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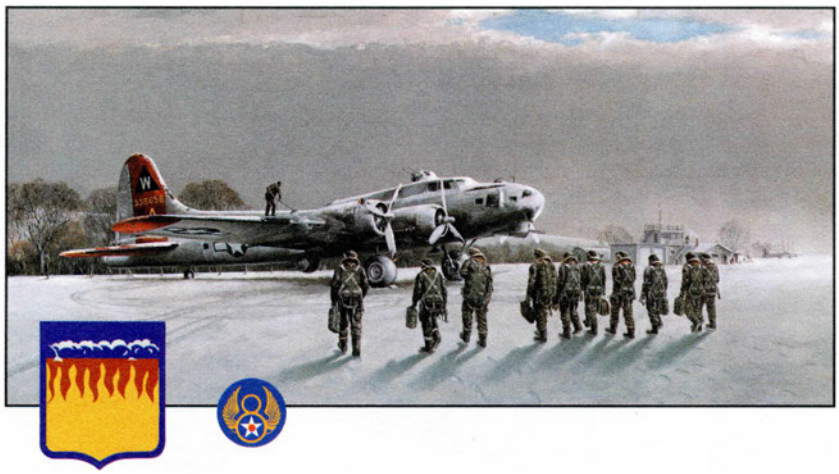

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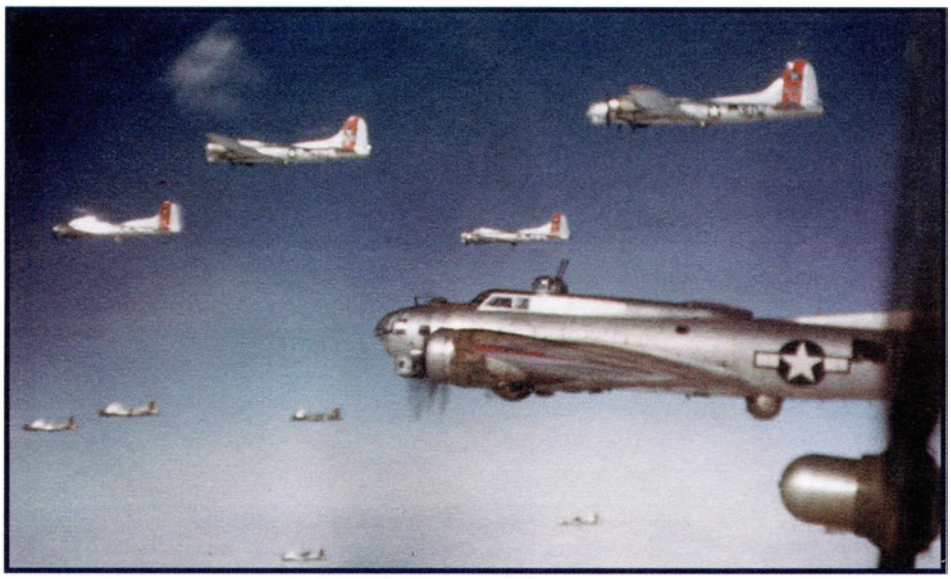
398th BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION • 8th AIR FORCE • 1st AIR DIVISION • NUTHAMPSTEAD, ENGLAND

VOL. 22 NO. 4 FLAK NEWS OCTOBER 2007



— Photo by Bob Welty, November 1944

Color Day For The Co-pilot

BOB WELTY, co-pilot on the 603 Joe Tarr crew, captured this view out his cockpit window with his trusty Argus C-3 camera. It was during a mission lull while the pilot was staying on the wing of the element leader, Warren Johnson. Mission photos by air crew members were not uncommon, but Welty's picture was rare in that he had a roll of Kodachrome color film in his Argus. For more B-17 action read Jan Zdiarsky's story on Pages 6 and 7.

Dues Now More Important Than Ever

It is now October, the reunion is coming up in November and soon it will be 2008. And …

The Dues will begin for the new year this month.

Needless to say, The Dues represents the lifeblood of the 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association. They keep us together, bring us together and nourish our memories together.

There are fewer and fewer of us still going strong and able enough to share in this (financial) burden. The mailing list for FLAK NEWS now stands at 1,416, and declining each year. So more is expected from fewer members.

This quarter kicks off 2008 for those living "Out West" — Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Alaska and Hawaii. Dues are still $20.00 and a mailing envelope is enclosed.

Special support is always appreciated (and necessary) at anytime. Mail to 398th Bomb Group, c/o Dawn Dougherty, OR 97446-9585.

The President's Page:

"Timeless Voices" Gets $5,000 Gift

Navigator's Son Responds To Call

BY WALLY BLACKWELL
President, 398th BGMA

It was a happy day for me in July when I received an E-mail that included this statement – "I just happened to re-read the January FLAK NEWS and the Timeless Voices article. Let me know how much you need to fund this project. It's too important to delay."

Thus I got to know Will Mayhall of Okatie, South Carolina. Will is the son of James Mayhall, who was the navigator on the 603 Squadron Harold Spangler crew.

I had described the "Restart for the Timeless Voices" program in the January 2007 FLAK NEWS. The restart was necessary because of the untimely loss of Randy Stange as manager of that project. The FLAK NEWS article included the statement "contributions to help fund the outlay for the project and establish a continuing program would be most welcome."

After a brief discussion, Will agreed that the 398th could use $5,000 to reimburse investments in camera equipment,

Continued on Page 2

The President's Page:

$5K Gift For "Voices"

(Continued from Page 1)

provide for commercial DVD preparation of interviews already taken, and be able to process interviews coming in the future.

"There has been significant interest in this project by our membership," said Marilyn and Geoff Rice, who already have a backlog of interviews to complete at the Phoenix reunion.

Will accompanied his $5,000 gift with the following message —

Thanks to the "greatest generation," we baby boomers have enjoyed both freedom and material abundance unmatched in human history. We tend to take this for granted. But if men like those of the 398th hadn't made the sacrifices they made, our lives would be far different. The very least my generation can do is to make sure that future generations understand and appreciate what they did. I'm glad to help support the Memorial Association in its Timeless Voices project, and hope that others whose fathers (or grandfathers) served will support the organization as well.

Will, thank you for your heartfelt words and for the funding. We will make good use of this money. It is accepted in remembrance of your father, James Mayhall, shown in the Spangler crew photo.

More than 40 398th members have already completed their Timeless Voices interviews during the recent annual reunions. This response surely is a measure of the interest in this activity.

Not all of the listed interviews have been placed onto DVD at the present time as the process is just beginning. They are being processed in the order they were taken.

The plan is that every interviewee will receive a complimentary DVD that will play on most television DVD players and/or a computer. Additional copies of the individual DVD's will be available through our 398th PX. Information to cost, etc. is already posted in the PX section of the 398th web site. The extra copies will be manufactured by a commercial source.

Eventually we will have all interviews on our 398th web page in video form so that a wider audience can see and hear the history of the 398th. Our long-term goal is to provide a copy of all interviews possible to record centers with which we have had a long term association, such as HALS, the 8th AF Museum, EAA, etc.

This Timeless Voices activity is being accomplished by the combined efforts of a special crew of 398th members. These dedicated volunteers are Dave and Beez Jordan for researching and defining the complete DVD production process, including the creation of 30 DVD masters from all 2003-2005 Randy Stange veteran interviews and Geoff and Marilyn Rice who will complete the interviewing and deal with the commercial manufacturer. We give them one BIG THANK YOU!

The following members have completed their interviews. Some may be viewed on *www.398th.org.*

Keith Anderson
Cleo Bickford
Wally Blackwell
Bob Bowen
Dale Brown
Lew Burke
Marvin Coffee
Dewey Cook
Donald Dunn
Bill Frankhouser
Dick Frazier
Robert Goren
George Graham
George Hershberger
Earl Hofert
Jerry Jans
Edward Jones
Edward Jordan
Joe Joseph
Paul Keenan
Clarence King
Robert Knowles
Arthur Laughlin
Joe Mansell
Ralph McIntyre
Hamilton Mero
Newell Moy
Elliot Novak
Allen Ostrom
Harry Overbaugh
Russell Reed
Paul Roderick
Robert Rowland
Ed Sewell
Philip Stahlman
Louis Stoffer
Ray Talbott
Howard Traeder
Al Turney
Thomas Vanner
Marshall Zinter

THE SPANGLER crew of the 603rd Squadron. Front row, left to right — Robert Weidig (co-pilot), Harold Spangler (pilot), James Mayhall (navigator), and John Schantzback (bombardier). Back row — Frank Garry (engineer), Joe Tola (tail gunner), Donald King (waist gunner), Gerard Bacon (waist gunner) and Howard Ayres (radio). Mayhall's son, Will, contributed $5,000 toward the Timeless Voices program.

By way of KIA history, it should be noted that two members of the Spangler crew (see photo) were among those killed on a ferry flight near Macclesfield, England, on January 2, 1945.

These would be Frank Garry and Howard Ayres, who were temporarily assigned to fly with pilot Don DeCleene, co-pilot Maynard Stravinski and navigator Tom Manos on the ill-fated flight. All perished.

www.398th.org

"Lots of people are viewing our 398th pages — 11562 visits to the site in August." — Dave Jordan

Call Now For Interviews

You may be assured of a Timeless Voices interview at Phoenix on November 28-29-30 and December 1 if you act soonest!

Marilyn Gibb-Rice is doing the "Voices" scheduling and she would love to hear from you to set up an interview time. Yes, you need to have a specific interview time to be included.

"Flight Line" Memories At Museum

Would you like to have your name, crew, mission or other event recognized on a special day in the Rotunda of the Mighty Eighth Museum in Savannah?

"On this day my 398th Bomb Group crew made our fifth visit to Merseburg and we ..."

There are any number of ways of selecting one special day to remember someone or a 398th event — a crewman killed in action, shot down, crash landing, received a medal, etc.

It is called the "Flight Line" campaign and is part of the Museum's 2007 annual fund raising program to assure funds for maintaining the Museum and its extensive operations.

Supporters of "Flight Line" can ask that their time period be recognized on a particular hour, day, or week of their choosing if that time period is still available.

Visitors entering the Lyle Lewis Rotunda will be able to see the sign

identifying the individual or group whose contribution is supporting the Museum on this particular time period.

Coordinating this event is Tom Cannon, Mighty Eighth Museum, PO Box 1992, Savannah, GA 31402. Telephone 912-748-8888 ext. 102.

Tell him you want to be on the "Flight Line."

"A Moving Experience"

"My father was a navigator on Harold Spangler's plane (Goosey Lucy) in the 603rd. (See Page 2.) He was killed in an automobile accident in 1960 leaving my mother with seven kids, so we never heard much about this experiences. A few years ago we got in touch with the other crew members or their survivors and had a ceremony at the 8th AF Museum dedicating a plaque to the crew. It was a moving experience, and we felt fortunate to have an opportunity to meet the great men who were in his crew.

"I just got the latest FLAK NEWS so will be making plans to come to Phoenix — hope to see you then."

— Will Mayhall

MARILYN GIBB-RICE
Named 398th Vice President

Turney Steps Down; Gibb Named VP

Our present 398th BGMA Vice President, Al Turney, has informed me that he will not be able to attend the Phoenix reunion and also wishes to be replaced as the 398th Vice President. We sincerely thank Al for his long service as the 398th Vice President and express concern that we will miss him at the reunion.

To be sure that there will be no disruption in 398th business activities under any circumstance, I have appointed Marilyn Gibb-Rice as the temporary 398th Vice President.

I am very pleased that Marilyn has agreed to do this for us. Marilyn has always stepped up to a 398th need, and her dedication and talents are much appreciated. Marilyn has been a major 398th doer for the past 15 years or more and she thoroughly knows how we do business.

I am sure you all will help Marilyn perform this job in the future. At this time I see no conflict with Marilyn remaining as the 398th BGMA Treasurer.

Hoping to see you in Phoenix.

— Wally

Picture Perfect

WHAT COULD be more special than a P-51 flying over the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor? Maybe a B-17?

FLAK NEWS Office Back In Business

The FLAK NEWS office in Seattle is "back in operation" after a month's idleness due to the editor's medical "bump in the road."

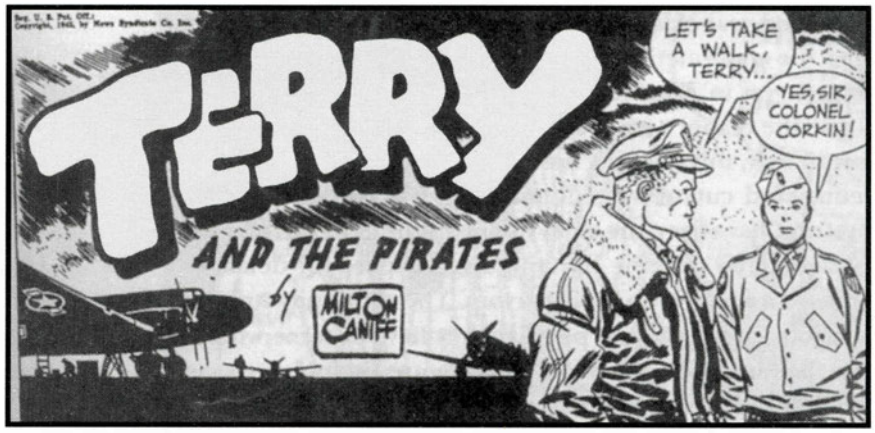
It was called a "fracture of the femur" near the hip bone, plus a couple of other little "burrs" on the hip. All held together with a "dynamic screw."

The month of idleness caused some phone calls and some correspondence to go unanswered. Sorry.

Typesetter/graphic artist David Ruberg filled in on some of the web site business, especially touching base with our friends in England.

Thank you, David.

Just Reminiscin'



398th REUNION: Nov. 28, 29, 30 & Dec. 1

24th Annual Meeting at Ahwatukee, Arizona

REUNION CHAIR — Sharon Krause, Plymouth, MI 48170-2870.

HEADQUARTERS HOTEL — Grace Inn, 10831 S 51st St, Phoenix, AZ 85044. Telephone — 480-893-3000 or 1-800-843-6010. The hotel is located in the community of Ahwatukee, seven miles south of the Phoenix airport or 10 miles south of Phoenix city center.

RESERVATIONS — No "mail in" reservations are required. Call 1-800-843-6010 or E-mail — *reservations@graceinn.com.* Ask for the special room rate of $89.00 for the 398th Bomb Group.

REGISTRATION — The official form appeared in the July issue of FLAK NEWS. For a copy, contact Sharon Krause.

BANQUETS — The Welcome Banquet will held on Thursday, Nov. 29, and the Farewell Banquet on Saturday, Dec. 1. Both at the hotel.

TOURS — A wide assortment of tours has been scheduled, beginning with the "Organ Stop Pizza" dinner outing on Nov. 28. Others are the Desert Botanical Tour and Arizona Mall on Nov. 29; Sedona Tour and Falcon Field on Nov. 30; Phoenix and Scottsdale City Tours on Dec. 1.

SHARON KRAUSE
Welcome To Arizona!

Distinct British Flavour Due At Arizona Reunion

Peter Brooke, who has assumed the role of Chairman of the Friends of the 398th, will be at the reunion in Ahwatukee, Arizona, to render a personal invitation to the 2008 Station 131 ceremonies. (See next page.)

"Even without an organized stateside tour (yet) we will be in readiness for any or all who might come."

Ozzie Osborn also will be at the reunion, along with Elaine Tyler, giving the meeting a distinct British flavour.

Weekley Authors "Last B-17 Driver"

"The Last of the Combat B-17 Drivers" is the definitive and revealing biography of Col. Harold D. (Hal) Weekley, USAF (Ret.), a 398th Bomb Group pilot and the last combat B-17 First Pilot of WW II to fly the B-17 as pilot-in-command into the new millennium.

This comprehensive work combines Col. Weekley's keen recollections with documented historical facts to describe his experiences as pilot in WW II, notably his combat missions from wartime England, his shoot down and bailout over enemy-occupied France, his escape and evasion, and his eventual repatriation to friendly forces. He concludes this book describing his close association with the B-17 into the 21st century.

This richly illustrated book combines over 200 rarely seen black and white photographs, more than 50 illustrations, eight appendices, an index and lots of hard-to-find information.

The 398th's "own" B-17, Aluminum Overcast, carries the colors of Weekley's downed aircraft from the 601st Squadron.

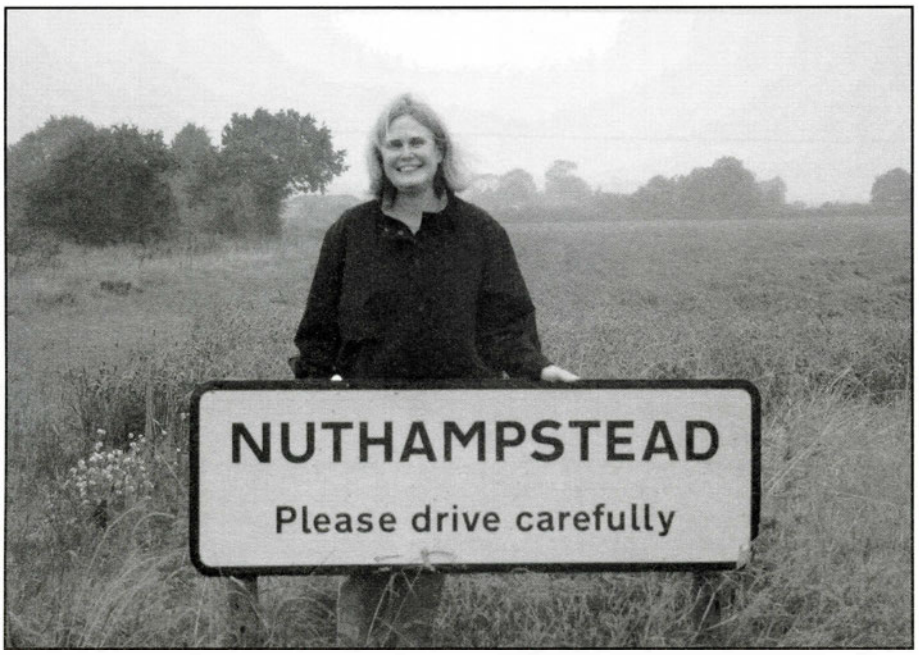
His book may be purchased from Atlas Books Bookstore, 30 Amberwood Pkwy, PO Box 388, Ashland, OH 44805. 1-800-247-6553. Or www.atlasbooks.com.

Hard covers are priced at $39.95, soft covers at $24.95.

They are also available through the 398th PX on Page 11.

HAL WEEKLEY
From B-17 "Driver" to B-17 "Author"

Time To Think "131"



CATHY JO YARMOSKI
Visited Her Dad's Old Station 131 Sites

"Cathy Jo made it safely to Cambridge and we had a great afternoon and evening at Nuthampstead. The weather changed for the worst, a strong northerly wind with a driving drizzle, which let up long enough for a walk down to the 601st dispersal area. We had dinner in The Woodman (where else), and just before leaving, Peter Brooke popped in for a quick pint and met Cathy Jo as well. We dropped her off at her B&B at 2200. She had a great time.

"We visited the memorial window, Anstey Castle mound, dispersed living site (to see where her Dad used to sleep), Station HQ'rs, The Woodman and the 398th/55th Memorials, then a swift half of ale, then up to the airfield, down runway 11 to the main runway. We parked up and then walked along the taxiway to the 601st dispersal area. Then back to the warmth of The Woodman for a leisurely dinner. Cathy Jo loved it — weather and all!"

— Ozzie Osborn

England Tour Abuilding:

BRANDY HOWARD IS LOOKING FOR YOU

Yes, there will be memorial services for the 398th Bomb Group in England next year, as has been the every-other-year custom since 1986.

Remembrances Services at the memorial are scheduled for Saturday, June 14, and Thanksgiving Services at St. George's Church at Anstey on Sunday, June 15, 2008. The next question concerns the presence of the 398th Americans. At the moment this rests in the hands of Brandy Howard of Freeport, Illinois.

"I have volunteered to solicit attendance information on just who among us will be interested in making a 'tour' of the June events in England.

"If a significant number are interested we would plan an extended program in cooperation with our Friends, probably looking at a nine-day period from June 11th through June 19th, 2008."

Brandy is the granddaughter of Bob Howard, a 603 ball turret gunner, who had been on previous tours. Brandy was on the 2002 and 2006 tours, which were led by FLAK NEWS editor Allen Ostrom and travel consultant Barbara Fish.

If you are interested in this proposed, informal tour, please contact Brandy at Freeport IL 61032-2330.

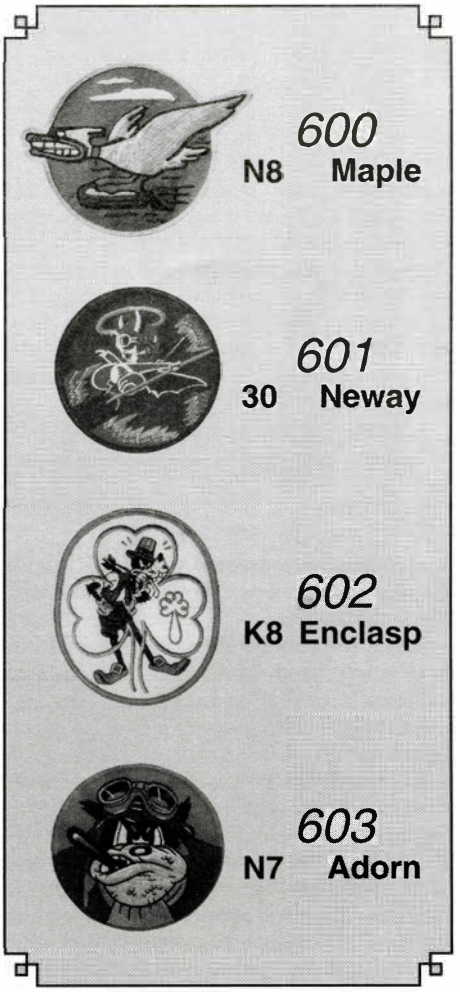
Photo Exibit Honors 398th

The Superintendent at The Cambridge American Military Cemetery at Madingley, David Bedford, and his assistant Arthur Brookes decided to mount a small photographic display in the reception building inside the main entrance to the cemetery. Consisting of a little selection of photographs showing the history of the AMC, accompanied by photos and stories putting faces to the names of those who are buried at Madingley or shown on the Wall of The Missing.

It will change regularly, with all Bomb and Fighter Groups gradually being selected. However, I was so pleased and honoured to be asked to provide the very first collection of photos and stories. Thus the 398th BG and the 55th FG were represented in the initial little display.

It is good to see visitors looking at the exhibition and I felt so proud that both Groups and Station 131, provided a backdrop to the stories of the crews lost flying from Nuthampstead. Seeing the faces behind the names makes it all so memorable and sad.

— OZZIE OSBORN, Cambridge



BLOODY ENCOUNTER

Over a Forgotten Mountain

BY JAN ZDIARSKY
Kovarska, Czech Republic

September 11, 1944, was a day like any other within the time frame of the Second World War. The intense thunder of war had so far not touched the mountains that defined the border between Germany and the remnants of Czechoslovakia, but this day was fated to bring the realization that war had come even here.

This day saw the meeting of the American 8th Army Air Force and the Luftwaffe in a particularly violent encounter. Only a few minutes of combat produced the loss of over 50 aircraft from both sides.

On this day, the United States 8th AAF dispatched a total of 1,131 four-engined B-17's and B-24's for Mission No. 623, targeting various sites in Germany and the occupied lands in Europe. They flew divided into three main streams, along Bomber Division lines, escorted by several hundred long-range P-51, P-47 and P-38 fighters. The intensity of this concentration of over 1,500 aircraft of the USAAF had until now not been seen over Europe.

Just as intense was the Luftwaffe's reaction to the raid, against which were mustered over 350 day fighters, mainly Bf 109's and Fw 190's, but also included Me 262's and Me 163's. Intense clashes over several areas of Europe saw the loss of over 60 American aircraft and some 200 of the Luftwaffe.

The 3rd Bomb Division wave targeted eastern Germany and Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (Czechoslovakia). One of the specified targets was a refinery at Ruhland, northeast of Dresden, and was the responsibility of elements of the 13th Combat Wing composed of the 486th, 95th, 100th and 390th Bomb Groups.

One combat box making up the wave attacking Ruhland was composed of 36 B-17's from the 100th BG, dubbed the "Bloody Hundred." As noon approached, the leading edge of the wave and its accompanying escorts, 55th Fighter Group Mustangs, turned above the Thüringerwald.

From the other side of Germany, hitherto unopposed, several tens of fighter aircraft from II (Sturm) and III Gruppe / Jagdgeschwader 4 approached the same location.

JG was a relatively new and unknown unit when it was integrated into the Defense of the Reich system in the summer of 1944. At the time, the unit was composed of the Stab and three Groups. Its II Gruppe was one of the newly formed ones equipped with the specialized Fw 190 version, the A-8/R2 "Sturmböck." This type was developed specifically for combat with four-engined heavy bombers, and in the subsequent minutes of the fight would play a significant role. Less potent Messerschmitts were not left behind, however, and acted as protective cover for these aircraft.

The first encounter between the two sides occurred between the 55th FG and III/JG 4, around 1130 hours over Oberhof. A short but intense air combat resulted in losses on both sides.

Among other factors to come out of this engagement was that the bombers operated without escort for several tens of minutes.

One of the casualties of the initial fight was Lt. Kenneth I. Crawford, flying Mustang S/N 44-13723 "One Mustang."

THE 100TH BOMB GROUP took the brunt of the action in the huge air battle between the 8th Air Force and the Luftwaffe on September 11, 1944. Fifty aircraft on both sides were shot from the skies over the German-Czech border on this day.

He died several hours after an unsuccessful attempt to bail from his damaged plane. Another loss victimized Lt. William M. Lewis, Jr., who was from the time of his death to 2002 listed as missing. His fate was clarified by the efforts of the Museum of Air Battle over the Ore Mountains between the years 1998 and 2002.

Combat over Oberhof meant losses and victories on both sides. Fiery downward spirals were the fate of 55th FG Mustangs as well as Messerschmitts from III Gruppe/JG 4. Initial combat lasted only a few minutes and opened the door for an even bigger hell, which was fanned less than a half hour later when armored Fw 190A-8/R2's caught up with the 100th BG over the Ore Mountains. At that moment, they were without cover.

Shortly after noon, a large group of Fw 190's from II (Sturm)/JG 4 attacked an unprotected formation of bombers

Continued on Page 7

AIR BATTLE

(Continued from Page 6)

from the "Bloody Hundred." Pilots flying Bf 109's joined in at a time when there was no threat from escorting Mustangs, which normally would have made their lives considerably more difficult. A wider combat engagement resulted, in which several tens of aircraft were lost on both sides. In the span of several minutes, Focke-Wulf and Messerschmitt pilots destroyed an entire third of a combat box from the 100th BG. This main phase of the battle took place over the sun kissed peaks of the Ore Mountains.

The majority of downed aircraft impacted in the area of Oberwiesenthal-Kovarska along the current Czech-German border. In the locale of Kovarska alone, four B-17G's met their end. Damaged aircraft turned for home, but the tragedy of this day had not yet ended.

With the battle in full swing, the forests of the Ore Mountains region were strewn with the burning wrecks of the first B-17 and Fw 190 casualties, and the sky above was consumed with fiery trails and white parachutes. At this point, Mustangs of 339th and 55th Fighter Groups appeared on the scene. Because of this the fate of the unprotected "Bloody Hundred" was not worse at the hands of the armored "Sturmböcks." Within several minutes, the tables had turned against the pilots of the German Fw 190's and Messerschmitt Bf 109's. The battle entered its third and final phase.

Fighter combat went from eight kilometers high to ground level, and from the Czech border to south of Chemnitz. The 100th BG felt a bit of relief, and some damaged aircraft turned in a desperate attempt to return to their base, with the remainder continuing on to their targets, which at this point was about a 20 minute fight away.

The battle also had dire effects on the people living down below. Burning wreckages and screaming engines were raining down into villages, forests and fields, and the air was fouled by the stench of destroyed aircraft.

Fw. Friedrich-Karl Frank of VII Staffel/JG 4 claimed one of the Flying Fortresses, but at the cost of his own mount, a Sturmböck coded "Yellow 8," heavily damaged. The plane crashed in a greenbelt at Spicak by Kovarska, not far from the point of impact of a B-17G "Mud In Yer Eye" from the 100th BG at around the same time. Friedrich-Karl Frank was injured but managed to bail out, and soon was reunited with his unit.

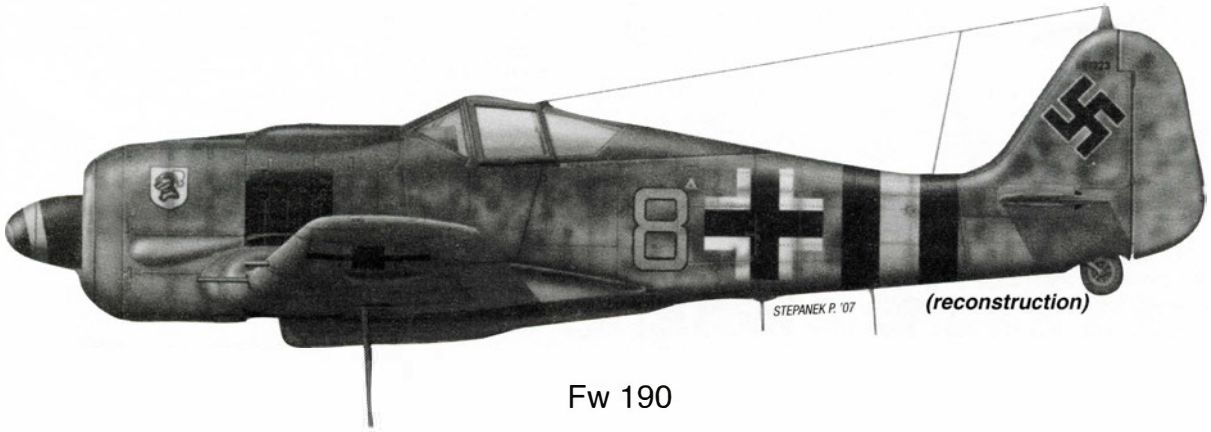
Later in the afternoon, as the wrecks in the forested Ore Mountains were burning themselves out, the lucky ones were returning to their respective bases. But there is more to be said. Today, we know that, in this specific battle, some 50 aircraft were downed, and 80 airmen from the 100th BG, JG 4 and the 55th FG lost their lives. As the described hell played itself out over the Ore Mountains, many other units of the USAAF and the Luftwaffe suffered similar conditions.

Fortresses of the 1st BD with their escort, engaged in heavy combat with the Luftwaffe around Merseburg, while Liberators of the 2nd BD were fiercely engaged north of Frankfurt. Such engagements took place over virtually all of Germany.

Within eight months the war was over, plane wrecks began to be overgrown where they lay, and memories began to fade. Some 50 years after the fact, an effort was initiated to reconstruct the

Continued on Page 10

THIS MEMORIAL in Kovarska, Czech Republic, commemorates the Air Battle over the Ore Mountains. The nearby museum, developed by Jan Zdiarsky, recently celebrated its 10th anniversary. Zdiarsky wrote the accompanying article.



Fw 190

St. George's Church:

WINDOW, BOOKLET "MAGNIFICENT"

We not only have a magnificent stained glass window at St. George's Church at Anstey, but we also have a magnificent color booklet depicting the names and window location of all the men killed in action. (See PX page 11 and photo on Page 12.)

The 14-page booklet is the result of the work of two dedicated second generation 398th members — Lee Anne Bradley, daughter of Frederick C. Bradley, 601 Squadron engineer; and Randy Stange, son of Ray Stange, 603 navigator/ bombardier.

Lee Anne spent many hours at the church locating and mapping the names from window photographs painstakingly taken by Randy following the 2002 Return to Station 131 tour.

Lee Anne then skillfully and expertly produced this pamphlet, adding the historical information for each name from her 398th database and the 398th Maxwell AF Historical CD's.

We are very grateful for this exceptional work by Lee Anne and Randy, completed in honor of the 398th Bomb Group and in memory of their fathers, who have passed away in recent years.

This outstanding piece of work will be the window's companion for posterity.

— WALLY BLACKWELL, President, 398th BGMA

— Photo by Roy Casson

This is the floral wreath presented at the Madingley Cemetery last Memorial Day — May 28 — by Ozzie Osborn on behalf of the 398th Bomb Group. The wreath bearer was an Air Force airman stationed in England.

JITKA FONIOKOVA stands in front of her front desk key rack at Pilsen's Continental Hotel, which last summer added a B-17 model (above her head). It was given by Allen Ostrom, who was a part of the Air Stars activities at nearby Slany, Czech Republic.

Remembering Our Military

"Isn't there something I can do at the least,
Give you some money, prepare a feast?
It seems all too little for all that you've done,
For being away from your wife
and your son."

Then his eye welled a tear that held no regret,
"Just tell us you love us, and never forget.
To fight for our rights back at home
while we're gone,
To stand your own watch, no matter how long.

For when we come home,
either standing or dead,
To know you remember we fought and we bled
Is payment enough,
and with that we will trust,
That we mattered to you
as you mattered to us."

WE ALL NEED TO PRAY FOR OUR MILITARY PERSONNEL EVERY NIGHT.
Just as they did for us back then.

— Editor

Going Solo To 131? Here's An Offer For Free Pick Up

Over the years there have been many "solo" visits made to the old base at Station 131 by 398th members and friends. And some have had a difficult time finding their way to hard-to-find Nuthampstead.

Even cab drivers at nearby Royston have been known to respond with confusion when asked to be taken to the old base. "Where's that?," they ask.

To help with this problem Brit Friend Roy Casson says he will "meet, greet and deliver any visiting Yank from Heathrow or Gatwick to Nuthampstead."

Casson, whose photo of the 398th memorial wreath at Madingley appears above, grew up at nearby Anstey and is intimately familiar with all the roads and back roads of East Anglia.

For those looking for a friendly face plus a guided tour to Nuthampstead, Casson is your man.

For those looking for a place to stay, the Woodman Inn is available for bed and breakfast. Their address is Woodman Inn, Nuthampstead, Royston, Herts SG8 8EE, England.

Cheerio!

www.398th.org

Some Real Words To Live By

The following may answer the question why Americans are resolved to step forward and sacrifice four our country —

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better.

"The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again; because there is not effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deed; who know the great enthusiasm, the great devotion, who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement and who at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly.

"So that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat."

A STATEMENT BY TEDDY ROOSEVELT

A Lesson In V-1 and V-2 WW II History

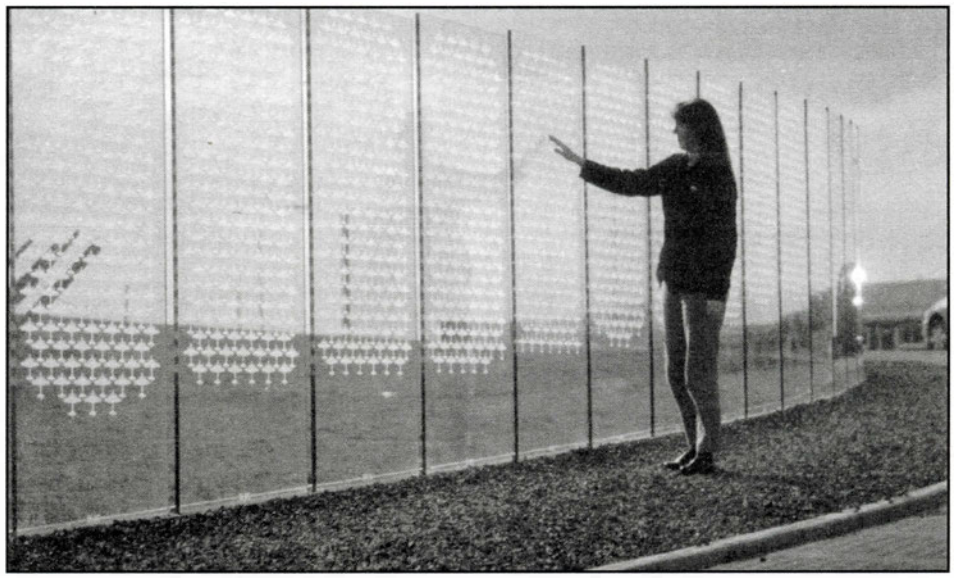
Just been reading the excellent new postings on *398th.org*. Really great. I just love all the detailed research and comments. Well done to all the contributors who have worked so hard on photo identification.

With reference the Charles Nellis diary entries. Thought I would just offer a minor correction on the definition of a "No-ball." It was the code word for attacks on the V-1 launch sites. The V-1's were known by the Brits as "Doodlebugs" and they caused a great deal of concern when that engine cut out and you had just a few seconds to try and decide where it was going to hit. They were launched from France mostly, but also The Netherlands. The launch ramp was designed like a ski jump and used a chemically produced steam in order to drive a pneumatic ram to get the V-1 in the air.

Once a certain speed had been reached the V-1's engine would take over. The launch ramps were made of concrete and we had them spotted, but they were very hard to hit accurately. All V-1 targets were coded "No-balls."

When the Germans started using the V-2 rockets, we coded attacks on their temporary launch sites as "Hi-ball." These V-2 sites were almost exclusively located in The Netherlands. All V-2 targets were coded "Hi-balls."

— OZZIE OSBORN, Cambridge



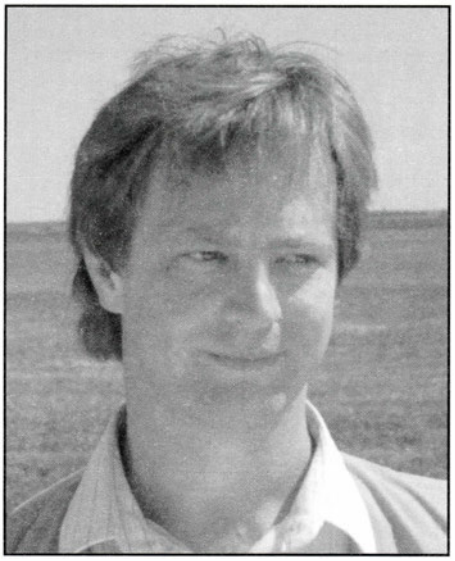
"Wrap Around" Included 398th Losses:

Heat Shatters Glass Panel At AAM In Duxford

One of the glass panels of the "Counting the Cost" Memorial Sculpture at the American Air Museum in Duxford, England, shattered last year. It was one of 52 such panels, each etched with the outlines of aircraft missing in action in operations flown by Americans in Britain during World War II.

The panel's demise was attributed to the summer's extreme heat. It represented aircraft and crews lost by the 4th Fighter Group, which accounted for the highest number of enemy aircraft destroyed by the USAAF. The group had been in action since 1942, being formed by the original Eagle Squadrons.

Many 398th members on various tours have seen and admired the "wrap around" glass panels that lead to the Museum's entrance.



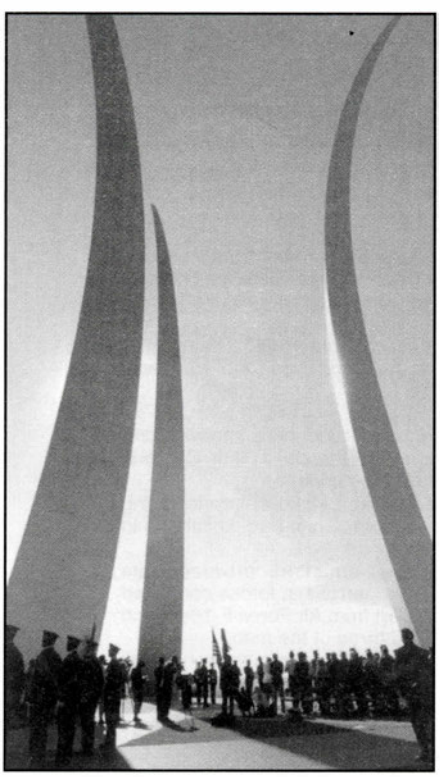
JAN ZDIARSKY

AIR BATTLE

(Continued from Page 7)

battle, and after many years of scrutinizing, still continuing, giving rise in 1997 to the Museum of Air Battle over the Ore Mountains on September 11, 1944. Combat over a forgotten mountain on that September day was but one episode from the Second World War.

It brought together two foes, massive air armies, whose dedication, bravery and resolve should not be forgotten. Last, but not least, this history is one of the chapters in the battle for our freedom.



AIR FORCE MEMORIAL
Washington, D.C.

Letters, Letters

"Thank you for a wonderful web site *www.398th.org.*

"My father, Horace Sullivan, died this summer and what a thrill it was to see his picture posted there with the Van Opdorp crew. He was that crew's navigator, and that same picture hangs on the wall at my parents' home.

"I'm so proud of my Dad I just can't seem to express it strong enough. He was a wonderful man who did his duty. As the minister at his funeral said, 'He used his experience to navigate his family to be his legacy.'

"Oh how blessed I am to have had him as my Dad.

"He has the Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters.

"All of you men did a wonderful thing and from the bottom of my heart — 'Thank you.' "

Dan Sullivan, Houston, TX

"This is to convey a short message of condolence to all the Barker family about the departure of your father, Tony, up and beyond the fields of Station 131. We all enjoyed having Tony there to talk to and receive those extra special tidbits of information about the 398th Bomb Group adventure at Nuthampstead.

"I was privileged to have visited Tony at a number of times in his home. He was great company! Tony was indeed a very unique and precious person. But it was time. We will miss him. Please tell all those good English folks that we too honor the life that Tony led."

Wally Blackwell, President 398th BGMA

"My dad, Albert Chamrad, was a tail-gunner on a 398th B-17. He is 83 and in very good health. My father is a wonderful husband, dad and grandfather and has always been one of the most patriotic men I know. I love listening to him talk about all of the missions he went out on and how the weather in England affected their missions, etc. My one goal this year is to get him to the reunion if possible.

"He marches in all the parades for WW II Veterans and receives FLAK NEWS. I love the articles."

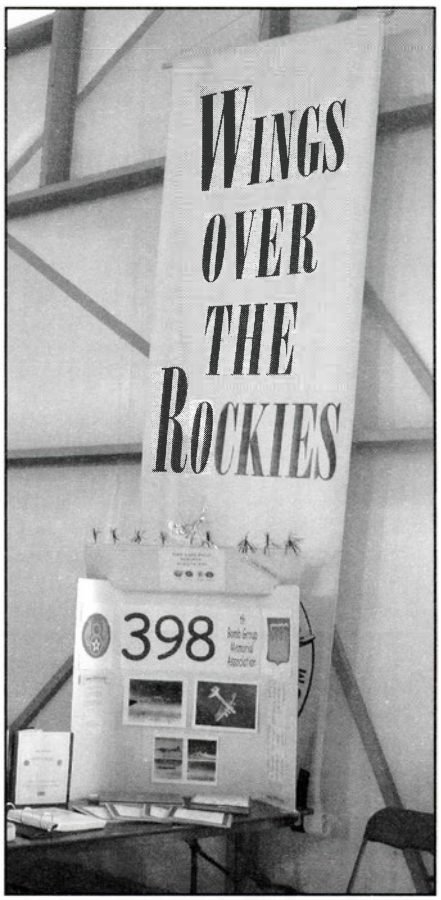
Carol Ann Szafranski, Maine.

"Greetings from Pilsen. I wish to thank you very much for FLAK NEWS July 2007. I appreciate and admire your editorial activity, which is 'evergreen' for a long time — over 22 years. It is a great honor for me to be one of the many lucky to read your periodical.

"I remind you of my friend, Roger Burke, an American writer who spent years in the Czech Republic and wrote a fine novel called, 'A Home in Bohemia.'

"He wrote of our 'national behavior' during the communist era and shortly after it. It is printed in the U.S."

Oldrich Nykles, Pilsen



"We made it to Denver Centennial Airport, Saturday and Sunday, for the Aluminum Overcast showing.

"There was considerable interest in what we had to show! A good turnout of vet's from various Bomb Groups, and many questions from second generation relatives on how to get info on the group that their relative flew with. Greg Anderson has invited us back for the next visit."

Geoff & Marilyn Gibb-Rice, Fountain, Colorado

Grandson Hits A Sale on FLAK NEWS

"I have a lot of reading to do now," said Jeff Vicha or Arvada, Colorado.

Vicha's grandfather, Ray (deceased), was a 603 waist gunner, serving on the Hopkins crew and others, plus being a gunnery instructor and armorer after his combat missions.

"I was fortunate enough to come across a party in Michigan who was selling 45 past issues of FLAK NEWS dated from 1988 to 2002," said Vicha. They had been addressed to the late Asahel Kellogg, who was from Belding, Michigan.

BRIEF-things

Your editor has discovered new respect and appreciation for folks in wheelchairs, walkers, etc., following his August excursion with hip surgery (he crashed reaching for the telephone to respond to a call from a 398th pal) ... it is ironic that our ***Ralph Hall*** and Nuthampstead's ***Tony Barker*** both passed on this year; it was ***Tony*** who accused ***Ralph*** of pinching milk from his cows (1944) and the two carried on with this scenario for the next half century ... the television show, "Dirty Jobs," depicted a pig farm outside Las Vegas, where the pigs were contained in fencing made up of WW II "Pierced Steel Matting" once used for airplane runways; there is still a section to be found in Nuthampstead, used by ***Richard Holub*** when he "rocket assisted" a B-17 from a barley field ... ***Marilyn*** and ***Geoff Rice*** say they have found a perfect reunion site in Portugal, but they will accept whatever city ***Sharon Krause*** selects for 2008 ... we are so fortunate to have a new supply of Anstey Stained Glass Window booklets available in the PX ...

Hello to my 398th Friends.

Here we go! Are all of you looking forward to Phoenix as much as I am? It's such a grand time seeing everyone and getting caught up with old friends and crew members. It's very emotional and heartwarming when, after 50 or 60 years, two of our guys find each other again! It happens all the time.

Our events this year will range from a pizza party to a desert tour and B-17's at Falcon Field. The area is so beautiful! So, if you have never been to Phoenix, you don't want to miss this one. We'll once again have a band for our Farewell Banquet, so you might want to bring your dancing shoes.

Now after those thoughts, I'd like you to send in your registration form and come join us in sunny Phoenix/Ahwatukee.

— SHARON KRAUSE, Reunion Chair

... ***Ralph Ambrose*** writes to tell of the passing of his good buddy from Chertsey, ***Roger Bradley;*** the two watched the B-17's come and go from the local haystacks ... perhaps you weren't counting back then, but the final number of American aircraft lost in the UK during WW II was 7,031 ... the statement on Page 9 by ***President Theodore Roosevelt*** was a favorite of our first 398th president — the late ***Bill Comstock*** ... don't forget to bring your 398th memories and personal stories to the Phoenix reunion, where ***Marilyn Gibb-Rice*** and others will interview you for Timeless Voices ... the September issue of AIR FORCE magazine, the journal of the AFA, presents a magnificent history of the nation's air force from the very beginning to the men and women who lead our nation today ... our generation will surely lock in on such names as ***Hap Arnold*** and ***Jimmy Doolittle,*** but the magazine offers a true wealth of names, dates and events worthy of a place in any library ... among the many "talking points" in the article is a listing of (1) key people, (2) key airplanes, (3) key developments, (4) key events, (5) places to remember and (6) famous organizations ... regardless of what direction our members take in response to the invitation to visit Station 131 next summer, our Friends will be there with their usual great ceremonies ... with ***Wilfrid Dimsdale*** stepping back in favor of other commitments, ***Peter Brooke*** has assumed the leadership, aided by many others including ***Greta Barker, Peggy Wells, Barry Tyler, Les Dear, Russ Abbey*** and many, many others ... the "Stolen Valor Act" was enacted to judge persons wearing U.S. decorations to which they were not entitled, and it might just apply to a guy who claimed he was at Station 131 from beginning to end, flew 686 combat hours, was a "Command Pilot," and a captain, but in reality was a second lieutenant co-pilot and pulled only 11 missions at the tag end of it all (he shall remain nameless in this column) ... it was too late to confirm at press time, but no less than 100 P-51 Mustangs were to perform at Columbus, Ohio ... if it happened, it must have been a sight to behold, ...

398th Bomb Group PX

ORDER FORM (The Second Generation)

QTY	ITEM	UNIT COST	TOTAL
	CLOTHING		
____	T-Shirt, black, "398th BG Flying Fortress"	$12.00	____
____	T-Shirt, navy, with B-17 front view	$12.00	____
____	T-Shirt, gray, with with logo on back	$12.00	____
____	T-Shirt, olive, with Triangle W	$12.00	____
____	Denim Shirt, long sleeve, 398th logo	$28.00	____
	(S, M, L, XL XXL, **please indicate size**)		
____	Golf Shirts, embroidered Triangle W, 60% cotton, 40% poly mesh		
____	Mens, light blue or white, S-XL	$25.00	____
____	Ladies, light blue, S-XL	$25.00	____
	(**please indicate size & color**)		
	CAPS		
____	Black, with logo (indicate 600, 601, 602, 603)	$8.00	____
	BOOKS (All books postpaid)		
____	Fortresses Over Nuthampstead (Bishop)	$65.00	____
____	398th History (1946, photo copy)	$20.00	____
____	"Remembrances" (1989, photo copy, Ostrom)	$30.00	____
____	"Bird of Prey" (Coffee)	$19.95	____
____	"Hell From Heaven" (Streitfeld)	$19.95	____
____	"Last of the B-17 Combat Drivers" (Weekley)	$39.95	____
____	"The Youngest Crew" (Wagner)	$19.95	____
____	"WW II Odyssey" (Frankhouser)	$19.00	____
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	(indicate 600, 601, 602, 603)		
____	Group lapel pin (Hell From Heaven)	$5.00	____
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____	Squadron Patch (indicate 600, 601, 602, 603)	$6.00	____
____	B-17 Jacket Patch (rectangular)	$4.00	____
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	PHOTOGRAPHS & PRINTS		
____	"Clearing & Colder" (8x10)	$10.00	____
____	"Clearing & Colder" (14x17)	$30.00	____
____	Anstey Stained Glass Window booklet	$10.00	____
	(11x17 includes list of comrades Killed in Action)		
____	Aluminum Overcast (8x10)	$2.00	____
____	"Sunset at Nuthampstead" (8x10)	$7.00	____
	MISCELLANEOUS		
____	Bumper Sticker (black)	$3.00	____
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____	License Plate Frame (398th imprints)	$5.00	____
____	Book Marker	$5.00	____
____	WW II Coloring Book (with crayons)	$4.00	____
____	Tote Bag (20x15, black, with logo)	$8.00	____

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