made available to members and friends for \$2.00 each.



COLONEL ANDREW MILLER (left) commanding officer of the 398th Operations Group, Castle AFB, Captain Pete Rooney and Lt. Col. John Arsenault pose with a framed, silk escape map as used by combat personnel on their missions in the ETO. The map was presented to Capt. Rooney at the Buffalo reunion by Ken Green of the 603rd Ken Hastings crew. “We have taken this priceless piece of the past and added it to our memorial wall,” said Col. Miller.

Fund Drive Goes Over The Top

Continued From Page 1

This gift came from Marcus Woods of Fullerton, California. Woods, civil engineer, was a navigator on the Stanley Reed crew of the 600th Squadron. This was one of the original crews from Rapid City, North Dakota.

How will the "over-subscribed" funds be used?

"The extra \$5,000, less the expenses incurred by the 398th during the promotion," said Comstock, "will be held in a special fund earmarked for future EAA needs. Keeping a 52-year-old Fortress flying is very costly and I suspect we will be called on again one day in the future to help out."

Following are the names of all those who contributed to the EAA "corrosion control" drive. These are in addition to those whose names appeared in the January FLAK NEWS —

"398th Colors Will Be Around For A Long, Long Time"

February 14, 1994

Mr. William G. Comstock
President
398th Bomb Group
Memorial Association, Inc.
Fairfax, VA 22031

Dear Bill:

On behalf of the EAA Aviation Foundation, I would like to thank you and everyone in the 398th for the generous gift of \$15,000 to our B-17 Restoration Project.

Your continuing support of our work to control corrosion on this beautiful aircraft speaks highly of your entire organization and will insure the 398th colors will be around for a long, long time. I believe your support exemplifies the way each of you answered the call 50 years ago to preserve a way of life we still enjoy today.

Our planned B-17 Heritage Tour has been a big challenge. The corrosion control project itself virtually doubled our original manhour estimate. Fortunately, everyone involved — from maintenance staff to chapter tour coordinators — has risen to the challenge. Members of the 398th and their guests will be entitled to the same discounted tour privileges (\$1 off per person) as will our own EAA members at each tour stop. We hope many of you will turn out to see the Triangle W and share its heritage in a personal way.

On behalf of all who will see and wonder at the heritage of this aircraft and what it represents, thank you again for your splendid support. We are proud of our association with you.

Warmest regards,
EAA AVIATION FOUNDATION
Gregory J. Anderson
Executive Vice President

BENEFACTOR

Woods, Marcus J.

PATRONS

Alhadeff, Ike

SPONSORS

Anderson, Gregory
Armor, Ray
Auten, William E.
Blackwell, Wallace
Burke, Lewis E.
Cullinan, Stephen P.
Hall, Wallace
Hershberger, George
Hicks, Lee J.
Hilliard, George
Kiacz, Steve C.
Lee, John J.

(In memory of
Melvin Cohn, KIA)

Leonard, Mrs. Norma
Miesenhelder, William
O'Malley, William E.
Powell, James I.
Retzer, Ralph
Ryan, William J.
Stahlman, Phillip H.
Steele, R.E. (Bob)
Sundhiem, Lloyd M.

Swjantek, Charles

DONORS

Alwood, Joseph
Amende, James K.
Atkinson, Herman
Augustine, Joseph J.
Bartusis, Anthony
Beck, Benjamin L.
Bestervelt, Harold J.
Blythe, J. Gordon
Bracia, Benny
Britton, John H.
Brooks, Henry
Brunsborg, Arnold N.
Campbell, Dennis E.
Campbell, Roger W.
Cеровski, Leo J.
Conrad, John P.
Croce, Leo R.
Daily, Bruce
Davidson, James A.
Duncombe, David M.
Eckstein, Julius
Engle, George W.
Ferraiuolo, Joseph
Florin, Henry J.
Fox, Richard B.
Frankhouser, William L.
Frazier, Willis E.

Gailey, Samuel A.
Generaux, Harry L.
Gomez, Anthony
Grothues, Mrs. Dorothy
Hall, Ralph W.
Haynes, Irby C.
Hudson, Jack
Hyndman, Staver J.
Johnson, L.G.
Jones, George D.
Kavanaugh, Dr. Wm. R.
Kerr, Walter H.
Kinzie, O. Gale
Kuse, Bernard M.
Law, Sylvia J.

(In memory of
Lyle J. Doerr)

Leung, George
McCormick, C.J.
Miceli, Gaspara
Miles, Emil
Mills, Mrs. Adelyn L.
(In memory of
Richard G. Mills)
Morrison, Donald
Moy, Newell (Newt)
Neely, P.T.
Neill, David S.
Oeder, Robert M.
Owens, Mrs. Darlene

Paget, Percy
(In memory of
Jack Davis)

Pearce, William B.
Perkins, Guy A.
Petska, Mrs. Margo
Poston, Roy W.
Rice, William C.
Rudow, Henry J.
Samuelson, Conrad
Shaw, Albert W.
Sherman, Richard
Shimek, Irene J.
Sistek, Anton
Smith, John R.
Spangler, Harold
Stallcup, Harold K.
Stoll, Victor E.
Swed, Morris F.
Test, Leo R.
Thaxton, John W.
Thomas, Howard D.
Vitelli, Anthony
Wierney, Mrs. Dessie
Wiggins Jr., Robert E.
Wiley, Mary K.
Wineman, Edward E.
Woolf, Jim
Wroe, Dr. Lester L.
Yarmoski, Frank

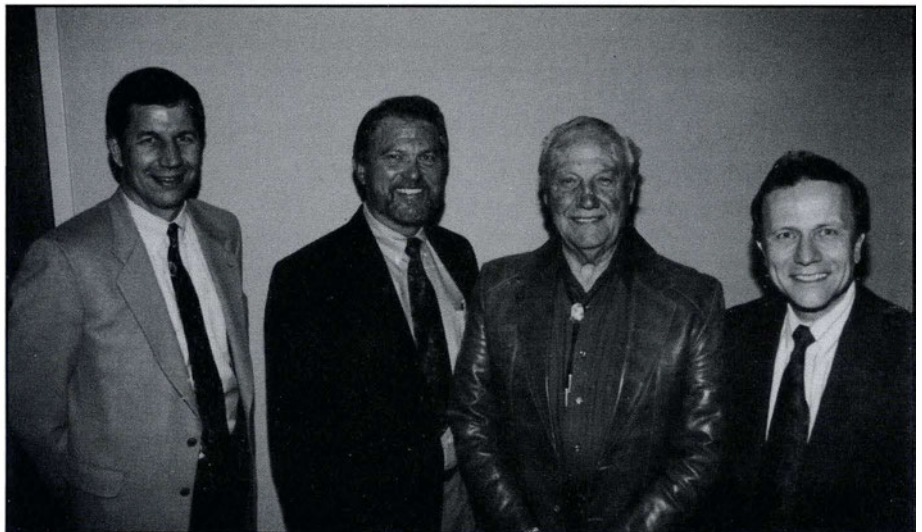
Changes In Heritage Tour

Some changes have been made in the EAA's B-17 spring/summer Heritage Tour, it was announced by Greg Anderson for the EAA. The schedule was printed in the January FLAK NEWS.

On May 18-20 the Aluminum Overcast will be at Collegedale, Tennessee, rather than Chattanooga, TN; on May 25-27 at Muscle Shoals, Alabama, rather than Florence, AL;

on June 6-8 at Cahokia, Illinois, rather than East St. Louis, MO; on July 1-4 at Freeport, Illinois, rather than Rockford, IL; on July 4-6 at Madison, Wisconsin; on July 13-15 at Valparaiso, Indiana; July 20-23 at Racine, Wisconsin; (cancel Kenosha, WI); on July 23 at Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

The fall and winter schedule will be printed in the July issue of FLAK NEWS.



"Thank You Very Much"

HAL WEEKLEY (2nd from right) accepted the "thank you's" from officers of the EAA Aviation Foundation of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, after Hal presented the EAA a check for \$15,000 on behalf of the 398th Bomb Group. Members contributed the money for major corrosion control work on the EAA B-17, Aluminum Overcast, which carries 398th Bomb Group colors. Left to right are Greg Anderson, EAA executive vice-president; Dr. Bill Harrison, Foundation director and B-17 pilot; Weekley, who also pilots the Aluminum Overcast; and Tom Poberezny, EAA president.

BRIEF-things

The tourist folks estimate there will be over 8 million Americans traveling to Europe this summer, many going for the special activities commemorating the 50th anniversary of D-Day in France, which is why the 398th opted to leave Normandy and the Battle of the Bulge areas to the ground guys ... **Jean Mustoe**, who lived beneath the roar of the B-17 take-off pattern during the war, said "your arrival in June will bring Nuthampstead and Anstey alive again" ... when the towns along the Rhine River flooded last winter our German friend, **Manfred Koenig**, was there to serve hot tea to the workers, adding some joy to the anguish by dressing up as Santa Claus ... you may be sure there will be lots of "line talk" at the Tucson reunion, what with chairman **Clyde Sebastian** having been an aircraft maintenance authority with the 602nd ... after all that "ground" work, Clyde picked up his private pilot's license after the war ... a man from the 305th BG has designed a special medal for the Red Cross women who were there after each mission with coffee, hot chocolate, and Scotch (not necessarily in that order); he also added "beauty" to their offerings ... Right On! 305th ... **Colonel Frank P. Hunter, Jr.**, whose life will be featured in the July FLAK NEWS, would have been 86 this year, same as **Earl Berryhill** and **James Duvall** ... **Robert Missner** of the 601st claims he was a "communications expert," but it took him 50 years to "communicate" with the 398th Association ... **Sherry Petska Middlemas** is a new Associate member, she being the daughter of free spirit **Al Petska**, the 602 pilot who used to take .45 pot shots at the rats in his tent ... in our January Taps List we inadvertently listed **Robert C. Carter** and **Harold E. Snyder**; please cross them off the list; they are indeed alive and well; sorry, guys ... the folks up at The Wash, where our tour party will stop for a visit, have asked **Willis Frazier** to make an audio recording of a typical mission, adding it to their on-going collection of memorabilia for their museum ... among the many members who supported the Aluminum Overcast restoration project was **Jack Lee**, who gave in memory of his radio operator, **Melvin Cohn**, who was killed while flying with another crew ... the B-17G that has been displayed atop a gas station near Portland, Oregon, for almost 49 years has been "left to rot and waste," according to a story in *B-17 Combat Crewmen & Wingmen* ... when they buried **Jack Davis** last winter Jim Arndell was there, and why not? **Jack** and **Jim** came from the same little town in Kentucky, entered the Air Force at different times but still wound up on the same **Bill Comstock** crew; later worked in the same town and even built homes next to each other; that's like Friends Forever ... treasurer **Ralph Hall**, ever watchful of 398th money, waited until they "had their act together" before sending a \$1000 check to the 8th Air Force Heritage Foundation ... there will be many opportunities for shopping in Tucson, with the Doubletree Hotel van always available to take guests to the local malls ... Board officers are reminded that the annual board meeting will be held Wednesday evening, rather than the usual Thursday morning ... some words mean a lot — it was one of those dark, cold mornings when pilot **Gene Douglas** and navigator **Harry Nelson** were walking towards their lead plane for a pre-dawn takeoff; "Who's leading?" asked one gunner of another — "Douglas and Nelson"; "Good, they always bring us home," was the reply ... if your FLAK NEWS editor does well on the golf course in Tucson, credit **Guy Perkins**, who set him up with a pair of "Big Bomber" metal woods ... **Harold & Nancy Stallcup** will be going on a Cunard Line D-Day Cruise and **Luther (Bud) Hough** will be leading a seniors D-Day tour aboard the Royal Viking Line at about the same time, leaving out of Montreal ... **Keith Anderson**, following the England tour and a trip to Sweden to check on his heritage, will continue on to Denmark, Germany, Holland, Belgium, and France with his family, winding up visiting the Normandy invasion sights ... **Ray Rovinsky**, who worked in the Combat Mess, insists that "the 398th had the best crews in the Eighth and we gave them the best food we had," for which he credits Mess Sergeant **Paul Cifrese** ... **Ray** insists that only "round, not square," eggs were served after May '44, but admits some of those "fresh" egg crates being back dated as far as 1941 ...

"It is the duty of nations as well as of men, to owe their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon ... and to recognize the sublime truth in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord."

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
April 30, 1863

A Memorial Day Remembrance

It was before dawn on the morning of October 15, 1944. The sun had not yet risen over East Anglia ... and probably was not seen all day because of the thick overcast that covered much of England this time of year.

The target for our B-17 bomber group was the marshalling yards at Cologne, through which passed much of the armament that would feed the Nazi war machine, even now preparing for a counter-offensive that soon would be known as the Battle of the Bulge.

The first plane in our squadron to take off that morning was the ship known as the "lead". These were all combat veterans, despite their youthful years. The Air Commander, the pilot, two navigators, bombardier, engineer, radio man and three gunners.

But their mission would end no more than a half mile from the end of the main runway. Loaded with almost 3,000 gallons of airplane fuel, two tons of bombs, thousands of rounds of machine gun ammunition, and all the equipment needed for an eight-hour mission over very unfriendly skies, this lead ship crashed into the tops of a row of the tall trees ... caught fire ... and came to rest in a water-filled castle moat just a stone's throw from the community's 400-year-old-church.

Ten young men perished that morning.

Theirs was not a case of dramatic death while engaging the enemy in high-altitude combat. They sacrificed their lives before they could gain 100 feet of altitude. They were within sight of their own bomber base ... their own Nissen Hut bunks they had left only three hours before.

They did not choose to die in this manner. Nor would they have chosen to die at 30,000 feet. It was God who chose the time and the place.

War at any altitude ... any location ... any form ... is always sad. We know this and we groan for alternatives. We cry for "peace" and there is none.

Some have sought "peace" by following a dictator ... only to be consumed by the fires of hate. Some have called for "complete freedom", only to discover that "complete freedom" is nothing but a prelude to slavery. We must have laws.

So we continue to arm and defend ourselves. Nationally and individually. This has been our style and we seem to be stuck with it.

No, I do not have a formula for peace. But I know the One who does. And one day soon He will return with His armies of heaven to once and for all put an end to the foolishness of war.

Until then we do what our country asks us to do. Some to fight ... some to die.

But surely, all to remember.

(An address delivered in Seattle on Memorial Day, 1993, by Allen Ostrom, FLAK NEWS editor.)

"ARMY TALKS" For The Air Force

REMEMBER:

1. Check your oxygen mask every five minutes.
2. Be sure your A-14 oxygen mask is modified before flying at high altitudes.
3. All electrically heated clothing must go to the drying room.
4. Don't disconnect electrically heated gloves. Leave snaps connected and avoid danger of short circuits.
5. Always keep your parachute near you.

REMEMBER:

(Some points on keeping Plexiglass from frosting)

1. Be sure the glass is clean and dry when you take off.
2. Turn upper and ball turrets to the rear during take-off, so that any mud and moisture

blown on to them will be on the rear of the turrets.

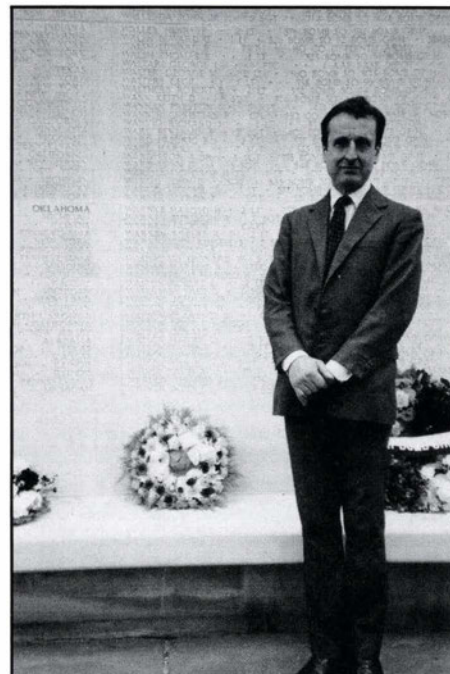
3. Preparations like Killfrost help some, especially if you take along a can of it and swab some on with a rag occasionally.

4. The best way to prevent turret plexiglass from frosting is to avoid letting the inside of the turret get too warm.

5. Some groups drill holes through the plexiglass for ventilation. Don't let a direct blast of cold air hit you. Some sort of plexiglass deflector should be mounted over the holes to keep the breeze along the glass.

6. Don't scrape the frost with a metal tool. Make yourself a little scraper out of plexiglass if you need one.

— ARMY TALKS, HQ, 8th Air Force
APO 634, US Army, ETO



WILFRID DIMSDALE, chairman of the Friends of the 398th at Nuthampstead, is in charge of the large committee that will welcome the 1994 England tour party in June. Members will spend five days at the old base, staying with Friends members on a "home stay" program. About fifty 398th members will be taking part in the varied programs being arranged by Dimsdale and his committee.

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