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601



603



600

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

VOL. 12 NO. 2

FLAK NEWS

APRIL 1997

## 398th Combo: Music Provided Common Bond At Nuthampstead

If there was one "common bond" between the divergent troops that made up the 398th Bomb Group — or any military outfit, for that matter — it was music.

Play it, sing it, write it, enjoy it, murder it ...

In music, anyone and everyone can get involved.

There was, of course, the likes of Glenn Miller who came to entertain at Station 131. And there were dances at the base and a "choir" at Chaplain Duvall's church services.

And now and again a gentleman with colonel's wings on his shoulder could be heard tinkling the piano ivories at the Officers' Club. That would be Col. Frank P. Hunter, Jr., commanding officer.

Col. Hunter was no novice in music, having been a member of the chorus at West Point during his Army cadet days.

Chaplain Duvall had an entourage of officers and enlisted men who assisted him in the services, one being the late Bill Comstock, for 20 years the president of the 398th.

The task of lining up talent for singing at the services fell on Dick Frazier, then a 602 pilot and today a member of the group's board of directors. For many years he has been identified as a church musician and choir leader.

On other occasions he joined Bill Priestley's little combo to play Dixieland and impromptu jazz. Priestley, 601 squadron ground executive officer, was no novice in music, having played guitar and cornet with the likes of Benny Goodman and Bix Beiderbeck.

*Continued on Page 9.*



**IMPROMPTU JAZZ** was played by this 398th combo at Station 131 when the musicians were not engaged in more important matters relating to the war effort. Left to right are Dick Frazier on bass, Bill Priestley on guitar, Raymond Lucier on saxophone, Phil Swan on trumpet, and Jim Ladue on clarinet.



**Betty and Louis Stoffer**  
Spokane Reunion Hosts

## Time Now For Reunion Plans

As usual, your FLAK NEWS is filled with stories of our yesteryears. But there is also a good bit about our tomorrows.

One of these would be the England tour in 1998, covered on Page 8. Lots of time to prepare for this one, even if "thinking about it" would be prudent even now.

But of immediate importance is the annual reunion, to be held in Spokane July 16-17-18-19, 1997. Pages 2 and 3 are devoted to reunion information, including the Official Registration form.

Members are urged to make their plans even now, as July will be upon us very quickly.

# THE SPOKANE REUNION

July 16-17-18-19, 1997

## REUNION FACTS

**REUNION CHAIRMAN:** Louis Stoffer, Centralia, WA98531-4529. Wife Betty. **HEADQUARTERS HOTEL:** Cavanaugh's Inn at the Park, W 303 North River Dr., Spokane, WA 99201. Telephone 509-326-8000. Hotel is located about one mile north of I-90 near downtown Spokane. Drive north on Washington St., across the Spokane River. Rates \$75.00 in Main Wing; \$89.00 for Executive Wing, and \$98.00 for Parkside Tower. Hotel reservations forms included in FLAK NEWS. You may also call, toll free, for reservations, 1-800-THE-INNS (843-4667). Ask for 398th rates.

**BACKUP HOTELS:** Cavanaugh's nearby River Inn is available for \$62.00 and Cavanaugh's 4th Avenue (downtown) is available for \$60.00. They also can be reserved by calling 1-800-THE-INNS (843-4667).

**TOURS:** All tours will be handled by Group Coordinators, Spokane, WA. Julie Saucier, manager. Coaches will depart from the hotel parking lot.

**AIR SERVICE:** Spokane is serviced by Alaska, Continental, Delta, Horizon, Northwest, and United Air Lines. Complimentary van service to Cavanaugh's Inns is available. Call Telephone located near baggage claim.

**GOLF:** Golfing starting times have been secured at The Creek at Qualchan course. The 6,180 yard course is 10 minutes from Cavanaugh's Inn at the Park. Green fees are \$22.00. Carts are available as is a full snack bar. Starting times begin at 8:00 a.m. July 16, 17, and 18. Golfers can car pool at the Inn at 6:30 a.m. or drive independently. Directions to the course will be available at Registration.

**CAR RENTAL:** Avis Rent-A-Car has been designated as the official car rental agency for the Spokane reunion. Special rates will be quoted to 398th Bomb Group members. Call 1-800-331-1600. Our special "AWD" number is J-945346. Cars are available at the Spokane International Airport only.

**SPECIAL DIETS:** Requests for special-diet banquet meals should be made with reunion chairman Louis Stoffer. Include your requirements with your Registration Form. Or call him at 360-736-5402.

**REGISTRATION FORM:** You may clip out the form on Page 3 or make a photocopy. After an audit, Louis Stoffer will return a copy of your registration.

**REUNION PACKETS:** All tickets ordered for tours and banquets will be in your Reunion Packet at the Registration Desk in the Audubon Room at Cavanaugh's Inn at the Park.

**BANQUET SEATING:** Tickets for the Thursday, July 17, and Saturday, July 19, banquets must be validated and stamped with a Table Number. These should be secured at the time of Registration.

## Your 398th Bomb Group Officers

<b>President</b> Wallace (Wally) Blackwell Rockville, MD	Harold D. (Hal) Weekley Mableton, GA	<b>Memorial Fund</b> W.A. McLaughlin, Chair Mineral Wells, TX
<b>Vice President</b> T.J. (Ted) Johnston Seattle, WA	Dale Brown Colorado Springs, CO	Al Turney Vallejo, CA
<b>Secretary</b> Harold Stallcup Forest City, NC	Ben Core Ft. Smith, AR	James Haas Perry, IA
<b>Treasurer</b> Ralph Hall New Bedford, MA	<b>Unit Contact</b> George Hilliard Cincinnati, OH	Marilyn Gibb Hudson, FL
<b>Board of Directors</b> James R. (Dick) Frazier Newalla, OK	<b>Group Historian</b> W.E. (Bill) Frazier Sunnyvale, CA	<b>Public Relations</b> Allen Ostrom Seattle, WA
	<b>PX Officer</b> Joe Joseph Defiance, OH	

## AVAILABLE TOURS

**GROWING ATTRACTIONS TOUR:** Wednesday, July 16, 1:00 p.m. A great way to get the "feel" of the Spokane region. Travel to Green Bluff where many orchards are located Stop at a fruit ranch for fresh apple pie and a Fruit Loop Express ride through the orchards. Then to Cliff House, once owned by an inventor, now the home of Arbor Crest Winery. This national historic landmark is perched on a rock 450 feet above the river and gives a panoramic view of the countryside. Arbor Crest has produced several award-winning wines. Coach loads up at 12:45 p.m., returns at 4:00 p.m.

**FAIRCHILD SURVIVAL SCHOOL TOUR:** Wednesday, July 16, 12:30 p.m. Only a limited number of seats available for this trip to Fairchild Air Force Base to hear about the AF's school on how air crew members can survive if shot down over wilderness or enemy territory. Coach loads up at 12:15 p.m., returns at 3:30 p.m.

**LASER LIGHT SHOW:** Wednesday, July 16, 5:30 p.m. This is one of the world's largest laser light shows on the waters of the world's largest dam — Grand Coulee. After dinner at Coulee, you will see a spectacular one-hour long show done with argon and krypton beams creating animated images on the dam, using the dam's water as a screen. The show is accompanied by music and narration about the area and its history. You will see an eagle flying down to catch a fish and the explosion of Mt. Saint Helens. Coach loads up at 5:00 p.m., returns at about 12:30 a.m.

**AGE OF ELEGANCE TOUR:** Thursday, July 17, 9:00 a.m. A great way to see Spokane and learn of its history, historic sites, and attractions. You will visit the (Bing) Crosbyana Room at Gonzaga University. Then tour the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, authentic Japanese Garden, and Manito Park's French Renaissance Garden. And much more. Coach loads up at 8:45 a.m. and returns at 12:00 noon. (Note: the group business meeting starts at 2:00 p.m.)

**TEA AT ANGELICA'S:** Thursday, July 17, 1:30 p.m. This one is for the ladies while the men are at their business meeting. See some of the fabulous mansions designed by Kirkland Cutter at the turn of the century. Enjoy tea and dessert at Angelica's, a Cutter designed home which is now a bed and breakfast. Coach loads up at 1:15 p.m., returns at 4:00 p.m.

**SILVERWOOD THEME PARK:** Friday, July 19, 11:00 a.m. A day of fun at a Disneyland-like park in the north Idaho woods. Ride a narrow gauge steam train, a corkscrew roller coaster, log flume ride, and antique carousel. See a Theme Park performance in the old-time movie theater, visit the old saloon and see a show at the ice arena. Much more. Coach loads up at 10:45 a.m., returns at 5:00 p.m.

**LAKE COEUR d'ALENE CRUISE/LUNCH:** Friday, July 19, 10:00 a.m. Coach to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, then board a boat for a cruise on this beautiful northern Idaho lake. Cruise past the new CDA golf course featuring a floating golf green (\$130 for 18 holes). Time for broasted chicken lunch before debarking for a walk on the boardwalk or shopping downtown. Coach loads up at 9:30 a.m., returns at 3:00 p.m.

**SILVER MOUNTAIN GONDOLA/LUNCH:** Saturday, July 20, 9:00 a.m. This is a breathtaking coach ride through some of Idaho's north woods and historic mining areas near Kellogg. The old Bunker Hill Mine no longer operates there, but there is a gondola ride to the top of Silver Mountain. It's a spectacular 15-minute ride as you rise 3,300 vertical feet to an alpine restaurant. Here you will have lunch as you overlook three states and Canada. Coach loads up at 8:30 a.m., returns at 3:00 p.m.

# OFFICIAL REGISTRATION FORM

398th Bomb Group Memorial Association 14th Annual Reunion  
Spokane, Washington July 16-19, 1997

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN JULY 1, 1997

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ WIFE \_\_\_\_\_ SQD. \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP+4 \_\_\_\_\_

NAMES OF OTHERS IN PARTY. PLEASE PRINT FOR NAME TAGS

## WEDNESDAY, July 16 —

Golf	6:30 AM	Meet in Lobby	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Registration	12:00 PM to 5:00 PM	Audubon Room		
Growing Attractions	1:00 PM to 4:00 PM	Coach Tour	\$24.00 x _____	\$ _____
Fairchild Survival School	12:30 PM to 3:30 PM	Coach Tour	\$10.00 x _____	\$ _____
Laser Light Show (Grand Coulee Dam)	5:30 PM to 12:30 AM	Coach Tour	\$42.00 x _____	\$ _____
Board Officers Meeting	7:00 PM	Finch Room		

## THURSDAY, July 17 —

Golf	6:30 AM	Meet in Lobby	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Registration	9:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Audubon Room		
Age of Elegance Tour	9:00 AM to 12:00 PM	Coach Tour	\$19.00 x _____	\$ _____
Tea at Angelica's	1:30 PM to 4:00 PM	Coach Tour	\$18.00 x _____	\$ _____
Group Business Meeting	2:00 PM to 4:00 PM	Riverfront Ballroom		
No Host Bar	6:00 PM	Riverfront Ballroom		
Welcome Banquet (Table reservations required)	7:00 PM	Riverfront Ballroom	\$25.00 x _____	\$ _____

## FRIDAY, July 18 —

Golf	6:30 AM	Meet in Lobby	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Registration	9:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Audubon Room		
Lake Cœur d'Alene Cruise/Lunch	10:00 AM to 3:00 PM	Coach Tour	\$38.00 x _____	\$ _____
Silverwood Theme Park	11:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Coach Tour	\$28.00 x _____	\$ _____
Dinner on your own				

## SATURDAY, July 19 —

Registration	9:00 AM to 12:00 PM	Audubon Room		
Silver Mt. Gondola Ride/Lunch	9:00 AM to 3:00 PM	Coach Tour	\$45.00 x _____	\$ _____
No Host Bar	6:00 PM	Riverfront Ballroom		
Farewell Banquet (Table reservations required)	7:00 PM	Riverfront Ballroom	\$26.00 x _____	\$ _____

Registration Fee (per person, 2 maximum per family) \$10.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
1997 Dues (if applicable, check your dues card) \$5.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOTAL** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I/We will be staying at the:  Cavanaugh's Inn at the Park  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete form, enclose check, and mail to:

Louis Stoffer  
398th Bomb Group  
Reunion Centralia, WA  
98531-4529

Received \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Louis Stoffer**

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

# Canadian Rockies Tour

For many 398th reunion attendees, Spokane, Washington, represents the closest they will ever get to seeing the Canadian Rockies.

For these folks, and those who just wish to add to their adventures in the Northwest, a post-reunion tour to the beautiful Canadian Rockies has been arranged through Group Coordinators, who are handling all the 398th reunion tours in and around Spokane in July.



Interested parties should call 509-455-4354 and request a tour itinerary. Their address is 2805 W 17th Ave., Spokane, WA 99224-5506. The five-day Rockies tour is priced at \$654 pp/double occupancy, \$948 pp/single, and \$549 pp/triple. This includes transportation, guide, all accommodations, some meals, and admissions.

The coach tour leaves Spokane on July 20, with overnight stops in Fairmont Hot Springs, Jasper, Banff, and Radium Hot Springs. The bus returns to Spokane at about 5:30 p.m. on July 24.

Some of the world's most spectacular scenery will be seen as the coach winds through the Canadian Rockies. In addition, there will be opportunities for exploring, like the Columbia Icefields, and riding the Sulphur Mountain Gondola, and Lake Louise. Even time for shopping and soaking in the hot springs.

## Dues Envelopes For 17 States

Dues envelopes for 1997, already addressed and ready for your own postage and mailing, have been inserted in FLAK NEWS to be used by members living in the following 17 states —

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

Additional states will be included in the July and October issues. This quarterly "break" in dues support is designed to soften the mail burdens of treasurer Ralph Hall and his aide-de-camp, Marjorie.

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*"My Guys" was written by Jill Chandler of Spokane, Washington. Jill's poems have appeared in previous issues of FLAK NEWS and 8th Air Force News. Jill will be a guest of the 398th at the Spokane reunion in July and will present additional poetry readings at the banquets.*



## Freed At Last

Fifty years ago I passed through the gate  
And away from the barbed wire I knew,  
Out of the POW camp where Fate  
Had placed me after I no longer flew.

How I longed for freedom and liberty  
I took for granted, had known all my life;  
Staring at the guard towers above me,  
I saw machine guns to quell any strife.

How proud I felt as freedom's fresh air  
Filled my lungs and restored my spirits, too;  
How comforting that my comrades did care  
Who liberated me as my hopes grew.

It was a long time ago when I  
Again became a happy, free man;  
I'll never forget, though time flies by ...  
Tearfully, into freedom's arms I ran.

— Bert McDowell, Jr.  
Lt. Col., USAF (Ret.), Irving, Texas

## My Guys

I call them *My Guys*  
Because they are; each and every one  
They fought in battles far and beyond  
So my freedom would be won

Now they are men of senioreed age  
They have no more air battles to wage  
In their wartime pictures they were boys  
With a look of innocence on their face

I appreciate what they have done  
I want to recognize their feats  
Whether they be big or small  
Each did his individual part

Yes they are *My Guys*  
And I love them all  
I will always remember the stories  
They took the time to tell

I suppose it is a bit unusual  
But I truly do care  
Because of the men who fought in the air war

# MEMORIAL DAY 1997

Fifty-two years after VE Day, the men and women who were a part of that great conflict still gather to remember the war ... and those who paid the ultimate price of freedom. Americans will pause on May 30 — Memorial Day —

to reflect what was, and what might have been. For those whose memories have faded over the years they can use the following Highlights of the European War, originally printed in 1945 by YANK, THE ARMY WEEKLY.

## 1933

**January 30.** Adolf Hitler and Nazi Party get control of Germany.

## 1934

**July 25.** Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss of Austria is assassinated by Austrian Nazis.

## 1935

**January 13.** The internationalized Saar Territory votes to return to Germany under League of Nations provisions.

## 1936

**March 7.** Hitler moved his new army into demilitarized Rhineland zone.

**July 19.** Spanish Civil War starts. Hitler sends Nazi troops to aid rebels.

**October 24.** Rome-Berlin Axis is formed.

**November 25.** Japan joins Axis.

## 1937

**January 30.** Hitler repudiates "war guilt" clauses of Versailles Treaty.

**October 6.** President Roosevelt urges quarantine of aggressor nations.

## 1938

**March 11.** Nazi troops move into Austria.

**September 29.** Germany, Italy, Britain, and France hold Munich conference; Hitler promises peace, gets Sudeten province of Czechoslovakia.

## 1939

**March 4.** Hitler ignores Munich Pact and takes rest of Czechoslovakia.

**April 27.** Britain establishes first peacetime conscription.

**August 21.** Germany and Russia sign 10-year nonaggression pact.

**August 23-25.** Hitler demands Polish Corridor and Danzig.

**September 1.** Seventy Nazi divisions attack Poland.

**September 3.** Britain and France declare war on Germany.

**September 27.** Poland falls in 26 days to blitzkrieg.

## 1940

**April 9.** Germany attacks Denmark and Norway.

**April 14-17.** Allies land in Norway.

**May 10.** German armies attack on western front. Winston Churchill replaces Neville Chamberlain as British Prime Minister.

**May 14.** Holland surrenders.

**May 22-June 4.** 335,000 British, French, and Belgian troops are evacuated from Dunkirk.

**May 28.** Belgium surrenders.

**June 10.** Italy attacks France.

**June 14.** Paris is abandoned to the Germans.

**June 22.** France signs armistice at Compiègne.

**August 8.** Battle of Britain begins in air.

**September 15.** RAF and ack-ack shoot down 185 Nazi planes in climax of air war over Britain.

## 1941

**April 6.** Germany begins blitz of Balkans.

**April 18.** Yugoslavia falls.

**April 27.** Germans enter Athens.

**June 22.** Germany attacks Russia.

**December 7.** Japanese attack Pearl Harbor.

**December 11.** Germany declares war on U.S.

## 1942

**June 13.** Near Bir Hacheim, Rommel ambushes British armor, forces British retreat into Egypt.

**October 23.** Battle of El Alamein begins.

**November 2-3.** Rommel starts long desert retreat.



**November 7.** U.S. and British troops land in Africa at Casablanca, Oran, and Algiers under Eisenhower. New Allied forces push into Tunisia, catching Axis African forces between Eisenhower's men in the west and Montgomery's in the east.

**November 8.** Nazis open drive on Stalingrad.

**November 25.** Red Army launches counteroffensive at Stalingrad.

**December 13.** Rommel withdraws from El Agheila.

**December 24.** Darlan assassinated.

## 1943

**January 31.** Von Paulus surrenders at Stalingrad.

**February 24.** Americans take Kasserine Pass.

**March 19.** Americans occupy El Guettar.

**May 7.** Allies capture Tunis and Bizerte.

**May 13.** Axis evacuates Tunisia.

**July 5.** German summer push begins in Russia.

**July 9.** Allied invasion of Sicily begins.

**July 25.** Mussolini overthrown in Italy. Badoglio assumes leadership, promises that Italy will fight on.

**August 17.** Sicily is taken.

**September 2.** Soviet offensive pushes Nazis to Dnieper.

**September 3.** British Eighth Army invades Italy. Italy surrenders.

**September 9.** Fifth Army lands at Salerno.

**October 1.** Fifth Army enters Naples.

## 1944

**January 1.** Allies are pinned down at Cassino.

**January 25.** Fifth Army units land at Anzio-Nettuno.

**May 11.** Fifth and Eighth Armies start offensive which breaks Cassino deadlock.

**June 4.** Allies occupy Rome.

**June 6.** D-Day. Allies land on Normandy beaches after great airborne assault on France.

**June 26.** Cherbourg surrenders.

**August 4.** Allies take Florence, Italy.

**August 15.** Seventh Army invades Southern France.

**August 23.** Allies liberate Paris.

**September 1.** Allies enter Belgium.

**September 11.** Allies enter Holland; American and British forces invade German soil.

**September 17.** Allied Airborne Army lands in Holland but fails to hold bridgehead at Arnheim.

**September 19.** Armistice signed by Finland, Russia, and Great Britain.

**October 14.** British enter Athens.

**October 21.** Aachen surrenders.

**November 3.** Flushing is captured by British, enabling the Allies to open the Port of Antwerp.

**December 16.** Rundstedt opens counteroffensive on Belgian and Luxembourg frontiers.

**December 27.** Bastogne is relieved.

## 1945

**January 12.** British and U.S. Troops join up between Bastogne and Laroche.

**January 19.** Red Army 20 miles inside Germany.

**January 30.** Germans withdraw inside Siegfried Line. Third Army crosses River Our.

**February 7.** Russians break through across the Oder.

**February 23.** Turkey declares war on Germany and Japan.

**February 24.** Americans storm across Roer River.

**March 8.** Remagen Bridge over the Rhine captured by U.S. First Army.

**March 17.** U.S. Third Army takes Coblenz. Whole German line between Saarbrücken and Rhine breaking wide open.

**March 22.** Third Army crosses Rhine.

**March 27.** Last V-Bomb hits England; 8,400 killed, 25,000 badly hurt since June 15, 1944.

**April 12.** President Roosevelt dies; President Truman sworn in.

**April 13.** Vienna falls.

**April 16.** Americans liberate Buchenwald.

**April 23.** Russians break into Berlin.

**April 26.** Americans and Russians link at Elbe, cutting Reich in two.

**April 29.** Germans surrender in Italy and West Austria.

**April 30.** Mussolini reported executed.

**May 1.** German radio announces death of Hitler.

**May 2.** Russians capture Berlin.

**May 8.** V-E Day.



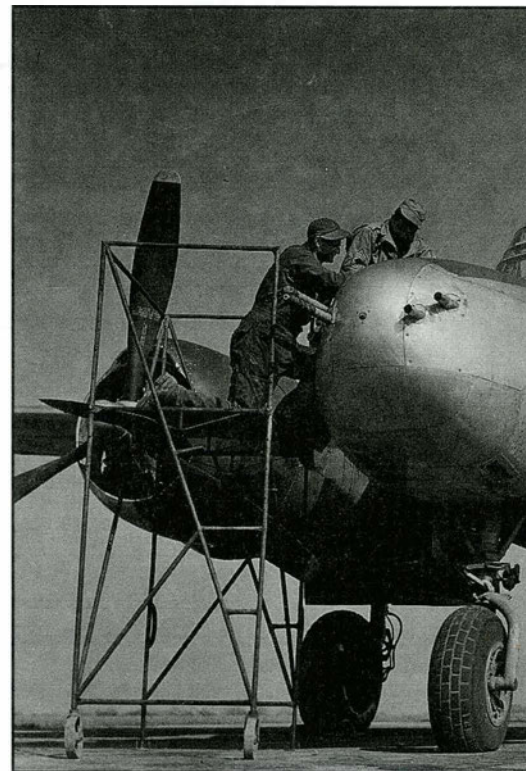
A P-51 MUSTANG makes his presence known to one of our 602 Squadron B-17's. Even if they buzzed Station 131 at times, they were a welcome sight in the skies over Germany.



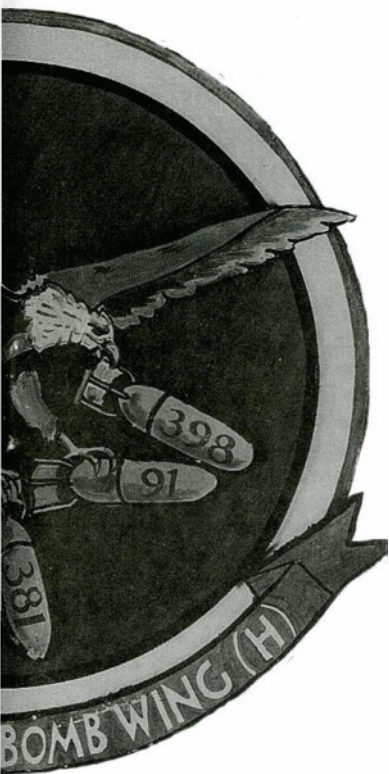
A RARE PHOTO of the First Co a part of this Wing, along with the 381st at Ridgewell.



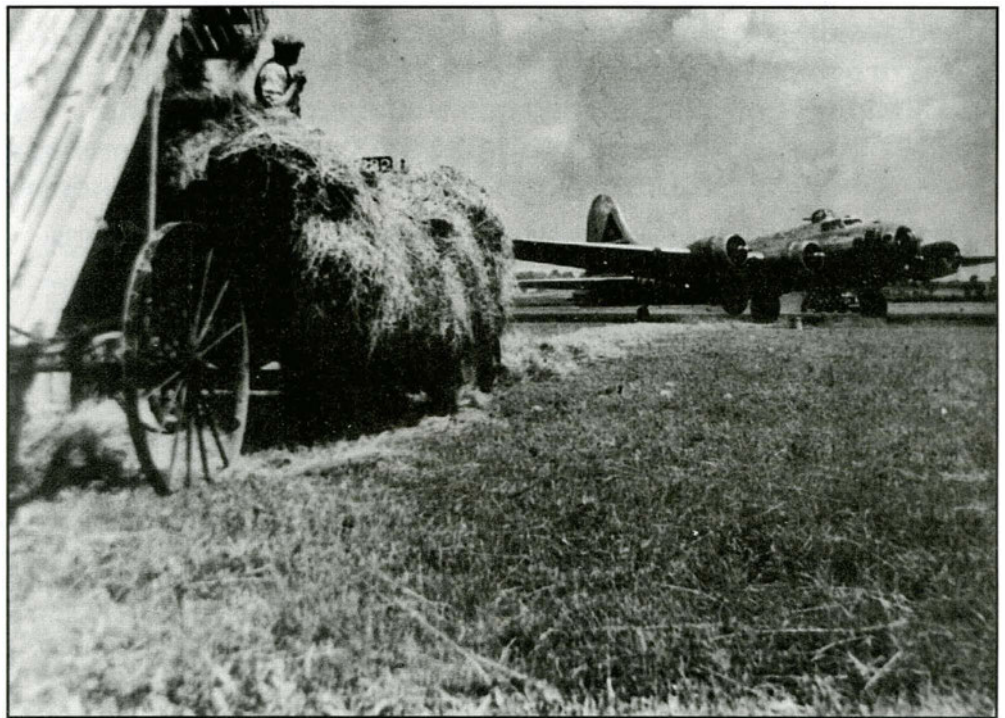
A LONE MP was photographed as he patrolled around the airbase. The 1142nd maintained "law and order" at the base, even keeping alert for airmen sneaking out the back gate for a pint or two.



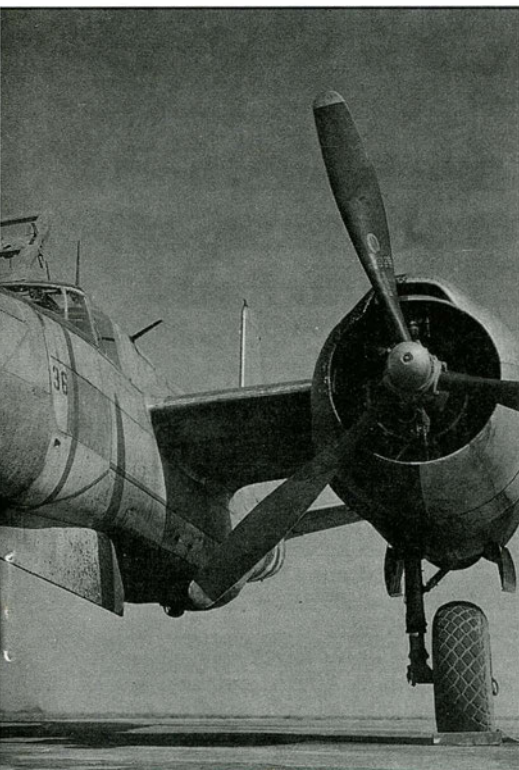
THIS A-26 was a "lost bird which we comm. He and other officers enjoyed flying it, occ. check on the formation as they proceeded



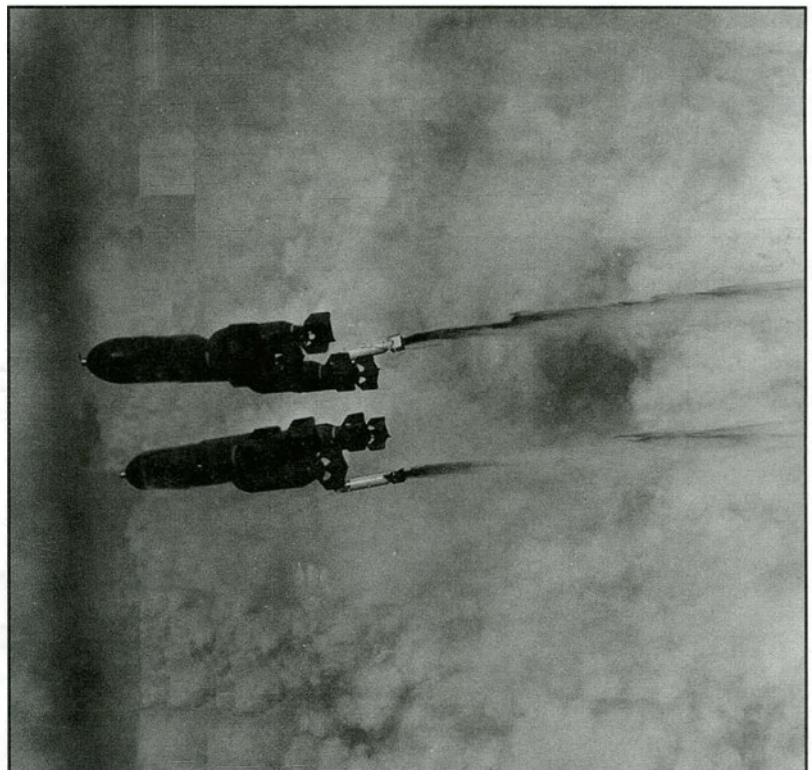
ombat Wing logo. The 398th was the 91st at Bassingbourn and



A NUTHAMPSTEAD farmer watches serenely from his hay wagon as a Fortress begins its takeoff roll and some "unserene" time over Germany.



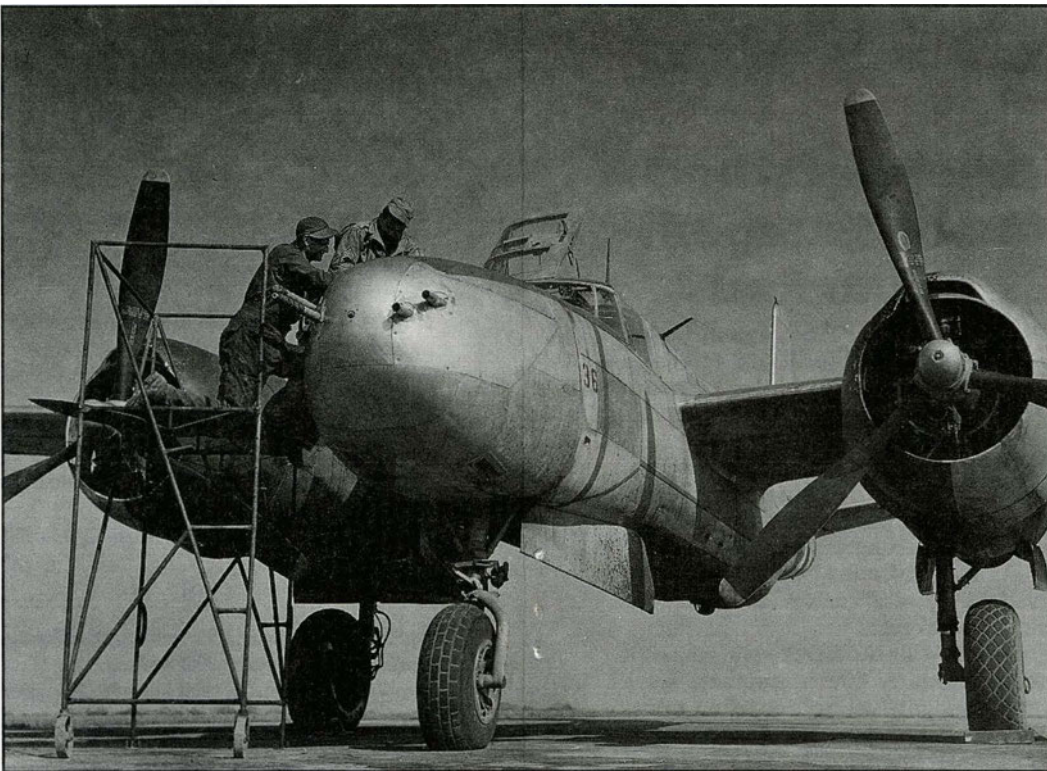
andered," according to Col. Lewis Ensign. occasionally using it to hover over the group to towards the continent.



EIGHT 500-POUNDERS are pictured in this photo, along with a pair of smoke bombs that left a trail for other bombardiers and toggliers in the squadron to drop on.



**A RARE PHOTO of the First Combat Wing logo. The 398th was a part of this Wing, along with the 91st at Bassingbourn and the 381st at Ridgewell.**



**THIS A-26 was a "lost bird which we commandeered," according to Col. Lewis Ensign. He and other officers enjoyed flying it, occasionally using it to hover over the group to check on the formation as they proceeded towards the continent.**



## Plan Now For Spectacular Trip:

# \$2995 Is Cost Of 1998 England Tour

Time-wise, it is more than a year away, but planning-wise, the time is now. We're talking about the June 1998 England Tour and Return to Station 131.

For those of you who have "always wanted to go back to Nuthampstead," the tour next year could well be the best (and perhaps the last) opportunity for that nostalgic visit.

Our Friends of the 398th are even now preparing for five days of "home stays," service at the Memorial, visit to Cambridge American Military Cemetery, Duxford Museum, service at St. George's Church at Anstey, and — naturally — some quality time at the Woodman Inn.

And, on the continent, our Friends at Neuss, Germany, are preparing another welcome that will see the Yank tour party visit Ardennes Cemetery, where Col. Frank P. Hunter, Jr., and many other men from the 398th are buried. This will come at the tag end of the German part of the tour, which begins at Munich, and winds its way into the Alps and other historical attractions like Rothenburg, Trier, and Luxembourg.

Dates for the 1998 tour are June 3 through 16. Travel will be via British Airways from New York, Chicago, and Seattle. Also from Dusseldorf (near Neuss) to London. Luxury coaches will be used on the land portion both in Germany and England.

Cost of the tour has been set at \$2,995, pp/double occupancy.

Members interested in this tour are invited to call toll free 1-800-423-5454. Talk to Barbara Fish and she will provide a more complete itinerary.

Allen Ostrom will again be the tour coordinator.

## Woodman Inn Goes "B&B"

When the 398th makes its return to Nuthampstead in June of 1998, they will see that "something has been added." The thatched-roofed Woodman Inn will not only be there for those mild and bitters, ploughman's lunches, darts, and general community gossip, but soon it will also be a "bed and breakfast."

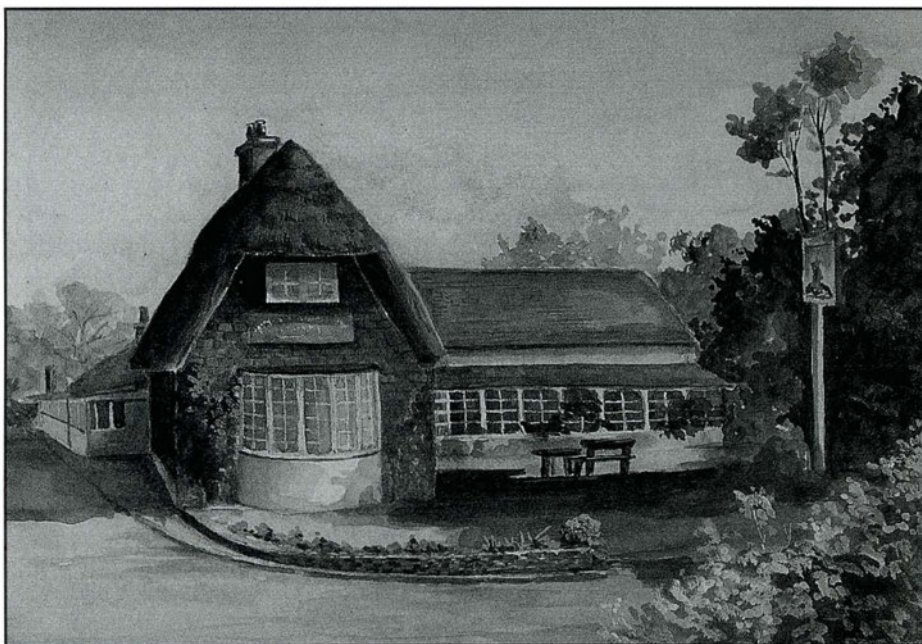
Ian and Sandy Johnson, proprietors, said that visitors will appreciate having overnight

accommodations near to the 398th Bomb Group Memorial.

"And it will help those who use the Nuthampstead Airfield, the Shooting Ground, and Barkway Golf Course."

The historical pub "has once again become the centre of activity for the village," according to Johnson.

The Woodman houses many items of 398th memorabilia.



Original painting by Joyce Grimaldi, Royston.

## Mighty Eighth Museum Now One Year Old

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum will hold its first anniversary celebration at the museum May 15-18, 1997.

"We have had a very gratifying and encouraging first year at the Heritage Museum," said Lt. Gen. E.G. Shuler, Jr., Museum Chairman and CEO, and we want to show our appreciation to all the Eighth Air Force veterans and others who have so strongly supported the museum. We also want to use the celebration as an occasion to introduce the museum to all those people who have not visited or heard about the Heritage Museum."

The anniversary celebration will begin on Thursday evening, May 15, and conclude with a memorial service on Sunday morning, May 18. Friday's events will be geared toward visiting school children in the morning and the Eighth Air Force veterans and families in the afternoon and evening. Saturday's events will be geared toward the general public.

The Heritage Museum opened May 13, 1996, with almost 5,000 Eighth Air Force veterans and family members from 38 states and four foreign countries present. "This year we are shooting for at least 10,000 people," said Shuler. "During the celebration we will introduce several new exhibits in the museum plus we plan to have aircraft flyovers, static displays, concerts, lectures, a banquet, and a dance.

## Blackwells And Queen Elizabeth At Duxford

Wally Blackwell, 398th Bomb Group president, and his wife, Teedy, will be on hand for the dedication of the American Air Museum at Duxford Airfield in England on August 1.

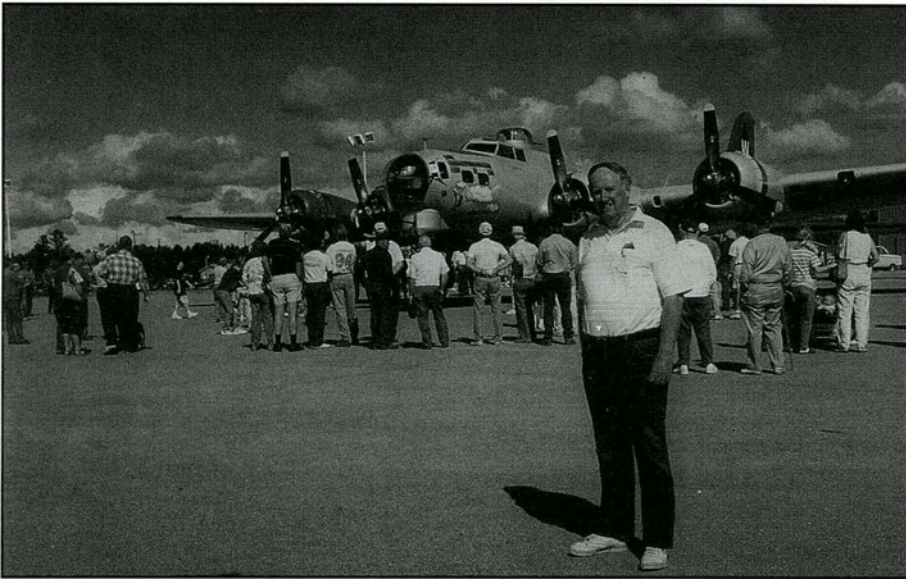
In the building stage for six years, the museum will be dedicated by Queen Elizabeth with the pomp and ceremony normally identified with British royalty. It was General Jimmy Doolittle who conceived the idea of such a showplace for American aircraft.

Others besides the Blackwells may well attend, as many 398th members have also been identified as "founding members."

The 398th has corporately supported the museum project.

A visit to the new museum will be on the itinerary for those on the June 1998 tour to Germany and England.

# Letters, Letters



**Gordon Graham and Aluminum Overcast**

"You fellows in the 398th Bomb Group Association are to be complimented for your efforts to restore the Aluminum Overcast. I went to see the beautiful bird at Pellston, Michigan, and it was so interesting to listen to some of the 200 on hand that day, many of them high school kids. They really enjoyed the visual history lesson given by the crew and other B-17 veterans. I learned from reading FLAK NEWS Vol. 9 No. 1 how the 398th provided funds to help restore this plane. It was entitled, "398th Will Finish The Job." I thought you would be interested in hearing of the results of your efforts and to say 'thank you' for sending the Aluminum Overcast our way."

**Gordon Graham, Cheboygan, MI 49721, (Ex-Sgt., 15th AF, B-24's)**

"You don't know how moved I was to open your heavy envelope and find your letter and story on my dad, Joe Pintek. Of course, I had to try and read it while crying. There are so many things I wish I could have asked Dad before he passed on. Now I would like to receive the certificate "In Memory Of" in his honor and will send a small token to the treasurer. And thank you for the headline, "Pintek Was Ready." That meant so much to me."

**Carol Sue Pintek, Ann Arbor, MI 48103-4856.**

"I flew two missions to Brux, Czechoslovakia, but cannot find this city on the map. Is it known by some other name?"

**Ralph D. Trout, Logan, IA 51546-1221.**

*Editor's Note: Brux was the German name in the Sudetenland. Now that this area has been returned to the Czech Republic, it is known as Most. Another WW II Czech target was Eger, now known by the Czechs as Cheb.*

"Thank you so much for sending FLAK NEWS these past few years. I am moving back to Ireland from England, but I will always remember the wonderful evening at Southampton when Bill Comstock and the 398th tour party honored my late husband, Flying Officer Robert Kennedy. Please send this contribution to your treasurer."

**Vivien Kennedy, W Sussex, England.**

"I am deeply interested in the FLAK NEWS reference to the crash of two planes on December 24, 1944, (Vol. 4 No. 4). I was a member of 600 Squadron ground crew of 42-102536 C. I worked with M/Sgt. George Knight (deceased) and Sgt. Williams Hallaran.

"When we were alerted that 536 had gone down on takeoff I took off on foot for the crash site. The crash crew was already there, recovering the air crew. When I was about 200 feet away I heard a loud hissing noise emanating from the plane, then the plane exploded and 536 was no more.

"The blast sent me flying. As I was getting up, I looked up. There was all kinds of wreckage coming down all around me — wheels, sheet metal, wing panels, ruptured fuel tanks, engines, etc. I remember seeing a wing spar stripped of all wing ribs impaled like a javelin in the ground.

"I will always remember that vision of utter destruction.

"Is it possible to get a copy of that FLAK NEWS?"

**Harry W. Holder, Green Bay, WI 54311-6566.**

*Editor's Note: A copy is on the way. If you come to the reunion in Spokane you can meet some of the crew survivors, including the chairman, Louis Stoffer.*

# Music Was The Common Bond

*Continued from Page 1.*

Priestly played the guitar in the combo and Frazier the bass. They were joined by 603 navigator Raymond Lucier on alto sax, 603 pilot Phil Swan on trumpet, and Jim Ladue on clarinet.

Ladue, a corporal in 601 operations, was enlisted by Priestley after hearing him play clarinet at the Red Cross.

"That first jam session and many more at the Officers' Club was an experience I will never forget," said Ladue, who recounted Priestley's postwar accomplishments in the field of architecture.

"I recall how uneasy I felt bringing my four years of high school band to these sessions," added Ladue, who went on to a career in industrial design.

Swan, the trumpet man when not flying missions, remembered the sessions at the Officers' Club and in the quarters of 601 commanding officer Tracey Petersen.

"We were joined on occasions by David Swift, 603 pilot, who played the 'drums' with brushes on the potbellied stove or on an upside-down waste basket.

"On occasions Swift brought along an RAF officer friend who sang scat with us," said Swift.

"'Scat' might be remembered as a rhythmic collection of syllables that mean nothing," recalled Ladue.

Except to the "scat" singer.

And perhaps to someone who plays drums on a potbellied stove.

## Givers

by Rachel Porter

*They give you strength,  
They give you heart,  
They give you live,  
And make you smart.*

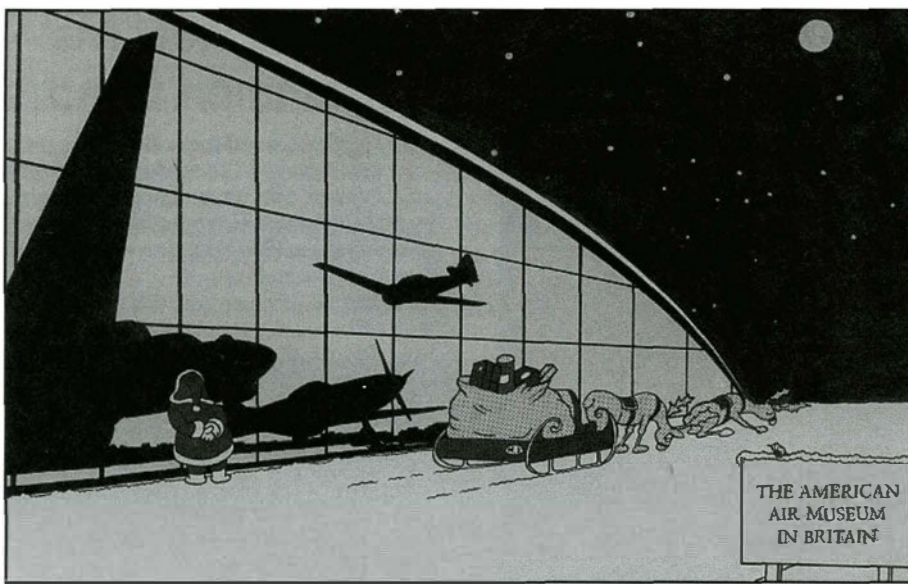
*They enlarge you brain  
They expand you mind,  
They give you chances  
Of every kind.*

*They give you power,  
Give you choice,  
Give you knowledge,  
They give you voice.*

*Through time they've given  
The best they had,  
Through great frustration,  
Through happy and sad.*

*They're kind and gentle,  
Patient and pleasant,  
A genuine treasure,  
Great teachers, past, and present.*

A sixth-grader, Rachel won first place in a Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) essay contest in Seattle.



## Unusual Yule Greetings

Christmas greetings sent to FLAK NEWS came in many forms and from many sources. The one from the American Air Museum in Britain (Duxford) shows Santa stopping for a peek at the new building which opens August 1. Upper right depicts an RAF Hurricane buzzing an English village. And at right sits a US PT-17 trainer in front of a Yule-decked home. All greetings were appreciated, with or without an airplane theme.

## “Air Force” Is Spoken Here

The term, “in the military” has more than a special meaning for former 601 navigator Joe Roberge of Bellport, New York. Joe did his 32 missions with the Leroy Darner crew, and 53 years later he still has a remarkable recall when queried on those long-ago details.

However, it is not only the things of the 398th that make Joe a whole lot different. Consider the following —

His father flew in the old Signal Corps in WW I.

His Father-in-law served as a civilian glider instructor in Oklahoma, many of his students taking part in D-Day.

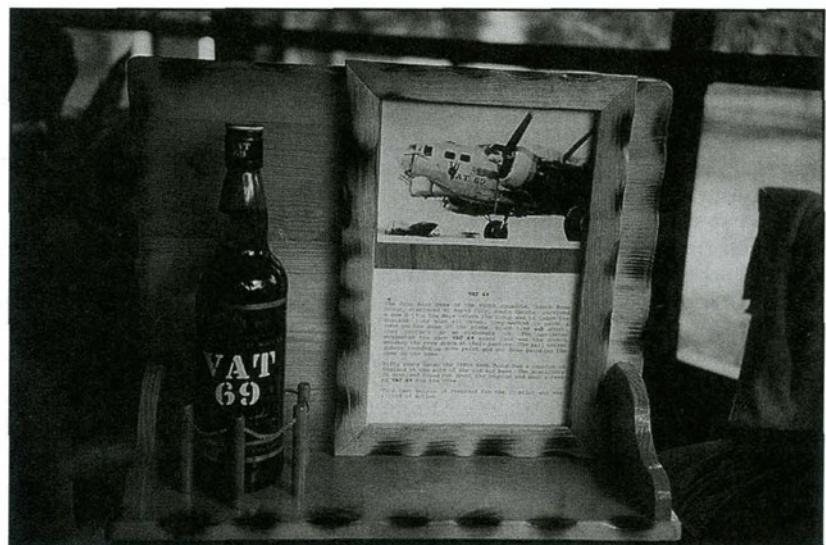
His son, Paul J. Roberge, USAF captain, was in lead-in-training for the F-15 when he was killed trying to help a colleague who had lost an engine.

One of his sons-in-law served seven years in England and Africa, plus three years in Viet Nam.

His brother-in-law served five years stationed mostly at Rome, NY AFB.

A daughter of one of his cousins is a major in the nursing service. She was in charge of an emergency hospital in the Gulf War.

It is quite possible the “Air Force” is the principal topic of conversation at Roberge’s family gatherings.



### 398th Display At Heritage Museum

VAT 69, otherwise identified as one of Scotland’s principal exports, has found a home at the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum in Savannah, Georgia. Leo Lorenzo, who painted the nose art on the B-17 his John Rice crew flew to England, donated the bottle and display, and it is now a part of the museum archives. Lorenzo said the bottle honors Clinton Clifton, their copilot who was killed in action flying with another crew.

# BRIEF-things

**Dr. Carl Klinkenhammer**, who built a church out of a WW II bunker at Neuss after the war, died this year at the age of 94; he conducted a memorial service for the 398th tour members who visited there in 1988; he was the first German priest to be imprisoned for his opposition to the Nazis ... but **Johannes Schultz Everding**, the 88 anti-aircraft gunner who was among those shooting at the Hunter-Gonzales B-17, is still going strong at 90; his warm embrace of **Mrs. Maria Hunter** ranks as one of the most powerful emotional sequences of the 398th tours ... **Manfred König** will again lend his skills in setting up the program for the June 1998 visit to Neuss ... **Tommy Garcia**, the specialist in restoring B-17's, says that more Fortresses are being restored these days and that a few of the "younger" WW II pilots are being recruited for cockpit duty; our **Hal Weekley** is still the only combat vet still drawing full-time duty in the left seat (Aluminum Overcast) ... note to **Paul Newman** (AKA **Jack Lee**): your FLAK NEWS editor's 1964 Pontiac Tempest is still coasting at 536,000 miles; he'll add a few more mile on the trip from Seattle to Spokane in July ... will your trophy case look so impressive when compared to **B/Gen. Clayton Isaacson's** 41 decorations picked up in 335 fighter missions in Europe, South Pacific, and Korea? And he did it all after serving as a private in the anti-aircraft in 1941; one of his Army pals became the FLAK NEWS editor ... the most glamorous golf tee in the world is located at Cœur d'Alene, Idaho, but the tab for 18 holes will be a whole lot cheaper at Spokane's Qualchan, where the 398th guys and gals will play ... the latest FLAK NEWS mailing to England produced one Lifetime 398th member: **John Whiteside** - "today the Pound/Dollar rate is \$1.589, there fore I enclose my English cheque for £32, which should be equivalent to \$50" ... John met an 18-year-old girl from Peterborough, who said "my favorite plane is the B-17" ... among the donations that came in for the "In Memory Of" fund was a check honoring **B/Gen. William Gross**, 1st Combat Wing CO; this was from **Bill Ryan**, 398th group armorer ... after suffering knee problems for 52 years as a result of his near-death encounter with German Flak, 603 pilot **Ed Stewart** finally opted for a total replacement; now he can say, "Ah! Life is so good!" ... but you can look for our new president, **Wally Blackwell**, to be limping a little at the Spokane reunion after his complicated ankle surgery; also a limp for the FLAK NEWS editor after his fourth knee arthroscopy ... the '98 tour to Germany will take in a French city named St. Avold, the location of Lorraine Cemetery and resting place for eighteen 398th men, including three from the **Warren Wade** crew of Shady Lady fame ... there must be more than a few members reading the 398th Combo story who will remember **Johnny Mercer** and **Johnny (Scat) Davis** from the 30's and 40's, **Mercer** better known for his musical arrangements and **Davis** for his trumpet and "scat" vocals ... our coach driver in England in '98 will again be the personable **Tim Wells** ... no parachutes on the cable car that will take '98 tour members to the top of "Zugspitze" in the German Alps ... the Czech Republic has set up a "Czech Center" on Madison Avenue in New York and have invited American Veterans (including the 398th guys who were on the Last Mission) to visit their Pilsen Liberation exhibit on May 14 ... several bomb groups have already held their annual reunions at the new 8th Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, and the 398th officers surely will be looking to go there in the future; but first comes Spokane in July 1997, and Harrisburg, PA, in August 1998 ... **Phil Swan**, the "combo" trumpeter (Page 1) played professionally until the age of 60, and is still a member of the Musician's Union (maybe he'll bring his trumpet to Spokane!) ... **Paul Keenan** says the cost of his one-hour flight in the Aluminum Overcast in 1995 was about the same as his salary for two months as a 603 pilot 50 years ago ... president **Wally Blackwell** and the 398th officers have approved a cooperative mailing effort on behalf of the Might Eighth's Wall of Valor Program at the Museum ...

# 398th Bomb Group PX



	Qty.	Enter Total Cost
Cap - Fits All Sizes (Specify Squadron or Group)	_____	\$8.00 each _____
Jackets - Navy Blue (S, M, L, XL, XXL, B-17 on Front)	_____	\$25.00 each _____
Golf Shirts - White or Navy Blue (M, L, XL, XXL)	_____	\$20.00 each _____
T-Shirts - Red, White, Navy Blue (S, M, L, XL, XXL, B-17 on Front)	_____	\$10.00 each _____
T-Shirts - White, Pink, Blue (Children Sizes 2-4, 6-8, 10-12, 14-16)	_____	\$8.00 each _____
Sweat Shirts - Red, White, Navy Blue (S, M, L, XL, XXL, B-17 on Front)	_____	\$15.00 each _____
Sweat Shirts - White, Light Blue (Children Sizes M & L, B-17 on Front)	_____	\$10.00 each _____
Squadron Patches - Specify Squadron	_____	\$7.00 each _____
Group Patch - "Hell From Heaven"	_____	\$6.00 each _____
Jacket Patch - Rectangle B-17	_____	\$4.00 each _____
Squadron Lapel Pins - Specify Squadron	_____	\$5.00 each _____
Group Lapel Pin	_____	\$5.00 each _____
Group Lapel Pin - Special Design	_____	\$5.00 each _____
Bumper Sticker - 398th Bomb Group	_____	\$1.00 each _____
China Plate with B-17 - 9"	_____	\$6.00 each _____
Glass (9 oz.) with B-17	_____	\$6.00 each _____
Membership Plaque - (Specify Regular or Lifetime)	_____	\$25.00 each _____
B-17 Lapel Pin - Specify Silver or Gold	_____	\$5.00 each _____
B-17 Earrings - Specify Silver or Gold (For pierced ears only)	_____	\$9.00 pair _____
Photo (Control Tower) - Station #131	_____	\$2.00 each _____
Photo (398th Memorial) - Post Card Size	_____	\$2.00 each _____
Photo (Aluminum Overcast) - 8"x10" (Latest photo)	_____	\$12.00 each _____
Bolo Ties - Group Logo	_____	\$4.00 each _____
Golf Towels - Group Logo	_____	\$4.00 each _____
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 _____
Cost Of Items Ordered	\$ _____	
Delivery And Handing Add \$3.00, or \$4.00 if Order is Over \$20.00.	\$ _____	
Total	\$ _____	

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to 398th Bomb Group Association PX (US funds). Mail to: Joe Joseph, Defiance, OH 43512-8854  
(Orders cannot be filled between November 1 and April 1.)

Don't worry about the future;  
God is already there.