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

VOL. 10 NO. 4

FLAK NEWS

OCTOBER 1995

“Quite Possibly The Best Ever”

494 Turn Out At Charleston

The charm of Charleston, South Carolina, was at least partially responsible for this comment on the 12th annual 398th Bomb Group reunion –

“Quite possibly the best ever!”
Strong words, but so correct.

Surely few, if any, arguments from the 494 members and friends who gathered in the city's Marriott Hotel during the four-day meeting October 11-14, 1995.

The attendance did not approach the record of 582 set in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1992, but considering the lengthening shadows of our members, an excellent turnout nevertheless.

The reunion was marked by the absence of Bill Comstock, the only president the 398th has known since its organization back in 1976. In the fight of his life with cancer the past year and more, Comstock remained at his home in Fairfax, Virginia, to complete the latest of his on-going round of treatments.

He had asked the Board of Directors to place his name on the ballot, which they did unanimously, and the membership responded by electing him as president for the 20th consecutive year. All the present officers were similarly re-elected. Ben Core was elected to the Board position vacated by the sudden death in September of Bill Jones, an original Board member.

Other officers re-elected were Ted Johnston, vice-president; Wally Blackwell, secretary; Ralph Hall, treasurer; George Hilliard, contact officer; plus Board members Dick Frazier, Hal Weekly and Dale Brown.

And also continuing in their appointed roles were Joe Joseph, PX; Willis Frazier, historian; and Allen Ostrom, public relations. Robert Wiggins remains as Me-



HAROLD AND NANCY STALLCUP
A Present For A Reunion Job Well Done

morial Fund chairman, along with W.A. (Mac) McLaughlin and Al Turney.

The impact Comstock has had on the men and women of the 398th was dramatized with deep emotion when Hilliard stepped to the podium and asked each person to “silently pray that Bill will defeat the curse of cancer.” The stillness that filled the room seemed to lend assurance that this will be so.

A specially-created card was passed around and signed by members announcing that the Board had selected him as the recipient of the “Flowers For The Living Award For 1995.” Comstock initiated this award several years ago. It was delivered to his home by Blackwell.

Johnston, who was Boeing's man in charge of the B-17's 50th anniversary celebration in Seattle back in 1985, and who later became the 398th's vice president, was more than prepared for the assignment of acting president at the

(Continued on Page 4)

Air Crews Had Jump On VE Day

One of the “Tale of Two Books” written about by Tony Clark was called “Duty Control Officers Log.” The dog-eared log book was dated 10 Jan. 1945 and the last entry was 3 June 1945.

Among the “priceless” comments entered by the tower operators came on 20 April, 1945 –

1645 – Called Lt. Cross to see what had been done about catching the people firing the flares at night in WAAF Sites No. 1 & 2. Also tent area. This was in conjunction with our conversation of 18 April '45. No attempt has been made to relieve crews of flare guns and flares although it is definitely known that they are in their possession.

Sounds like some of the boys were getting a six-week jump on VE Day celebration. There was no further entry on whether the culprits were apprehended.

(See Tony Clark's story on Page 10.)

Vic and the Ghosts of Station 131

BY VIC JENKINS

Nuthampstead Airfield Research Society
Nuthampstead, England

When the 398th Bomb Group finally vacated Station 131 in late June of 1945 the base was handed over to the Royal Air Force under the care of a maintenance unit consisting of about 30 personnel.

The airfield was used as an area-wide collection site for bombs and ammunition awaiting transportation and ultimate dumping into the North Sea.

The runways, perimeter roads and bomb storage areas were stacked with every type of bomb and bullet imaginable.

Every building on the station was intact. The base hospital was used as living and sleeping quarters. It was from here that the personnel was dispatched by truck and bicycle to the various parts of the station to carry out their daily duties.

Nuthampstead was a pleasant place to be stationed during the summer months. But in the winter it was a different story.

Security and fire patrols were carried out every night, and with the field more or less abandoned the nightly patrols could be quite eerie and lonely.

I was one of those RAF men on these patrols, and it wasn't long before the talk amongst us got around to the subject of "ghosts."

"Have you seen the ghost that appears in the morgue dressed in full flying gear?"

one fellow asked.

Of course, we all laughed. But he insisted he had seen this thing on numerous occasions. And we all laughed again.

Not long afterwards, whilst on patrol, I was checking out "B" hanger, which had been the work place of the 478th Sub Depot. It was very dark inside, although I did have a flashlight.

Suddenly, I heard the sound of music. It was very faint, but I could make it out to be coming from a big band. I was frozen to the spot. I must have listened to the music for some time, and just as quickly as it had started, it stopped and it was deathly quiet again.

For a moment I assumed it must have been the wind blowing through the girders of the building. But there was no wind. And it was a still, quiet, moonlit night outside.

Many years later I learned that the Glenn Miller band had played in that very same hanger. And it was on a still, quite, moonlit evening.

Could it have been "Moonlight Serenade" that I heard being played that night?

As for the morgue experience, at which we all got a good laugh at the time, others finally admitted they felt a strange presence when they entered. Personally, I never entered that morgue, especially

after my own experience in "B" hanger.

Some of the other RAF lads also told of hearing talking and laughing coming from the deserted squadron huts that straddled the road that led to the back gate and hospital. Perhaps it was a couple of pints of beer consumed at the Woodman Inn that made them hear those strange voices.

I am not so sure.

It has been stated that the old Yank airfields of the 8th and 9th Air Forces were inhabited by ghosts. And after my experiences in "B" hanger and the experiences of my friends at the morgue, I'm certain they were at Station 131, too.

The airfield was finally closed in the late 50's and early 60's and the land returned to their original owners.

The concrete from the runways and perimeter roads was broken up and the material used to build the M-1 Motorway from London. It is ironic that the rubble from the London Blitz was used to build the runways in the first place.

Until they were finally taken away or demolished, some of the Nissen huts and buildings were occupied on occasions by Gipseys, or Travellers, as they like to be called.

But they were never known to have spent a night in the old hospital. Could they have sensed an "unnatural presence" in the old structure?



Still Famous

The photograph at left represents one of the most dramatic shots ever taken of an 8th Air Force B-17. It has been seen in magazines and periodicals the world over and is still exhibited in museums wherever a history of World War II is presented.

The photo took on an additional meaning on September 11, 1995 when Larry deLancey died at the age of 75. It was he, along with Phil Stahlman in the cockpit, who flew this plane home from Cologne on October 15, 1944, after taking a direct hit in the nose, killing toggler George Abbott.

Others aboard this plane that day were Ray LeDoux, Ben Ruckel, Al Albro, Wendell Reed, Russell Lachman and Herbert Guild.

For his heroism in bringing this plane home from the bombing mission deLancey was awarded the Silver Star.

Liberator Time: Tour Group Schedules Visit to 2nd AD Library

Hold your barbs, you B-17 guys, even if what you are about to read might just trigger your next thought with a "HUH?"

OK, let's just blurt it out –

Members of the June, 1996 tour to England will visit the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library while on their sojourn in the area of Norwich. This will come after the scheduled visits to London, Nuthampstead and the regular stops in and around Station 131.

What's the 2nd Air Division, you ask?

Answer: 14 groups of B-24 Liberators!

The 24's were scattered mostly north and east of Cambridge and they did their "bunching up" out over the Channel and North Sea. After the war, the 2nd Division Liberator people built a Memorial Library in Norwich. It contained the division's Roll of Honor, hand-written with the names of the 6,740 men killed in action, plus all the memorabilia gathered over the years and deposited in the East Anglia library.

The entire library was destroyed by fire in 1994.

"A new library will arise from the ashes of the old", was the word from the 2AD officers.

Already, a temporary facility is in place, stocked with 2,000 new books, flags, photos, etc.

"By the time your 398th tour group arrives next summer, we should have a nice display ready for you", said Phyllis DuBois, librarian for the Memorial Library. "We will look forward to greeting you."

The visit will take place on Saturday, June 22nd.

Members are urged to look around for some pertinent memorabilia they might wish to leave with our B-24 friends.

"CHUNNEL TUNNEL"



Pre- or Post-Tour? It's Possible!

London to Paris in three hours via the \$15 Billion "Chunnel Tunnel!"

Finish off your 398th Bomb Group "Return To Nuthampstead" tour via the Eurostar to Paris (or Brussels). Or, if you so desire, begin the June 1996 tour in Paris and meet your tour partners in London to begin the 17-day odyssey back to the old base.

Thrill to the 178-MPH speed of the Eurostar, which is akin to a B-17 going over Cologne with a tail wind. The Eurostar is the most advanced train of its time and can carry as many passengers from London to Paris (or Brussels) as two 747's.

It can be an experience of a lifetime, especially if blended into the great itinerary planned for the June 9-25, 1996 398th tour back to Station 131.

For more information on this great possibility, call Barbara Fish, Travel House, Inc., Seattle. Toll free 1-800-423-5454.

TOUR PRICES:

	Full 17-day Tour June 9-25, 1996	Short 10-day Tour June 9-18, 1996
From Newark	\$3249.00	\$2149.00
From Washington D.C.	\$3249.00	\$2149.00
From Chicago	\$3349.00	\$2249.00
From Dallas/Ft. Worth	\$3349.00	\$2249.00
From Los Angeles	\$3349.00	\$2249.00
From Seattle	\$3349.00	\$2249.00

Single supplement \$400.00

Travel consultant: Barbara Fish, Travel House, Inc., Seattle.
1-800-423-5454

Travel coordinator: Allen Ostrom, 398th Bomb Group.



FIFTY YEARS AGO these two "kids" stood on this corner at Hare Street, south of Station 131, and counted the 398th B-17's as they took off and returned. And also, on occasion, confronted the Yanks coming by on Jeeps, trucks and bikes, with "got any gum, chum?" Today, Ralph Ambrose (left) lives in Virginia and Roger Bradley in London. The two get together often to re-live those exciting years of World War II. These days, unlike then, they are allowed in the Beehive Pub, still doing business on Hare Street.



Flag Program

This display of the American flag might serve to remind our 398th readers that the flags of deceased members may be flown at the old base at Nuthampstead in memory of a loved one. Contact Secretary Wally Blackwell for more information. His address is Rockville, MD 20850-3067.

The flags of 15 former members have been flown during the past several years, including that of Col. Frank P. Hunter, Jr.

CHARLESTON REUNION A WINNER

Comstock Again Voted President; New By-Laws Adopted

(Continued from Page 1)

reunion. Johnson guided the business proceedings at the annual meeting, highlighted by the adoption of new association By-Laws.

The new By-Laws were designed to introduce the new "Associate" and "Auxiliary" members into voting and leadership roles. Previously, only members who served with the 398th in 1943-45 were eligible.

As of January 1, 1998, these new positions will be open to blood relatives, spouses and widows of veterans (Associate) and to others having an interest in the 398th (Auxiliary). A non-voting category of "Honorary" has been retained.

The entire By-Laws appeared in the July 1995 issue of FLAK NEWS.

It was hardly "all business" at the reunion, however, as the 494 spilled out on a variety of tours designed to show off the charm and history of Charleston. Fort Sumter, Magnolia Gardens, Charles Town Landing, The Citadel, Patriot's Point Naval Museum and the city itself all were part of the terrific tour program laid out by reunion chairman Harold Stallcup. He and wife Nancy, who live in North Carolina, are well acquainted with Charleston and their expertise proved a blessing to the 398th visitors.

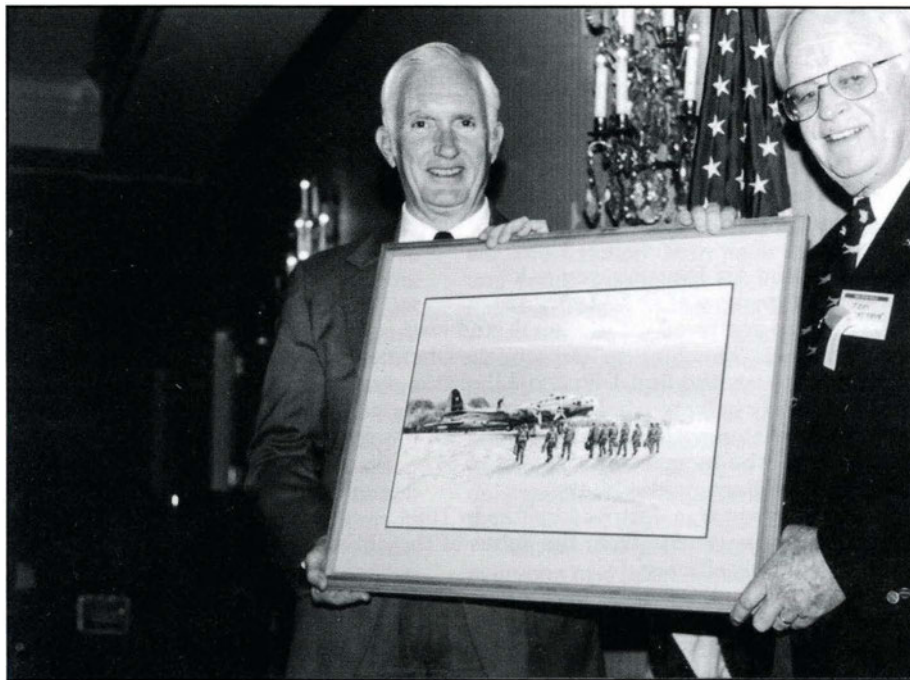
Col. Earl J. Berryhill, slightly slower of step and sight at 87, was still sharp of wit and memory as he mingled with the troops he helped train at Rapid City and later oversee as "city manager" at Station 131. He was an honored guest at The Citadel, where he was on the faculty from 1965 to 1974.

Berryhill received a famed photo of all the Station 131 telephone numbers, decorated with all the group and squadron logos by Nancy Stallcup.

Some 120 from the reunion force received honorary treatment at The Citadel dress parade. In addition to the folks from the 398th, Charleston entertained the parents of The Citadel's Class of 1999.

The 602 Squadron crew of Herb Boehme took honors for having the most members of their crew at the reunion (6), the others being Bob Blacker, James Yip, Bob Knowles, Phil Sorensen and Bob Rowland.

The Memory Room at the hotel served as "headquarters" for registration, PX, videos, memorabilia viewing and gathering place for fellowship. Joe and Rozanne Joseph did their usual land-of-



LT. GEN. E.G. SHULER (left) received a framed picture of the 398th logo, Clearing & Colder, as presented by Ted Johnston, 398th vice-president. Shuler, president of the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum in Savannah, Georgia, was the featured speaker at the annual reunion in Charleston, South Carolina. Johnston took over as reunion leader in the absence of president Bill Comstock, currently going through some heavy Flak with cancer.

vice business of selling T-shirts, jackets, patches, calendars, pins, patches, etc.

Joseph reminded all that mail orders for Christmas (see Page 11) had to be received at his Ohio residence by November 11).

Howard Traeder, wearing his well-travelled and patch-decorated jacket, reminded the banquet gathering of the upcoming tour to England (June 1996). He pointed out that our Nuthampstead Friends are looking forward to hosting another "home stay" program, and are setting up small plane flights on the old runway, big band barn dance, special memorial services and much more in anticipation of another "Yank invasion."

His talk centered around "What other group has done so much?" Then he mentioned past visits to crash sites, to Merseburg, Neuss, Normandy, Scotland, Battle of the Bulge sites, and special ceremonies for lost comrades.

Keith Anderson, one of the 21 members who visited Pilsen, Czech Republic, last May for the 50th anniversary of VE Day, told of the emotions felt at being treated as "heroes" by the local Czech citizens.

Lt. Gen. E.B. (Buck) Shuler, USAF (Ret) came to the reunion banquet from Savannah, Georgia, to tell of the progress being made in the construction of the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum.

(Continued on Page 5.)



SAM MILLER of the 603 Lovelace crew made this blanket while confined in a German PW hospital recovering from injuries sustained after bailing out during a mission to Munich. He collected all the 121 patches from other prisoners he came in contact with. The blanket was presented to the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum during ceremonies at the reunion.

"It is customary in democratic countries to deplore expenditures on armaments as conflicting with the needs of the social services. There is a tendency to forget that the most important social service that a government can do for its people is to keep them alive and free."

—RAF Air Vice Marshall Sir John Slessor

Reunion

(Continued from page 4.)

The 90,000 square foot building is scheduled to open May 13-14, 1996. The 398th and "Friends of the 398th" have contributed toward the building campaign, but Shuler said individuals also have the opportunity to make contributions.

For more information, write Savannah, GA 31402.

Shuler, who served as 8th AF commanding officer in 1988-91, pointed out the museum "was created to build, maintain and operate into perpetuity a living memorial to the men and women who served with the 8th Air Force."

He then recounted the grim statistics — "26,000 were killed; 28,000 became prisoners of war; 9,000 bombers were shot down.

"The Heritage Center will be a memorial and monument to the men who did not return from the war and to the survivors who continued to make their contributions to our country."

Jack Lee, our 603 "master of one-liners," pulled an on-going string of laughter from the Welcome Banquet audience with a presentation called, "Random Memories and Stuff."

And for the Farewell Banquet, a group called, "The Five Aces" was an absolute hit as they sang a great selection of 40's songs called, "Our Kind of Music." Mostly teachers and administrators, the group was recruited by Nancy Stallcup, herself a former teacher respectfully known as "Big Red."

"Big Red" and husband Harold received a Waterford crystal bowl from Bill and Evelyn Comstock for their heading up the Charleston reunion.

NEXT YEAR

The 1996 reunion will be held in Springfield, Missouri, on September 25-26-27-28, 1996. Charter trips to Branson and other nearby attractions are being arranged.

Periodically, FLAK NEWS opts to render an "editorial" opinion. These opinions do not necessarily reflect the policy of the 398th Board, but are offered as thoughts for patriotic stimulation.

On this occasion, the words of RAF Air Vice Marshall Sir John Slessor just happened to appear at about the same time as articles were appearing in the national press regarding the closing of air bases, shipyards, Army posts, etc. And in another case, a request for the use of an Army helicopter for a mountain rescue was refused "because we don't have the funds."

Thankfully, no one "back then" thought to render as "too expensive" when it came time to fill those Fortress gasoline tanks.



KEVIN WHITTAKER, founder of the Macclesfield Historical Aviation Society (England), holds a memento from the Donald deCleene B-17 that crashed on Birchenough Hill near Macclesfield 50 years ago. While probing near the crash site, which took the lives of five 603 airmen, Whittaker came upon this unusual bit of wreckage. It turned out to be the "SCR 522 VHF Radio Antenna." It was mounted atop the fuselage aft of the radio room. He has given the antenna to the 398th for display in a future repository.

New Book Tells of 398th Airman On Ellis Crew

"Three Gold Stars" is the title of a new book written by R.J. Rosamilia of Toms River, New Jersey. One of the Gold Stars is in memory of Bill Lewendoski, co-pilot on the Richard Ellis crew of the 603rd Squadron.

The other Gold Stars represent his brothers, Walter of the Marines and Alex of the Army. All three were killed in World War II.

The intimately-written story covers the lives of the three New Jersey brothers, from their youth through the details of each of their final moments in combat.

Five of the nine members of the 398th crew were killed in the violence over Osnabruk, March 14, 1945. Four survived, but have since passed on.

The book may be purchased from Rosamilia in Toms River, NJ 08753. Cost is \$19.95.

Great New Video On 398th B-17 Now Available

A "keepsake" type of B-17 video, perfect for the veteran who served with the 398th Bomb Group, has been produced by the EAA Aviation Foundation. Featuring the Aluminum Overcast, resplendent in 398th colors, the new 30-minute video is called, "Flying the B-17." And it also features our own Hal Weekley, who narrates the combat narrative as one of the few WWII pilots still serving in a Fortress cockpit.

Other pilots, including one woman, take part in flying the 'Overcast in and around Oshkosh, Wisconsin. A good bit of combat footage is utilized, plus excellent mount camera and air-to-air photography.

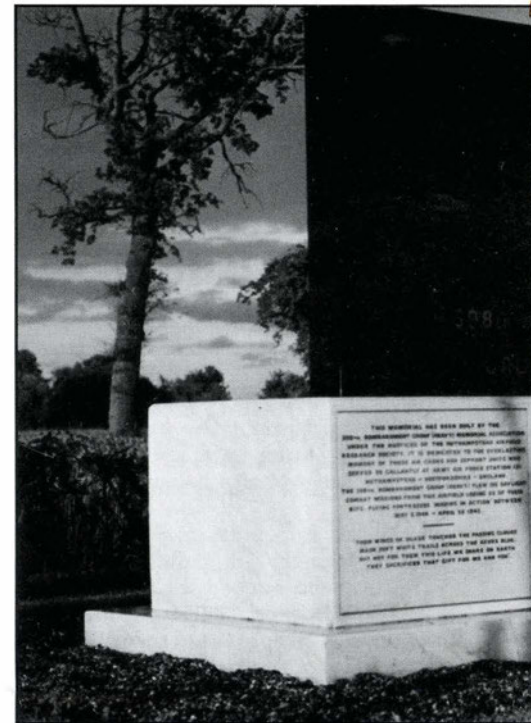
The video costs \$12.95 including shipping and handling. Write to EAA, PO Box 3056, Oshkosh, WI 54903-3065. Or call 1-800-843-3612.

"It's a good one," said the FLAK NEWS editor.

They Paid It All

“Their wings of silver too
made soft, white trails
But not for them this life
they sacrificed that gave

Floyd Aaron, <i>T/Sgt</i>	601	04-13-45	Lamar Q. Coleman, <i>Sgt</i>	600	04-08-44
George E. Abbott, <i>S/Sgt</i>	601	10-15-44	Robert H. Colgan, <i>T/Sgt</i>	603	02-03-45
Albert J. Aleksyn, <i>S/Sgt</i>	603	02-03-45	Roger D. Comer, <i>2/Lt</i>	600	05-19-44
Gerald C. Anataillia, <i>S/Sgt</i>	600	07-16-44	Frederick B. Cone, <i>T/Sgt</i>	600	05-19-44
Vernon Anderson, <i>2/Lt</i>	601	11-26-44	Harry J. Connolly, <i>2/Lt</i>	602	10-28-44
Joe T. Andrews, <i>S/Sgt</i>	601	05-24-44	James B. Coulson, <i>Sgt</i>	601	11-26-44
Darrell Argubright, <i>2/Lt</i>	601	08-30-44	Lyman N. Cranston, Jr., <i>2/Lt</i>	602	09-12-44
Charles Arnold, <i>2/Lt</i>	603	08-08-44	Chares E. Cropp, <i>S/Sgt</i>	603	07-13-44
Brooks Atchinson, <i>S/Sgt</i>	603	11-21-44	George R. Crowe, <i>2/Lt</i>	602	10-28-44
James J. Ault, Jr., <i>S/Sgt</i>	603	11-21-44	Francis A. Daly, <i>Sgt</i>	602	10-28-44
Howard F. Ayres, <i>T/Sgt</i>	603	01-02-45	Gordon F. Davidson, <i>Capt</i>	603	05-24-44
Charles P. Bagley, <i>1/Lt</i>	600	11-30-44	Robert L. Davis, <i>2/Lt</i>	600	11-25-44
John C. Bait, Jr., <i>S/Sgt</i>	602	04-11-45	Donald J. DeCleene, <i>1/Lt</i>	603	01-02-45
John M. Baker, <i>Capt</i>	600	08-08-44	Stanely DeLafayette, <i>2/Lt</i>	603	11-21-44
John P. Baker, <i>1/Lt</i>	603	10-15-44	Merritt A. Deuel, <i>2/Lt</i>	600	05-19-44
William H. Baker, <i>2/Lt</i>	600	11-25-44	Albert L. Dion, <i>2/Lt</i>	600	08-12-44
George E. Barton, <i>T/Sgt</i>	603	10-15-44	Lyle J. Doerr, <i>1/Lt</i>	602	12-30-44
Joseph G. Barzano, <i>Pfc</i>	600	05-19-44	Joseph D. Doglio, <i>2/Lt</i>	602	07-19-44
Manuel M. Bassora, <i>Pvt</i>	12260M09	24-44	Paul E. Doyle, <i>2/Lt</i>	601	11-26-44
Leroy K. Bayless, <i>Sgt</i>	603	10-15-44	Robert W. Dudley, <i>Sgt</i>	603	03-02-45
William J. Beatovich, <i>Capt</i>	603	01-23-45	Hazen V. Earle, <i>S/Sgt</i>	602	12-30-44
Hubert F. Beatty, <i>1/Lt</i>	600	02-22-45	Stephen L. Edington, <i>Sgt</i>	603	08-04-44
James A. Beatty, <i>T/Sgt</i>	600	08-12-44	Richard F. Ellis, <i>2/Lt</i>	603	03-14-45
Joe Bergant, <i>S/Sgt</i>	602	12-30-44	Ernest F. Engeman, <i>2/Lt</i>	603	08-04-44
Norman E. Bergen, <i>2/Lt</i>	601	05-24-44	William H. Englehardt, <i>Sgt</i>	603	07-07-44
Nelson R. Beyer, <i>Sgt</i>	601	01-20-45	Roger J. Erickson, <i>2/Lt</i>	602	10-28-44
Harold A. Bisping, <i>S/Sgt</i>	601	07-08-44	Gerald F. Farren, <i>Sgt</i>	600	05-19-44
Harold L. Blackwell, <i>Pvt</i>	478SD	06-15-44	Doyt W. Faurot, <i>T/Sgt</i>	603	08-04-44
Charles A. Borden, <i>Sgt</i>	603	08-04-44	George A. Feathers, <i>Sgt</i>	603	08-04-44
Thomas C. Bowles, <i>1/Lt</i>	603	09-26-44	William Feinstein, <i>1/Lt</i>	603	02-03-45
Harvey J. Boyd, <i>2/Lt</i>	603	08-04-44	Howard V. Feldman, <i>2/Lt</i>	602	04-25-45
Michael J. Brennan, <i>T/Sgt</i>	602	04-25-45	Henry Ference, <i>2/Lt</i>	603	11-21-44
Ray D. Bringle, <i>T/Sgt</i>	603	07-13-44	Allan H. Ferguson, <i>2/Lt</i>	602	04-25-45
Unite L. Brodin, <i>Capt</i>	603	05-24-44	James S. Fields, <i>2/Lt</i>	602	09-12-44
Loren C. Brown, <i>S/Sgt</i>	603	07-13-44	David V. Flores, <i>S/Sgt</i>	600	12-24-44
Melvin P. Brown, <i>S/Sgt</i>	603	10-15-44	Louis Fontana, <i>Sgt</i>	600	09-10-44
Phil Brusseau, <i>1/Lt</i>	603	10-21-44	Thomas K. Foster, <i>1/Lt</i>	603	07-13-44
Clifford Z. Bryan, <i>2/Lt</i>	603	07-13-44	Thomas H. Fox, <i>S/Sgt</i>	602	12-30-44
William M. Bryan, <i>2/Lt</i>	603	11-21-44	Augustine S. Franzone, <i>1/Lt</i>	603	01-17-44
Anthony Buddes, <i>T/Sgt</i>	603	03-15-45	Victor Frisbie, <i>S/Sgt</i>	600	05-30-44
Alfred Bueffel, <i>S/Sgt</i>	600	08-12-44	Virgil Fuller, <i>Sgt</i>	602	10-28-44
Paul Bunning, <i>T/Sgt</i>	602	07-19-44	John P. Furrow, <i>S/Sgt</i>	603	01-01-45
John D. Burns, <i>S/Sgt</i>	601	06-18-44	Joseph R. Gaiser, <i>T/Sgt</i>	602	12-30-44
Wilbert Y. Burns, <i>Sgt</i>	601	09-08-44	Clement Galetto, Jr., <i>Sgt</i>	603	08-04-44
William Butters, <i>1/Lt</i>	603	01-23-45	Carlo Galliotto, <i>T/Sgt</i>	601	07-08-44
Felix Byrne, <i>S/Sgt</i>	600	11-30-44	Eugene Gamba, <i>Sgt</i>	601	09-08-44
Robert G. Campbell, <i>1/Lt</i>	601	11-02-44	Reynaldo Garcia, <i>S/Sgt</i>	602	02-03-45
William Campbell, <i>Capt</i>	603	01-23-45	William F. Garner, <i>S/Sgt</i>	602	02-03-45
Albert S. Carlisle, Jr., <i>Sgt</i>	603	03-02-45	Thomas D. Garrett, <i>S/Sgt</i>	602	07-19-44
Peter D. Carrado, <i>S/Sgt</i>	603	05-24-45	Frank E. Garry, Jr., <i>T/Sgt</i>	603	01-02-45
James E. Chandler, <i>T/Sgt</i>	601	10-23-44	Robert Gaynor, <i>2/Lt</i>	603	11-21-44
Donald Christensen, <i>T/Sgt</i>	601	05-24-44	Ralph Glancy, <i>S/Sgt</i>	603	11-21-44
Donald R. Christensen, <i>2/Lt</i>	603	03-02-45	Harold M. Gnesin, <i>2/Lt</i>	602	06-25-44
Marvin Clark, <i>S/Sgt</i>	603	11-21-44	Edward B. Goesel, <i>T/Sgt</i>	601	06-18-44
Thomas A. Clark, <i>1/Lt</i>	600	04-08-45	Billy G. Gonser, <i>1/Lt</i>	602	09-12-44
Clinton B. Clifton, <i>2/Lt</i>	600	09-10-44	Marvin L. Gooden, <i>T/Sgt</i>	603	02-03-45
Glen H. Cline, <i>S/Sgt</i>	603	01-01-45	Richard S. Goodman, <i>S/Sgt</i>	602	09-12-44
Gene F. Clinesmith, <i>2/Lt</i>	602	03-09-45	Judson F. Gray, <i>Maj</i>	603	05-24-44
Melvin Cohn, <i>T/Sgt</i>	603	11-02-44	Gregory G. Groncki, <i>S/Sgt</i>	602	07-19-44
Donald Colbert, <i>Cpl</i>	603	09-08-44	Gerald O. Gruette, <i>T/Sgt</i>	603	07-13-44
Fred Cole, <i>S/Sgt</i>	603	11-21-44	Elmer G. Gurba, <i>Sgt</i>	603	03-02-45



THE 398th MEMORIAL

John V. Gustafson, <i>2/Lt</i>	603	03-02-45
Louis Haberman, <i>1/Lt</i>	603	05-24-44
John R. Halbert, <i>F/O</i>	602	04-25-45
Ralph L. Halter, <i>1/Lt</i>	601	06-18-44
Marion B. Hamilton, <i>S/Sgt</i>	600	04-08-44
Jack Hamrick, <i>T/5</i>	814ENG	08-18-42
V.A. Hansard, Jr., <i>1/Lt</i>	600	11-25-44
Clarence H. Harper, <i>T/Sgt</i>	603	02-03-45
Leonard D. Harrison, <i>S/Sgt</i>	600	08-08-44
Franklin D. Harrod, <i>2/Lt</i>	600	12-24-44
Earl K. Hart, <i>2/Lt</i>	602	07-19-44
Kenneth S. Hastings, <i>1/Lt</i>	603	11-21-44
Dallas A. Hawkins, <i>2/Lt</i>	602	07-19-44
Herbert A. Helbig, <i>T/Sgt</i>	600	11-30-44
Ralph C. Hess, <i>S/Sgt</i>	601	07-08-44
Joe Heustess, <i>T/Sgt</i>	602	04-25-45
James F. Hochadel, <i>S/Sgt</i>	603	08-08-44
William H. Hoffman, <i>2/Lt</i>	601	05-24-44
James R. Honaker, Jr., <i>2/Lt</i>	600	02-22-45
Raymond C. Hopp, <i>2/Lt</i>	600	07-07-44
Charles Howell, <i>1/Lt</i>	603	11-21-44
Frank P. Hunter, Jr., <i>Col</i>	398HQ	01-23-45
Frank Iaconis, <i>S/Sgt</i>	601	11-26-44
John W. Ingram, <i>1/Lt</i>	601	05-24-44
Earl C. James, <i>1/Lt</i>	603	01-17-44
Robert W. Jenkins, <i>Sgt</i>	600	05-19-44

atched the passing clouds,
s across the azure blue.
e we share on earth;
ift for me and you.”

398th Killed In Action



CLIB L. JOHNSON AT NUTHAMPSTEAD

Clib L. Johnson, *T/Sgt* 603 11-21-44
 Roy Johnson, *T/Sgt* 600 08-08-44
 Donald J. Jones, *2/Lt* 600 04-10-45
 William G. Jones, *Sgt* 603 11-03-44
 Wallace E. Kasch, *S/Sgt* 600 04-18-45
 Thomas D. Kelly, *S/Sgt* 601 05-24-45
 Saul J. Kempner, *2/Lt* 600 08-12-44
 Cecil E. Kennedy, *T/Sgt* 600 08-12-44
 Charles R. Kennedy, *S/Sgt* 603 10-15-44
 Charles L. Khouri, *1/Lt* 603 10-15-44
 James P. Kiernan, *1/Lt* 603 01-17-44
 Warren L. King, *2/Lt* 603 01-01-45
 Joseph J. Kiska, *T/Sgt* 602 12-30-44
 Casimer P. Klawinski, *S/Sgt* 603 01-17-44
 Sherman S. Klein, *S/Sgt* 600 04-08-45
 Theodore A. Kline, *2/Lt* 601 04-13-45
 Albert W. Knight, *S/Sgt* 600 08-12-44
 Harry Kravif, *Capt* 601 06-18-44
 John K. Kressenberg, *1/Lt* 600 08-08-44
 Walter J. Kruse, *1/Lt* 601 07-08-44
 LeRoy Kucharski, *S/Sgt* 603 11-02-44
 Thomas A. L'Estrange, Jr., *S/Sgt* 603 02-03-45
 Marvin F. Leach, *Sgt* 602 09-12-44
 Robert W. Lehner, *1/Lt* 603 11-21-45
 Ralph H. Lentz, Jr., *1/Lt* 603 01-23-45
 Clement A. Lescale, *S/Sgt* 600 04-08-45

Charles Letts, *1/Lt* 603 01-23-45
 William J. Lewandowski, *2/Lt* 603 03-14-45
 John Leydon, *1/Lt* 603 11-21-44
 Loren S. Liby, *Cpl* 600 09-10-44
 William G. Logan, *S/Sgt* 603 02-03-45
 John A. Loomis, Jr., *1/Lt* 602 07-19-44
 William H. Love, *2/Lt* 603 03-02-45
 Dane Lovelace, *1/Lt* 600 07-16-44
 Clinton L. Loveland, *T/Sgt* 601 06-18-44
 Norinan K. Lovingfoss, *1/Lt* 602 11-10-44
 Marvin Y. Luckie, Jr., *S/Sgt* 603 02-03-45
 James E. Luna, *2/Lt* 600 02-22-45
 John S. MacArthur, *1/Lt* 603 08-04-44
 Thomas Manos, *F/O* 603 01-02-45
 Robert Mayfield, *T/Sgt* 603 01-23-45
 James W. McAfee, *2/Lt* 600 04-10-45
 Paul McCain, *1/Lt* 601 07-08-44
 Donald J. McCorkindale, *2/Lt* 603 11-21-44
 Charles B. McLean, *S/Sgt* 603 07-16-44
 William C. Meyran, *1/Lt* 603 10-15-44
 Walter E. Miller, *S/Sgt* 603 11-21-44
 James R. Mitchell, *2/Lt* 601 01-20-45
 Edward J. Mizerski, *S/Sgt* 603 01-17-44
 Carlton C. Moore, Jr., *Capt* 603 10-15-44
 Uvaldo G. Morales, *S/Sgt* 601 05-24-44
 Edward L. Mullendore, *S/Sgt* 602 09-12-44
 George C. Munroe, Jr., *2/Lt* 600 04-08-45
 Paul A. Nachtwey, *2/Lt* 602 12-29-44
 Herbert H. Newman, *1/Lt* 603 11-02-44
 Ira L. O'Neal, *2/Lt* 600 05-19-44
 Richard T. Osteen, *1/Lt* 600 08-08-44
 Harry Ostrow, *2/Lt* 603 03-02-45
 Peter L. Paget, *2/Lt* 603 01-17-44
 George C. Papajohn, *S/Sgt* 601 07-08-44
 Leo R. Parr, Jr., *Sgt* 603 03-14-45
 Milton Passmore, *S/Sgt* 603 11-21-44
 Max W. Paxton, *S/Sgt* 600 04-10-45
 Ernest L. Pennell, *S/Sgt* 600 05-30-44
 Anthony J. Perry, *S/Sgt* 603 11-02-44
 Victor C. Petrauskas, *S/Sgt* 603 10-15-44
 Bruce E. Phelps, *2/Lt* 603 02-03-45
 Milford Pinson, *S/Sgt* 602 10-28-44
 Kenneth J. Plantz, *Sgt* 603 03-02-45
 Perry E. Powell, *1/Lt* 603 02-03-45
 Thomas S. Pozder, *S/Sgt* 601 11-26-44
 Joseph M. Price, *T/Sgt* 601 11-26-44
 Elvin R. Prichard, *S/Sgt* 603 01-17-44
 Virgil Register, *S/Sgt* 603 11-21-44
 Paul H. Rich, Jr., *1/Lt* 603 11-21-44
 Richard Rimmer, *S/Sgt* 601 11-26-44
 George T. Roby, *T/Sgt* 602 10-28-44
 Howard Rogers, *T/Sgt* 603 01-23-45
 Arthur Roit, *S/Sgt* 600 04-10-45
 Benjamin G. Rolfe, *2/Lt* 601 11-26-44
 Michael A. Romano, *S/Sgt* 600 08-08-44
 John D. Rose, *2/Lt* 601 05-24-44
 Charles N. Rosenblum, *Sgt* 601 09-12-44
 Lowrey O. Ross, *T/4* 830ENG 10-04-45
 Burton H. Roth, *2/Lt* 600 05-10-45
 Jack E. Rouch, *Sgt* 600 04-08-45
 John D. Sauer, *2/Lt* 603 09-08-44

William J. Scales, Jr., *2/Lt* 601 12-24-44
 Dale J. Schaupp, *Sgt* 600 05-19-44
 Arthur P. Schmidt, *S/Sgt* 601 11-26-44
 Murray J. Schultz, *2/Lt* 603 08-04-44
 Charles J. Searl, *1/Lt* 600 08-12-44
 Phillip A. Seltzer, *2/Lt* 602 10-28-44
 Harry Shafer, *Cpl* 602 05-08-44
 William Shumate, *S/Sgt* 603 01-23-45
 Charles L. Simons, *Sgt* 601 08-08-44
 Lewis G. Slade, *2/Lt* 602 10-28-44
 Leonard W. Snyder, *2/Lt* 603 03-14-45
 James H. Somers, *Sgt* 602 09-12-44
 William R.E. Stegell, *S/Sgt* 600 03-18-45
 Charles H. Stein, *S/Sgt* 600 11-30-44
 Robert A. Stewart, *S/Sgt* 602 12-30-44
 Sidor P. Stizzo, *S/Sgt* 603 05-24-44
 Maynard Stravinski, *2/Lt* 603 01-02-45
 Joseph F. Stritch, *T/Sgt* 602 02-03-45
 Robert R. Stuart, *2/Lt* 603 11-21-44
 Gordon Sudborough, *T/Sgt* 602 07-19-44
 Giles L. Teague, *1/Lt* 602 12-30-44
 Andrew R. Thomas, *1/Lt* 603 03-15-45
 Thomas L. Thompson, *1/Lt* 600 05-30-44
 Raymond A. Thornton, *2/Lt* 601 07-08-44
 Felix H. Tichenor, *Sgt* 600 04-10-45
 Richard S. Trantham, *Sgt* 600 09-10-44
 William S. Tull, *S/Sgt* 603 10-15-44
 Francis E. Tuttle, *S/Sgt* 603 07-13-44
 George N. Van Luven, *Sgt* 602 09-12-44
 William J. Vanderlick, *1/Lt* 603 10-15-44
 Paul W. Voehringer, *1/Lt* 603 05-24-44
 Arnold M. Volkay, *2/Lt* 602 10-28-44
 Warren J. Wade, *2/Lt* 601 09-08-44
 Thomas D. Wadleigh, *Cpl* 600 09-10-44
 Charles F. Wagner, *Sgt* 602 04-11-45
 Charles Walker, *S/Sgt* 602 04-25-45
 John P. Walker, *1/Lt* 602 12-30-44
 Samuel T. Walker, Jr., *2/Lt* 603 02-03-45
 Edwin M. Wallace, *M/Sgt* 602 01-10-45
 Raymond A. Wallace, *2/Lt* 603 07-13-44
 Lee C. Walsh, *2/Lt* 600 08-12-44
 R.C. Warkentin, *S/Sgt* 603 07-17-44
 John G. Weibel, *Maj* 398HQ 06-18-44
 William E. Wells, *1/Lt* 600 04-08-45
 Theodore West, *2/Lt* 603 07-13-44
 Roger J. Weum, *1/Lt* 600 11-30-44
 Goodrich C. White, Jr., *2/Lt* 602 09-12-44
 Rufus White, *S/Sgt* 603 03-14-45
 Bill Wickens, *T/Sgt* 600 04-08-45
 Luther Willis, *T/Sgt* 601 05-24-44
 George Wilson, *2/Lt* 601 07-08-44
 Orville M. Wilson, *S/Sgt* 600 08-12-44
 William H. Wilson, *S/Sgt* 600 08-08-44
 William J. Wilson, *Sgt* 603 07-07-44
 Jack B. Withrow, *S/Sgt* 602 02-03-45
 Ray R. Woltman, *1/Lt* 603 02-03-45
 Marlin Woodward, *S/Sgt* 603 05-24-44
 Byron O. Young, *S/Sgt* 602 04-25-45
 John L. Zasa, *S/Sgt* 600 11-30-44
 Urie H. Zook, *S/Sgt* 600 02-22-45

“Their wings of silver touched the passing clouds,
made soft, white trails across the azure blue.
But not for them this life we share on earth;
they sacrificed that gift for me and you.”



THE 398th MEMORIAL AT NUTHAMPSTEAD

News From Camp Lucky Strike:

"I'm Going To Give You A Concise Summary of What Happened To Me"

BY PAUL KRUP

Radio Operator, McAfee Crew, 600th

MAY 21, 1945 – I'm in a little camp on the west coast of France called, "Camp Lucky Strike."

I have a nice, 60-day furlough coming to me as soon as I am shipped back to the States. This camp is about 42 miles from the port of LeHarve.

I have been here going on 11 days, and I have been unfortunate to be in the wrong block. It seems that some of the fellows have been getting out of here in less than four days. Hopefully, I should be processed and on a ship in three or four days.

Censoring has been lifted, so I'm going to give you a concise summary of what happened to me the last two months.

On April 10, we were setting out on our 16th mission. Phil Krieg, our co-pilot, flew with another crew and their co-pilot, Donald Jones, flew with us. It was his first and last mission.

Our target that day was the SS Barracks in Oranienberg, near Berlin. The Russians were moving towards Berlin and they wanted this place taken out.

We were on the bomb run when we were attacked by a German jet called ME-262. His cannon shells hit us in the left waist, opening a hole big enough to drive a truck through. Felix Tichenor got his left leg and arm shot off by the exploding projectiles.

The oxygen and electrical systems were both shot out. We were at 25,000 feet when our toggler, Frank Lewis, unloaded our bombs. I made my way to the cockpit to tell our pilot, Jim McAfee, what happened in the waist. I tried to arrange an emergency intercom, but it didn't work, so I started back to the radio room.

While still on the cat walk in the bomb bay we were hit again. No. 3 engine was on fire and flames were pouring into the bomb bay. When I got into the radio room there was another explosion and the ship went into a dive.

The walls caved in and the floor gave way and I was underneath it all. I thought "this is it" and started to pray. I couldn't move. Not at all. Then all of a sudden the plane leveled off and I got up and found my chute. I ripped off my flak suit and put the chute on.

It was then I noticed Haskell Boyes, our ball turret gunner, diving out of the waist door. He and Robert Engard, the "spot jammer", apparently had tried giving Tichenor first aid before jumping themselves.

I looked for Tish's chute, but apparently it had been blown out of the ship at the first hit. I then went out the waist door, and none too soon. In just a few seconds the plane exploded.

I look around and saw four other chutes. These would have belonged to Engard, Boyes, Lewis and Max Paxton, tail gunner.

I believe Paxton was killed on the ground.

McAfee, Jones, Tichenor and engineer Art Roit never got out before the plane blew up.

I landed in a tree, in a stumpy clearing that once was woods. I climbed up the tree, unbuckled my chute and slid to the ground. I crawled on the ground to some marsh grass and lay there for a few minutes before heading deeper into the swamp. I could hear voices and see civilians and soldiers with guns all around. One guy almost stepped on me, but didn't see me.

I then crawled to a brook and followed it to a bridge over a road. On the other side of the bridge I ran into a German lieutenant from the Wehrmacht. He asked

me if I was armed. I shook my head and said, "no".

Then a lot of angry civilians came at me, but this lieutenant chased them away. He took me to a first-aid station where my face was bandaged. The left side of my face, forehead, nose, lips and eye brows were burned ... and I had a nose bleed. I looked pretty messy but the burns were only second degree and some of the blisters were broken.

Anyway, they are all healed now and my eye lashes are growing in again. I have a skin discoloration over my left eye which will soon go away.

At the aid station I ran across Boyes. His left arm was blown off above the elbow. I found out from a kid who was evacuated from the hospital in Berlin to our Stalag (PW Camp) that Boyes couldn't be moved because he was too weak from loss of blood.

I was taken to a German airfield at Finow. I was there for three days and taken to Staaken, an airfield in the suburbs of Berlin. We stayed there for a few days and then taken to a PW camp at Luckenwalde. This is where I saw our first American prisoners.

The Russian Army came on April 22 and the camp was liberated.

After five days I took off from camp with five other guys – two fighter pilots, two fellows who had been prisoners for 27 months and Lewis, our toggler.

I acted as interpreter as we walked, hitch-hiked and ate with the Russians for the next two days. We crossed the bridge at the Elbe River at Wittenberg and were on our way towards the American lines when a Russian boy on a bike told us that an American mechanized scouting patrol had entered the last village.

We hot-footed back to the village and joined up with them. They gave us guns and ammunition. Soon we had captured over 100 German soldiers. They surrendered without a fight.

Finally, we ended up in Halle, home of Georing's famous air school. From there we went to Merseburg by truck and then we were flown here to Camp Lucky Strike.

They are six days late in processing us. Normal Army SNAFU, I guess. However, it's the best and most efficient army over here and none can compare with it.

We are getting good food, like fresh eggs, chicken and steak. We are on a hospital diet plus 10% extra food while here.

FORMATIONS

April 10, 1945

LEAD SQUADRON (600)

DAILY

Hahn

Hoelzel Maudsley

Sheffer Hultman

Runnion

Watson Idso

McAfee Bischoff

LOW SQUADRON (602)

PAYNE

Lamiell

Miller Godfrey

Cochrane Wintersteen

Markham

Coffee Elwell

Coville Ferguson

Heathcote

HIGH SQUADRON (601)

TAYLOR

Mills

Mundhenke Keathley

Jauregui Bornstedt

Traeder

Vallish Green

Starkey Hernden

50 PLUS AND STORIES

BY WES EATCHEL

*Fifty years ago and more I set upon a dream.
To which I fashioned fantasies.
I crafted in my mind intrinsic skills,
Portending victories*

*At eighteen I played the game.
I walked the straight and narrow path.
I was higher than the clouds.
As cadet withstood the wrath.*

*A fallen angel I became.
Cursed forever to the ground.
Not for long, self-pity I abhor.
I was lost but I was found.*

*Those silver streaks among the skies
Came closer to my view.
Not one but two and maybe more.
Flew together in that blue.*

*So I found another way
to lift me off the ground.
Those seventeens looked mighty good
to anywhere they're bound.*

*Fate had smiled on me again.
This time I would not fail.
I'd conquer every obstacle.
By d— I would not fail.*

*All those pre-flights and instructions
Were my cup of tea.
I'd dream of shooting 50's
And revel to be free.*

*I'd even feel at home
In that August desert sun.
Yes, I'd even volunteer
For an extra gunnery run.*

*It was off to Rapid City
Where it was hard to think of war
But one could vent anger at the blizzards
Then revel in Deadwood and Rushmore.*

*But a gunner's real passion's
An enemy in his sights.
From a target towing sleeve
To those camera mounted flights.*

*It was hours of turret training.
But the pilot would prevail,
When he said he wanted me
to protect him in the tail.*

*The tail's a lonely place.
You only see where you have been.
The clouds that intercept a group,
Awake a fear if buffeting begins.*

*Frustration had its day.
Transition completed school.
Topeka was the rainbow,
A 17G and shining jewel.*

*We flew the mighty ocean,
From the US to Labrador, to Iceland, to Wales*

*Then abandoned that shiny aircraft,
And we're told the Iron Horse now prevails.*

*Nuthampstead was for us
A very funny sounding place.
Though station 131
And 398th was no disgrace.*

*We very soon became acquainted
With the heroes of the war.
To those who had preceded us
Perhaps a month or more.*

*The regimen to follow
Seemed strange to us indeed.
For some were flying missions
While others' sleep would intercede.*

*The Seventeens on the tarmac
Began to fall silent to the war.
The troops were in the Fatherland
With weather to abhor.*

*But there was one last mission
Somehow it had to be.
For the boys who flew to Pilsen
For some into eternity.*

*For us the last to combat.
The last mission had been flown.
The years of expectation
Was a one-way ticket Home.*

*The Luftwaffe and the Wehrmacht
Were to be no more.
The Mighty Eighth was bloodied
But the victory we had bore.*

*Back across the Atlantic
The B-17's we would fly.
To find a more sophisticated plane,
As B 29's would fill the sky.*

*The Japs were in retreat,
As training got underway.
The atomic bomb was dropped,
Which made the airman's day.*

*This time the war was over.
The last training flight had been flown.
The only aircraft we cared about,
Was the one that'd take us home.*

*Now those fifty years have flown,
On winds unlike before.
And the sons of tailgunners,
Only read the tales of war.*

*All may seem like heroes,
As stories may portray.
But those who almost were,
Must confess they missed the fray.*

*If consolation is required,
By those of us who tried.
Let us ever be so grateful,
For the Mighty Eighth who died.*



WES EATCHEL

Wes Eatchel didn't make it to Nuthampstead in time for even one mission, but he was there long enough to get the "feel" of the air war and the mystique of B-17's. And, more important, was able to put his thoughts down in the form of poetry. West has written hundreds of poems since "those" days. He lives in Murray, UT 84107. He was on the Alfred Warren crew of the 603rd Squadron.



BILL COLE



HARRY GRAY

Bill Cole of the Ray Armor 601 crew came to the reunion with his vintage A-2 jacket, although zipping it up was out of the question.

Harry Gray of the 602 Ferguson crew came with a spanking new, fitted, goat-skin A-2, replete with hand painted designs on front and back.

Both caught looks of admiration.

A TALE OF TWO BOOKS

BY TONY CLARK
Saffron Walden, England

War torn and frayed, dusty and forlorn,
but well remembered ...

As I write, I see two books. Not best sellers, glossy jacketed and recently purchased. These dowdy, dog-eared and hand-written books are beyond price, unique and a true reflection of men in adversity ...

The FIRST BOOK – It was customary, in days just before the first world war, for young ladies to keep a bound book for friends and family to pen greetings, poems, sketches and anecdotes. When war was declared in 1914 this book became an important memory bank of names and events from home and from the trenches in the fields Picardy and Flanders. Personal little messages, humorous poems and sayings and all of them epitaphs of those war torn days –

*God Bless our wives,
They fill our lives,
With little bees and honey
They soothe life's shocks
They mend our socks,
But don't they spend the money ... !!*

or

*Oh, could I find in utmost space,
A place for hope and for prayer a place,
Mine were not suit for a glimmering prize,
In the chosen seats of the upper skies,
No grand ministrations, no throned height,
In the midst most intense of unspeakable
light,
I would roam through the ages all alone,
If the Army would only send me home,
Naked I would crawl through briar and
thicket,*

*If I thought they'd give me my blinking ticket
France 1916*

It is hard to believe that in the July 1916 battle of the Somme 20,000 young men perished before breakfast on the first day whilst "walking" across "No Man's Land" and into the waiting German machine guns. This battle continued for 4 months and a total of 1,200,000 were killed just to take a few acres of land, which were re-taken by the Germans a year later.

Compare that slaughter with 1944 D-Day casualties on Normandy beaches of 21,000. How easy it is to dismiss this carnage, but when each one is personalized by reading a little "billet doux" from a trench or beach under fire or perhaps a note written in haste before a flight or journey overseas, then the enormity of these men's sacrifice becomes apparent when turning the leaves of this book.

The SECOND BOOK – Is different, but yet the same. Another war. Another lifetime. A hand-written ledger inscribed thus ...

**DUTY CONTROL, Officers Log
January 1945 ... Station 131 ...**

The random entries in the log bring back the atmosphere of war. A technical jargon which only those who participated knew the key ...

*04.15 – Lead Sq. Briefing
05.35 – Regular Sq.
06.15 – Attended Briefing, 38 ships.
R/W 23 Cross Wind from the right 20-25
mph
Delay YY Q.F.E 29-36 E.T.R 15.32
09.10 – E/Q 1st A/C off*

*A/H Last off at 09.52
15.44 – 1st Op A/C landed
16.25 – Last Down E/T
37 A/C Down 1 Outstanding
18.30 – Off Watch ...*

In those few hours Station 131 fulfills its wartime function. Men have faced death and come safe home. But one aircraft is missing. This is the price of WAR.

Somewhere a crew is facing its destiny, whatever it may be. And those cryptic notes in a battered ledger are their memorial. Little mention in the book is there of the blackest days – 23rd January (the loss of Col. Hunter) or April 13th (the decimation of 601 Squadron by premature detonation of salvaged RDX bombs).

Then on until page 100 the entry which everyone had been awaiting.

*2nd June 1945 1200 hrs ...
Field Officially Closed ...
Lt. H. Alpern AC*

This book remained closed for 25 years until a chance remark – a sequence of events and a journey half-way around the world brought it to light. It tells a heroic story in its own right. Not a history or a personalized view but a factual day-by-day report which would be as Churchill had promised in 1940 ... "Blood, Tears, Toil and Sweat" ... "until Victory is won".

Each of these Two Books dramatically illustrates a story of sacrifice, courage and conviction. But yet, in the midst of the carnage of war, a little humour, a wry smile and confidence in a job well done ...

Letters, Letters

"Thank you for your letter of May 30 and photograph taken at Litice, Czech Republic. I shall prize it as a memento of a very special occasion in my 27 years as a representative of the U.S. government abroad. It was a pleasure meeting the veterans of the 398th Bomb Group who fought in the air war against Nazi Germany."

Leonardo Williams, American Embassy, Prague, Czech Republic

"I am currently restoring a 1943 Dodge WC54 ambulance of the same type that was used at Nuthampstead during WWII. I would like to make contact with any 398th member who drove one of these or had anything to do with them. And especially would like to have a close-up photo."

Steve Pena, Stotfold, Herts SG5 4BX, England

"I am glad to hear that your Pilsen tour members became familiar not only with my country, but also with the warm relationship and love that we Czechs have for America. I am pleased to know that the 1945 LIFE magazine photos I sent to you will be given to the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum."

Ladislav Kohout, diplom.technik, Bolzanova 24, Plzen, Czech Republic

"I want to pay a special tribute to one of your members, Robert D. Hale, who died earlier this year. He was my father-in-law, but more importantly, he was always so proud of what the

398th accomplished in WWII. It was the highlight of his fine USAF career. I am an AF Captain (vintage 1960) and we launched missiles from Cape Canaveral. But my son and I still build old B-17 models and consider you folks our real heroes. God bless you all for keeping this country free! Keep the memories alive."

Roland Toups, Baton Rouge, LA 70821

"Enclosed is my check for the 1966 dues. And I would add that I enjoy every issue of FLAK NEWS. I admit to having forgotten lots of things I experienced on my 34 missions with the Bob Nelson crew. We were some of the first people rotated back home in September of '44. Thanks again."

Cecil Robson, Billings, MT 59102

"My father, who has the same name as me, died earlier this year. I have read his FLAK NEWS for several years and wish to continue his/our membership on a lifetime basis. My sincere thanks and gratitude to all the 398th and everyone who made my freedom in 1940 (when I was born) a reality."

**William T. Priestley, Rolling Meadows, IL
60008-2319**

"I am so very proud to have played a small part in the success of the 398th. I was in the 860th Chemical Company and our men developed the sky finder smoke bomb for the lead planes."

Maurice Poss, Tomah, WI 54660-1313

BRIEF-things

Eli and Milan Knezovich had many emotional moments visiting with Maria Hunter and Fred Gonzales at the Charleston reunion; they are half-brothers of William Beatovich, who was among those killed with Colonel Hunter and crew January 23, 1945; they were located by Charles Anderson, a friend of Beatovich's ... among those receiving applause when introduced at the reunion were the English war brides and children and grandchildren of veterans ... one visitor from England was there, Gordon Aldrige, and he learned to say, "y'all come to Nuthampstead next June" ... the new 398th roster was a hugh success, many commenting on the cross-index feature ... and treasurer Ralph Hall wishes to thank all those who contributed toward the publication costs ... Frank Lewis, one of the survivors on the McAfee crew (see Page 8) had withdrawn from his dramatic war experiences for over 50 years until located by his pilot's nephew; FLAK NEWS even had him on the Taps List; he has his own marvelous story on the bail out, capture, escape, evasion and ultimate return to the main gate at Station 131 ... this will be told in a future issue ... if you can match a 398th nose art name with the plane's serial number and squadron, please send to FLAK NEWS ... one of the many new air museums cropping up around the country, and displaying B-17 memorabilia, is at Vancouver, Washington. Our own Don Generaux, 601 pilot, is on the board of directors ... the very first SAS trans-Atlantic commercial air crossing was made 50 years ago by a Swedish SAAB rebuilt B-17; it carried a crew of eight, one ton of mail and one passenger; it took 24 hours, two stops and one overnight ... add Robert C. Carter, Ed Looker, Al Turney and Wilber Timm to the list of "Lifetime" members who continue to pay annual dues ... FLAK NEWS has received many envelopes decorated with the VJ commemorative poster stamp to bring attention to the proposed Post Office stamp rescinded by the White House last year (on Dec. 7, thank you) ... several copies of the Dutch language "Bulletin Airwar 1939-45" are available on request from FLAK NEWS (I can't read them) ... it was suggested (in jest) that the members of the England tour group, when visiting in Yorkshire next June, be allowed to witness the birth of a calf (as in the TV series "All Creatures Great & Small") ... to which Wilfrid Dimsdale, Friends of the 398th chairman, replied: "Good idea, we'll try to arrange it" ... Barbara Fish, who will lead the tour again as Travel Consultant, has reserved 10 places on a special 8-day tour of France to include the Normandy landing sites; this will be prior to the June 10 arrival of the main party in London ... the first person to submit his \$300 reservation fee was Richard Knerr, who flew with the Gieryn crew, but who discovered the 398th Association only this year ... Barbara would like to hear by Christmas time from the others who have indicated an interest in the tour ... Jack Lee would like to thank all the Charleston attendees for the invitation to speak at the Welcome Banquet (which he did so beautifully and to the audience's delight) ... to Stan Gabriel of the 603rd: the Presidential Unit Citation was issued to the First Bombardment Wing (of which the 398th was a member along with the 91st and 381st); however, the 398th was not a member at the time of the award of 11 January 1944, the date of a mission to Oschersleben, Germany ... Chuck Lindsay gave FLAK NEWS a 603 Squadron history book, published in Rapid City, so now the editor is looking for similar books on the other three squadrons; Chuck was a barber over there and has the photos to prove it ... that super photo of a B-17 shadow on the Arizona desert in the July FLAK NEWS was taken by Randy Stange, son of 603 navigator Ray Stange ... chaplain James Duvall missed the Charleston reunion due to health reasons, but was pleased to hear that Col. Berryhill was there (both are 87 years of age, same as Col. Hunter would have been) ... construction of the American Air Museum at Duxford, England, has begun, thanks to a jackpot full of money from the English lottery ... the "Friends of the 398th" hope to lay hold of an area in it for their Station 131 Nissen huts and memorabilia.

398th Bomb Group PX

	<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Enter Total Cost</u>
Cap - Fits All Sizes	_____	\$8.00 each _____
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Jackets - Navy Blue	_____	\$25.00 each _____
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Sweat Shirts - White, Light Blue	_____	\$10.00 each _____
(Children Sizes M & L, B-17 on Front)		
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Bumper Sticker - 398th Bomb Group	_____	\$1.00 each _____
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Membership Plaque -	_____	\$25.00 each _____
(Specify Regular or Lifetime)		
B-17 Lapel Pin - Specify Silver or Gold	_____	\$5.00 each _____
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(For pierced ears only)		
Photo (Control Tower) - Station #131	_____	\$2.00 each _____
Photo (398th Memorial) - Post Card Size	_____	\$2.00 each _____
Photo (Aluminum Overcast) -	_____	\$5.00 each _____
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Bolo Ties - Group Logo	_____	\$4.00 each _____
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Neck Tie - American Flag	_____	\$22.00 each _____
Folding Umbrella - Red with White B-17	_____	\$18.00 each _____
Beach Towel - White with Black B-17	_____	\$18.00 each _____
Barrel Bag with picture of B-17	_____	\$17.00 each _____
<i>Cost Of Items Ordered</i>	\$ _____	
<i>Delivery And Handing Add \$3.00,</i>		
<i>or \$4.00 if Order is Over \$20.00.</i>	\$ _____	
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Name _____

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Make checks payable, in U.S. funds, to the
 "398th Bomb Group Association PX" c/o:
 Joe Joseph, Defiance, OH 43512-8854

Christmas orders must be received by November 15.
 (Please, no telephone orders.)

Dues Time Again For East Coast

It's dues time for the folks who live in several East Coast states. Dues are still \$5.00 and a notice should be found in every FLAK NEWS sent to the following states -

Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, DC.

Also included in the quarterly dues program are those members living offshore.