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

VOL. 23 NO. 2

FLAK NEWS

APRIL 2008

# 398th VP Daughter Reaches Out

By MARILYN GIBB-RICE

Vice President, 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association

Allow me to introduce myself. I am the youngest daughter of James and Dorothy Crouch and I am married to Geoff Rice the group's aircraft photo researcher. My father was a waist gunner and togglier on

Willis Frazier's crew in the 601st. I began attending reunions with my mother in 1991 after my father passed away. I have attended all of the stateside reunions since that time and I have attended three

of the UK reunions. When the call went out for bringing the second generation onto the board, I volunteered. I joined the board in 1998, became the treasurer in 1999 and the vice president this past year.

Wally, the president of the group, asked me to write an article to introduce myself and explain my roll in the future of the 398th BGMA. After much thought, I e-mailed "twos" and "threes" (2nd and 3rd generations) who have been to reunions to seek their thoughts on the future of the bomb group. I would like to thank them for their help (you know who you are) —

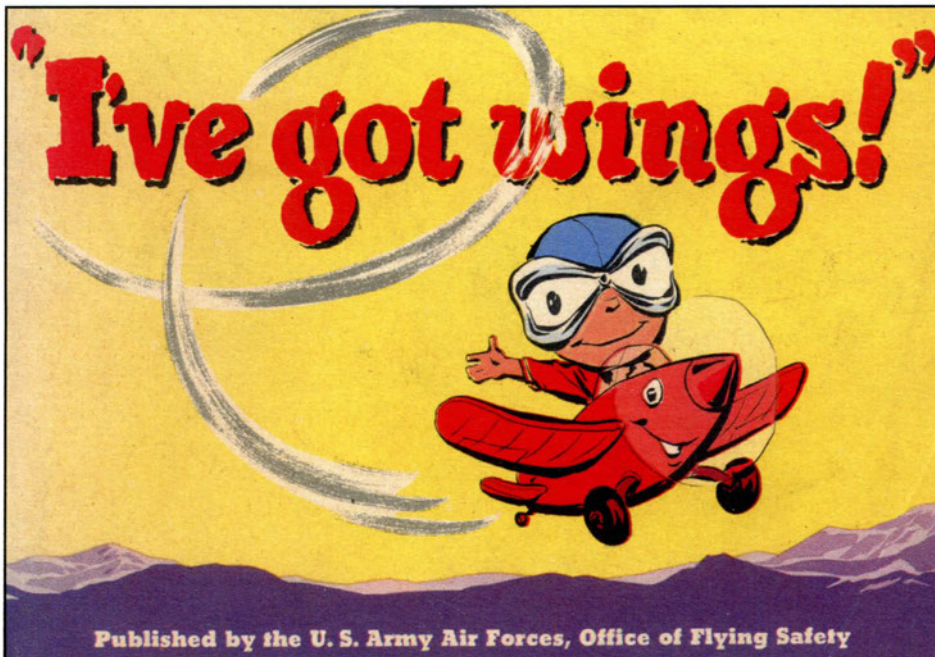
## "Twos And Threes" Urged To Attend Reunions, Tours

thank you. Several common reasons were given as to why they have become involved and how valuable the reunions are.

The ones of us without our fathers that attend, feel closer to our fathers when we are around all of the other 398th vets. We attend because our fathers can't. Part of our fathers lives in those who are still around. We find out what it was like in the 398th during WW II. It is our connection to their time at Nuthampstead.

To the ones of you who are fortunate enough to still have your father, we encourage you to join your father at our reunions. You will get to know about a period in his life that you may not know too much about. You will be able to get to

*Continued on Page 2*



## From A Modest Beginning

It was a simple, 94-page booklet featuring the raw elements of learning to fly and it was directed to the raw recruits of young airmen known as Cadets. The cartoon characters became the initial learning tools for the young men from all over America who answered the call to arms. And their personal calls to become pilots. As simplistic as the cartoons were, along with the simplistic flight directions, these men moved on in their quest for Wings and were soon in the cockpits of B-17's and other aircraft of World War II.

# “If We Don’t Keep Things Alive, Who Will?”

(Continued from Page 1)

meet other vets along with other “twos” and “threes.”

Some of the reactions from the ones that have attended the reunions are:

These 398th vets are fascinating.

They are of the Greatest Generation.

A thrill I shall never forget.

Makes our lives richer.

Bonds are sealed with others.

We are able to pay our respects.

Makes us proud. The vets are all so dear.

Meeting wonderful characters.

New surprises and new friends.

We get to thank the vets.

Realizing we have so much more to learn.

It is a blessing to be a part of this group.

The vets are amazing. Doing historical research, you get to know just how amazing they really are.

While attending the reunions, we hear endless stories of courage that come to life as we listen to the vets. They share their pain, their sorrow, but they also share their joys and happiness. These guys stand for something, something more than themselves. They stand for freedom, freedom not just for Americans, but freedom for people everywhere. If it

wasn't for our dads and others like them, we wouldn't be enjoying the freedoms we so easily take for granted. These 398th veterans are real heroes. These 398th veterans are our heroes!



MARILYN GIBB-RICE

We would like to encourage vets and vet's widows to communicate with their children and grand children about the 398th. We need to keep the history of the group alive and continuing on from generation to generation. If we did not

have the 398th BGMA, the stories of our fathers would have gone untold. Now we have so many means available for people to find out about the group and their history. We have so many wonderful volunteers working endless hours on collecting and preserving the information that we receive in order to keep memories alive. We need to let everyone connected with these historic men know that there is this wonderful organization available for them. We would like to see the Sons and Daughters of the 398th be as successful as the Daughters of the American Revolution!

We are asking that more of the veterans and Twos and Threes attend the reunions since each year becomes more precious. We need to honor our fathers' service along with all of the others who left home, leaving behind their families to fight for freedom not only for our country but for others as well. We need to realize how close some of our fathers came to not coming home. We need to realize that a lot of fathers did not come home — they gave all. Their names are forever engraved on the window at the Anstey church. We need to understand what it really meant for our fathers to fly in a B-17 in World War II.

Please support the 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association by becoming a member and joining us at the reunions. You will be able to find a common ground, no matter what generation you are. It is impossible to explain the emotions of attending a reunion unless you have been there and witnessed it in person. By keeping this bomb group active, we will keep our memories of our fathers and grandfathers alive. If we do not keep things alive, who will?

Marilyn Gibb-Rice  
Fountain, CO 80817-1795

## Navigator's Intercom Adventure:

### *Where Did They All Go?*

It was not very funny on November 2, 1944, after “bombs away” over the Leuna plant at Merseburg.

Nothing “funny” about losing part of your tail assembly to flak and then an engine to a Focke Wulf fighter. And then the moment of truth when you ring the “bail out” bell.

That was some 64 years ago, and while the episode is still very clear to Russ Reed, he can look back on at least one incident with considerable humor (kinda) —

The picture has Reed and his crew at 9,000 feet over the North Atlantic somewhere between Goose Bay, Labrador, and Keflavik, Iceland. Hour after hour of monotonous droning on auto pilot.

Reed and co-pilot Dick Wanserski in the cockpit; Stan Mates at his navigator's table in the nose and the rest of the crew huddled in the radio room (some playing craps).

Finally, Wanserski left for the radio room (with a stop at the bomb bay relief

tube) and to check on the others.

One of the gunners, Vic Krizek, had no interest in craps so he went forward to occupy the empty co-pilot seat and chat with Reed. Later, Reed himself headed for the relief tube after trying unsuccessfully to reach Mates on intercom.

Mates, meanwhile, had “unplugged” and was planning to visit Reed in the cockpit. When he finally reached the flight deck and saw the left seat unoccupied he immediately turned and headed toward the radio room thinking he was the only one on board.

“He was under a ‘full head of steam’ when he reached the radio room,” said Reed. He was most ‘relieved’ to see us.”

After that, he learned to not unplug his intercom.

Mates had joined the Reed crew in Florida only in time to leave for England. Five missions later he and the others all “unplugged” and headed for POW camps.



— Painting by Gil Cohen

## So You Want A New Computer?

The good news is I got a new computer, much faster than my five year old iMac. I got the latest iMac with 24 inch screen last week. It is great. The screen is very bright and sharp and big. And it is very speedy.

The bad news is that with the new Intel Macs and new Leopard OS, some old software just plain doesn't work at all. Case in point, my five year old GoLive 6 (for web creation) and Photoshop 7 (for managing photos for the web) that I use to make web pages is dead.

I have downloaded a 30-day trial of GoLive 9 and am practicing, but so far it is very frustrating, probably because I skipped versions 7 and 8 and thus I am dealing with many accumulated so called improvements. I can't figure out where some things went and there are brand new ways of doing things.

I presume it will be the same with Photoshop. So there is a big relearning curve. I also want to evaluate Dreamweaver vs. GoLive, though I think Dreamweaver is way beyond my capabilities.

— DAVE JORDAN  
398th.org

(If you want the FLAK NEWS Editor, he responds only to the U.S. Mail and telephone.)

— A.G.O

# Do You Know What You Have Done?

Colonel Michael Ryan was a speaker at the 2004 reunion at Falls Church, Virginia, (Washington, DC) and he left the 398th gathering with these words — “Do you know what you have done?”

And then he went on to tell of the 60-plus years of peace in Europe that followed World War II. Something that has not happened since the days of Napoleon. Ryan then pointed to the



COL. MICHAEL RYAN

gathered veterans in the banquet room and said —

“The Romans gave them peace, but not democracy. You gave them both. Imagine!”

This same Ryan, son of “one of our own,” was at the reunion as “Military Advisor to the Secretary of Defense Representative, Europe, U.S. Mission to the EU, Brussels, Belgium.”

He had ascended to this lofty position via many Air Force assignments since graduating from the Academy in 1982, and immediately moving on to home and abroad assignments as an A-10 pilot.

All that, and more, came to an end last fall with his Air Force retirement. And brought new challenges in the civilian field in Belgium.

He will now be addressed as, “Mr. Ryan,” having been reappointed as the “civilian” Defense Advisor at the U.S. Mission to the European Union.

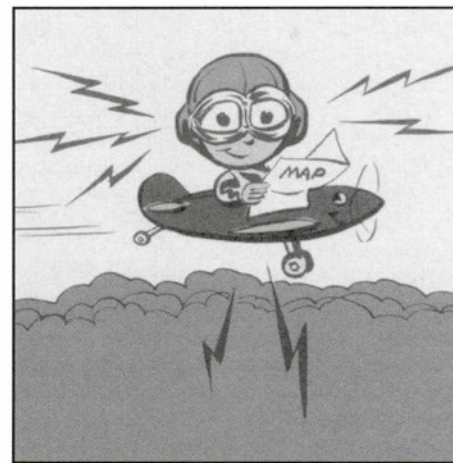
“I will most likely remain here (Brussels) through our son's high school graduation in 2010,” he said.

“We have been very blessed and tremendously lucky to have spent so many wonderful years together in the service of our country and we look forward to many more.”

What is revealed there (in his 29-year “resume”) will correspond to his 2004 question to the 398th veterans — “Do you know what you have done?”

Ryan's father, a navigator in the 602 squadron, died when Michael was seven.

The adjoining is a tribute to his Dad.



## A Message To Dad

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Dear Dad

As you know, I retired from the Air Force recently after twenty-five years of service (plus my four years at the Air Force Academy). I just thought I'd write to tell you what you already know, that your life, your deeds, and your heroism inspired me to serve my country. Thank you.

I was lucky. I never had to do what you and your friends did. I never had to go to war, although lots of my friends did and some didn't come back. Sure I flew a lot, sure I was in Europe during the height of the Cold War, and sure I feel good that I was able to help a lot of people and do a lot of good things, but I never had to do what you had to do and I thank God for it. Still, I was proud to serve, proud to stand watch, and proud of my association with those great warriors whom I know and love. “There is no greater honor,” a famous author once said, “thank to be considered a peer in the company of warriors.” I've had that honor a thousand times, and I thank you for inspiring me to it.

During my first days at the Academy, I came upon this quote by John Stuart Mill in an article called “To What Should I Devote My Life.”

*War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things. The decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse.*

*The man who has nothing for which he is willing to fight, nothing which is more important than his own personal safety, is a miserable creature and has no chance of being free unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself.*

Well Dad, living and working with better men than myself has made me a better man. Some of those men are my friends, and some of those men are your friends. All of them have inspired me, as you did, and I just wanted to mark this occasion by saying Thank You.

— Your loving son,  
Michael

[www.398th.org](http://www.398th.org)

## England In June:

# Brandy, Ozzie Join Talents For Tour

The England Tour for 2008 has been "pulled together" through the combined efforts of Brandy Howard (over here) and Ozzie Osborn (over there).

There will be 17 398th Association members on the flight across the pond, with prospects excellent for even more.

The dates are Wednesday, June 11, through Tuesday, June 17.

Tour costs, according to leader Brandy will be \$3,000 per person. This to include five nights at the Crowne Plaza in Cambridge; all local transportation plus transportation to and from Heathrow Airport in London; admission and lunch at Churchill's Chartwell House; two Pub lunches, a hog roast lunch and a Farewell Dinner.

Not included is the individual travelers' fares to and from their home to London and return. Nor the one night hotel stay near Heathrow (Ibis) after arriving in London on June 11. It will be necessary for most travellers to leave on June 10 if their flight does not land until the 11th.

Reservations (if still available) and specific tour information may be obtained

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## 398th Officers Are Among The 17 On England Tour

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by contacting Brandy or Ken Howard.

Airline information may be obtained by calling Sara at 1-800-727-2157.

On the "other side," Ozzie and his Friends have lined up an active tour schedule that will include representation at the Memorial, Woodman Inn, Anstey Church, Cambridge Military Cemetery, Duxford and other WW II bomber bases that have active museums.

In addition to Brandy, her father, Ken, and grandmother, Helen, the "loading list" will include a pair of the group's directors, Lew Burke and Arnie Schneider and their spouses, Lillie and Marie. Also the new treasurer, Mellisa Ledlow and husband Jim. Also historian Lee Anne Bradley.

Rounding out the "Squadron of 17" will be Frank Yarmoski, the ex-togglier, with his daughter Cathy and friend Sandra



**BRANDY HOWARD**  
She's The Leader



**ANN COLLINS**  
She'll Go To Slany, Too



Petrocco; ex-ball turret gunner Terence St. Louis; David Evans, a keenly interested Associate; Ann Collins, daughter of a ball turret gunner; Geoff Rice, a transplanted Brit (husband of vice-president Marilyn Gibb-Rice) who will be making his umteenth trip back to England.

Others are sure to be added in the final few weeks before "tour time."

[www.398th.org](http://www.398th.org)

## Sally B Had A Sudden Change In The Weather

The weather in England, which many of us remember as "capricious," caused not only a near-washout of the B-17 Sally B flying display schedule for 2007.

But to make it hurt even further, the season ended with an engine failure. (Oil pressure on No. 1 began to decrease while the oil temperature began to rise. It seized.)

With the season a near total loss, and finances running low, there appeared one Bertie Ashby, a land owner from the Norwich area.

His contribution to Sally B — £360,000!

It was the largest gift ever received by Sally B.

Suddenly, the weather changed from Capricious to Euphoric.

## Czech Show Beckons



**CHRISTENSEN MEMORIAL**  
Slany, Czech Republic

The exciting and dramatic "Air Stars Meeting of 2008" is scheduled for June 7 in the Czech Republic city of Slany, a "suburb" of Prague. It is well known to the 398th.

And the sponsors are inviting any member of the Association to come and participate. Especially those who might have known the Christensen crew of the 603rd which was shot down near the Slany airport in 1945 with the loss of eight lives.

There will be participation from the Czech vice premier, and American ambassador, Czech army and air force units, 40's type dance bands and specialty flying.

Christensen's son and other family members of the crew have been to previous Air Stars to see the excellent memorial dedicated to those who perished when the Fort was shot down.

For information on this invitation contact the FLAK NEWS editor.

# 398th Memories & Statistics

The war has been over for almost 63 years, but memories ... and official records ... live on indefinitely.

Case in point is the 398th Bomb Group STATISTICAL REPORT, prepared faithfully and professionally by Headquarters under the watchful supervision of Wallis Campbell and his staff.

The STATISTICAL REPORT has been used ever so many times by the FLAK NEWS editor these past 23 years to supply

facts, figures ... and sometimes frightening personnel news ... in pursuit of stories of our men.

In this issue, one monthly report was pulled from the shelf to illustrate the extremes the HQ people went to in tracking both men and machines. This one covers the four weeks between January 1, 1945, and January 31, 1945.

Each monthly report covered 25 pages, almost exclusively relating to the aircraft and the men who flew them.



## SECRET Strength Report

Personnel Strength as of December 31	Personnel Strength as of January 31
Flying Officers .....406	Flying Officers ..... 349
Flying Enlisted Men .....625	Flying Enlisted Men ..... 576
Engineering Section Personnel	Engineering Section Personnel
Officers.....14	Officers..... 14
Enlisted Men .....590	Enlisted Men..... 587
Ordnance Section Personnel	Ordnance Section personnel
Officers.....7	Officers ..... 7
Enlisted Men .....192	Enlisted Men..... 190
Armament Section Personnel	Armament Section Personnel
Officers.....9	Officers ..... 8
Enlisted Men .....234	Enlisted Men ..... 235
Administration Personnel	Administration Personnel
Officers.....83	Officers.....83
Enlisted Men .....883	Enlisted Men..... 841
Station Complement Personnel	Station Complement Squadron
Officers.....12	Officers ..... 12
Enlisted Men .....128	Enlisted Men..... 121
<b>TOTALS</b>	
Officer Strength	Officer Strength
Flying .....406	Flying ..... 349
Others.....113	Others ..... 112
Total Officers.....519	Total Officers ..... 461
Enlisted Men Strength	Enlisted Men Strength
Flying .....625	Flying ..... 576
Others.....1899	Others ..... 1843
Total Enlisted Men .....2524	Total Enlisted Men..... 2429
<b>Total Flying Personnel.....1031</b>	<b>Total Flying Personnel..... 925</b>
<b>Total Ground Personnel ...2012</b>	<b>Total Ground Personnel .. 1955</b>

## SECRET Aircraft Strength

Total on hand 31 December 1944....59			Total on hand 31 January 1945 .54		
LOSSES			GAINS		
1-1-45	43-38895	Crashed in Channel	1-3-45	43-98993	Burtonwood
1-5-45	43-38164	Abandoned on Continent		43-8637	Burtonwood
				43-38951	Burtonwood
1-6-45	44-8637	Missing in Action		43-38970	Burtonwood
1-11-45	42-97338	Abandoned on Cont.	1-12-45	42-97266	Bovington
1-11-45	42-102469	Abandoned on Cont.	1-14-45	4408630	Burtonwood
1-12-45	44-8476	Salvage	1-15-45	44-8553	Burtonwood
	42-97810	Abandoned on Cont.	1-17-45	43-38562	Stanstead
	43-38811	Abandoned on Cont.		43-39098	Stanstead
	43-37977	Abandoned on Cont.		44-6834	Stanstead
1-13-45	44-6573	Abandoned on Cont.		44-8500	Stanstead
1-14-45	42-102418	Crashed, Operational Mission	1-22-45	44-6885	Burtonwood
			1-23-45	44-8644	Ridgewell
1-15-45	43-37874	Abandoned on Cont.	1-29-45	43-39137	Burtonwood
	42-102593	Abandoned on Cont.			
1-22-45	43-37889	Missing in Action			
	42-107150	Missing in Action			
1-24-45	43-38126	Abandoned on Cont.			
1-29-45	43-37982	Abandoned on Cont.			
	42-102492	Salvage			
1-31-45	43-38661	Missing in Action			

## SECRET Engineering Statistical Report Month of January 1945

	600	601	200	603
1. Daily average no. of A/C assigned .....	14.4	14.5	14.3	14.5
Daily average no. of A/C operational.....	8.4	10.2	10.3	10.8
Daily average no. of A/C oper. per A/C on hand .	65.4%	76.9%	80.4%	83.3%
Daily average no. of A/C grounded for maintenance and repair .....	3.2	2.4	1.7	1.5
Daily avg. no. of A/C grounded for battle damage.	1.2	0.7	0.8	0.7
Total no. of Major Battle Damage.....	10	5	8	8
Total no. of Minor Battle Damage.....	18	15	28	31
a. These figures are recorded as of 2000 hours each day.				
2. Engine Changes				
a. AIR	600	601	200	603
Engine failure abortions.....	2	1	2	1
Engine failure other .....	0	4	1	4
b. GROUND				
Engine failure - oil consumption .....	1	4	1	0
Engine failure - mechanical reasons .....	3	7	2	4
Engine failure - battle damage.....	5	2	0	1
Engine change - Time .....	0	0	2	0
Totals .....	11	18	8	10
3. The following mechanical abortions occurred for reasons below:				
	600	601	200	603
a. Engine failure.....	2	1	2	1
b. Propeller governor.....	0	0	0	1
c. Electronic turbo controls .....	1	1	0	0
d. Oxygen system.....	0	0	0	2
e. Bomb release equipment.....	0	0	1	0
Totals .....	3	2	3	4
4. No. of scheduled A/C failing to T/O.....	3	12	2	6

# THE COCOA BEACH REUNION

## September 3-4-5-6, 2008

### FACTS

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

**HEADQUARTERS HOTEL** — Hilton Cocoa Beach Ocean-front, 1550 N Atlantic Ave, Cocoa Beach, FL 32931. Telephone 321-799-0003. The hotel is located 1.3 miles south of State Route 520. About 45 miles east of Orlando.

**RESERVATIONS** — No “mail in” reservations required. Call 1-800-526-2609 for “398th Group Rate” of \$89.00 per room.

**REGISTRATION** — Use the Official Registration Form on the adjoining page. Fill in completely, recording the cost of each tour or banquet desired. Tabulate the Total Cost at the bottom to include the \$10 per person registration fee (and your 2008 annual dues if applicable). Send the Registration Form and covering check to Sharon Krause. She will return a copy of the Form, indicating receipt of your funds.

**TOURS** — All tours (except NASA) will be conducted by Complete Destinations, 3936 Andover Cay Blvd, Orlando, FL 32825. Phone 321-229-1036. Lynn Haverkamp. Tickets will be collected by the coach drivers for all tours.

**BANQUETS** — The Welcome and Farewell Banquets will be held in the Hilton Hotel’s Sea Oats Ballroom on Thursday and Saturday nights, September 4 and 6, respectively. Make your table reservations when picking up your Registration Packet in the Memory Room (Sea Grapes Room). All banquet tickets must show a “Table Number.”

## A Learning Experience

The young FAA/CAA aircraft controller arrived on the scene at 8th Air Force Headquarters, ready to assume control of the day’s activities, featuring about 1,500 heavy bombers. He began with some questions —

ATC — “So when do they all take off?”

8th Operations — “Oh, along about 0715.”

ATC — “Staggered takeoffs?”

8th Ops — “No, all at the same time.”

ATC — “What about the weather?”

8th Ops — “Has to be almost zero visibility before we scrub any mission.”

ATC — “Who can control all those planes?”

8th Ops — “They control themselves. They all know what to do and they do it with strict radio silence.”

ATC — “Surely there must be collisions.”

8th Ops — “Yes, indeed, there are accidents. They are all hundreds of pounds over their maximum take-off weights and they fly into an overcast that can extend to 10,000 feet and more. The majority always get airborne safely.”

ATC — “What about coming back? What are the landing procedures for finding their own base?”

8th Ops — “They do that for themselves. Of course, they won’t all be coming back. Some will go down in various places on the Continent or Channel. Some will find other fields in East Anglia even with their dead, dying and wounded aboard. They’ll fire red flares coming in.”

ATC — “What happens tomorrow?”

8th Ops — “They’ll do the same thing all over again.”

The ATC turns white, goes very quiet and leaves the room.

The foregoing was a hypothetical story as delivered by Ozzie Osborn at the Phoenix Reunion’s Farewell Banquet last December.

### TOURS

WEDNESDAY, September 3 — 6:15 to 10:15 PM via Coach.

**Indian River Queen Dinner Cruise.** This is the special event for the early birds who want to get a jump on the reunion activities. We’ll board the 99-foot Indian River Queen triple deck paddle wheel vessel for the ship’s famous “Southern Comfort”



dinner beginning with cheese and fruit kabobs and ending with Bourbon pecan pie (and lots in between). Dance to the live Dixieland Band while enjoying the sights of the Indian River.

THURSDAY, September 4 — 10:00 AM to 12:00 NOON.

**Island Boat Wildlife Tour.** A popular tour of the Cocoa Beach Thousand Island islands. Explore the heart of the islands, home to herds of Manatees, flocks of birds and playful Dolphins. All on the Banana River and amongst the space age facilities of the Space Center.

FRIDAY, September 5 — 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

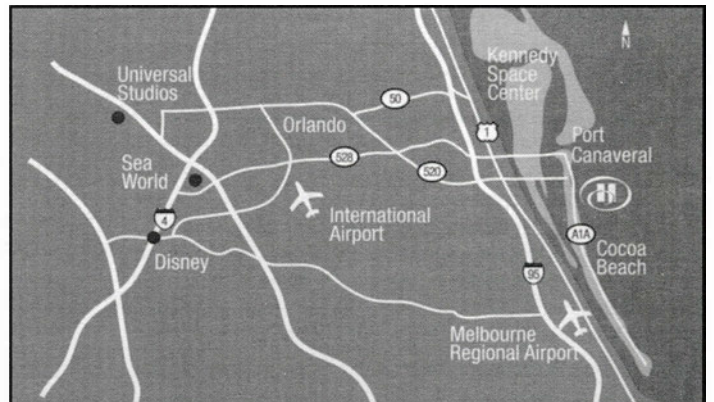
**NASA Kennedy Space Center Tour.** This is a FREE tour made available to the 398th by NASA’s “External Relations” department. However, only 40 tickets are available, so it will be “first come, first served.” This will include a visit to the Air Force Museum at Cape Canaveral, the Kennedy Space Center and IMAX theater. Lunch is “on our own.”

FRIDAY, September 5 — 10:00 AM to 12:00 NOON.

**World Class Port Canaveral Cruise.** View the great diversity of businesses and occupations supporting the Port’s cargo, cruise and foreign trade zones. A perfect way to see and enjoy the “business end” of America’s Space Program.

SATURDAY, September 6 — 12:00 NOON to 4:00 PM.

**Air Command Warbird Museum.** This museum at nearby Titusville displays, maintains and restores all types of aircraft that were indigenous to the world’s military Air Forces.



# OFFICIAL REGISTRATION FORM

398th Bomb Group Memorial Association 25th Annual Reunion  
Cocoa Beach, Florida September 3-4-5-6, 2008

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN AUGUST 5, 2008

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ WIFE \_\_\_\_\_ SQD. \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP+4 \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

NAMES OF OTHERS IN PARTY.  
PLEASE PRINT FOR NAME TAGS \_\_\_\_\_

## WEDNESDAY, September 3 —

Registration	9:00 AM to	4:00 PM	Memory (Sea Grapes) Room		
Indian River Queen Dinner Cruise	6:15 PM to	10:15 PM	Via Coach	\$94.00 x _____	\$ _____

## THURSDAY, September 4 —

Registration	8:30 AM to	4:00 PM	Memory (Sea Grapes) Room		
Board Officers Meeting	9:00 AM to	12:00 PM	Dunes Rooms I & II		
Island Boat Wildlife Tour	10:00 AM to	2:00 PM	Via coach	\$41.00 x _____	\$ _____
GROUP BUSINESS MEETING	2:00 PM		Seashore Ballroom		
No Host Bar	6:00 PM		Sea Oats Ballroom		
Welcome Banquet	7:00 PM		Sea Oats Ballroom	\$33.00 x _____	\$ _____

(Table reservations required.)

## FRIDAY, September 5 —

Registration	8:00 PM to	4:00 PM	Memory (Sea Grapes) Room		
NASA Kennedy Space Center Tour	8:30 AM to	4:00 PM		\$0.00 x _____	FREE

*Note: Only 40 tickets for this tour are available.*  
*It is provided free of charge by NASA to veterans and kin.*  
*Tickets will be distributed on "first come, first served" basis.*

Port Canaveral Tour	10:00 AM to	2:00 PM	Via Coach	\$41.00 x _____	\$ _____
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## SATURDAY, September 6 —

Registration	9:30 AM to	12:00 PM	Memory (Sea Grapes) Room		
Air Command Warbird Museum Tour	12:30 PM to	4:00 PM	Via coach	\$35.00 x _____	\$ _____
No Host Bar	6:00 PM		Sea Oats Ballroom		
Farewell Banquet	7:00 PM		Sea Oats Ballroom	\$44.00 x _____	\$ _____

(Table reservations required)

**Registration Fee Per Person** (2 maximum per family) \$10.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**2007 Dues** (if applicable) \$20.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I/We will be staying at the:  Hilton Cocoa Beach Oceanfront **TOTAL** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please check all that apply:

- Veteran
- Widow
- Relative
- Associate

**Please complete the form, enclose check, and mail to:**

**398th Bomb Group Reunion  
Sharon Krause  
Plymouth, MI 48170-2870**

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

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

# Bottom Line Notice

The Annual Financial Report for the past year was offered by the "outgoing" treasurer, Marilyn Gibb-Rice, who has since been "elevated" to the Association's vice presidency.

It arrived without comment, perhaps because Marilyn had "poured out" her 398th feelings and attitudes in her Page 1 story about urging the "twos and threes" to enter into the joys and pleasure of belonging to the Association through the reunions and tours.

What she did not touch on was the number on her report's "bottom lines," which while not earth-shaking, still begs for recognition. The net income deficit of \$2,314.24 should be of some concern, especially in that it could have been much higher had it not been for the \$5K Timeless Voices gift offered by a member.

Another consideration would be the fewer and fewer members among our contributing members. The Taps list published in January was rather dramatic, especially coupled with the unpublished list of members who have been dropped because they either refused or forgot to offer dues support. Members who moved and neglected to offer new addresses also hurt the bottom line.

Like Marilyn suggested, it is going to be up to the "twos and threes."

# Southeast Dues

With the vice president's compelling message on the financial condition of the 398th Association, which is directed to everyone, the thrust this quarter will be directed to those members living in what we can call the "Southeast."

Twenty-five percent of the group's dues for the year will be directed to the following states —

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

Dues are still \$20 (as of now) and they represent the only source of income for the 398th. Hopefully, all those who receive dues cards in this issue will respond (and also make note of any address changes).

Others wishing to "help the cause" can send their contributions to dues manager Dawne Dougherty, Harrisburg, OR 97446-9585.

# 398th BOMB GROUP

## FINANCIAL REPORT January through December 2007

<b>Income</b>	
"Memory Of" Fund	50.00
Flak News	1,080.00
Membership Dues	9,120.00
Interest Income	17.17
Reunion	1,049.95
Timeless Voices	<u>5,645.00</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$16,962.12</b>

<b>Expenses</b>	
Timeless Voices	1,326.33
Flak News	14,365.15
Gifts	986.84
PX Restocking	1,367.76
Postage and Delivery	329.11
Printing and Reproduction	73.91
Reunion Expenses	13.28
Supplies	581.68
Telephone	<u>232.30</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$19,276.36</b>

**Net Income - \$2,314.24**

<b>Current Assets</b>	
Checking/Savings	
A.P.G. Edwards & Sons	16,874.34
Ent Federal CU Savings	43.43
Ent Federal CU Checking	<u>5,745.53</u>
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<b>\$22,663.30</b>

Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable	<u>-1,874.34</u>
<b>Total Accounts Receivable</b>	<b>-\$1,874.34</b>

**Total Current Assets \$20,788.96**

**TOTAL ASSETS \$20,788.96**

<b>Liabilities &amp; Equity</b>	
Equity	
Opening Bal Equity	7,714.92
Retained Earnings	15,388.28
Net Income	<u>-2,314.24</u>
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>\$20,788.96</b>

**TOTAL LIAB & EQUITY \$20,788.96**



## Help The Editor

**The FLAK NEWS editor has run completely out of back copies of one of the early issues — Vol. 6 No. 3 (July 1991). If any member who has been keeping all the back issues will be so kind as to photocopy this issue (12 pages) the editor will be most grateful. Send to Allen Ostrom. Thank you!**

# Letters

*To Sandra Averhart:*

"I am currently researching material for my next book which will be devoted to the 8th Air Force missions flown against Merseburg's Leuna synthetic oil plant.

"I came across a superb diary (*398th.org*) written by your uncle, William Baker, and found his thoughts particularly evocative. And also pertinent due to his later loss of life on return from another mission to Merseburg.

"Would it be possible to use extracts from his diary for my book?"

— **R.J. Bowden**

"You are more than welcome to use whatever you need from the diary. In fact, it would be an honor. I realize that I have a rare and valuable piece of history and I treasure it more than I can say. The 398th is happy to release stories that support its history."

*Sandra Averhart, North Fort Meyers, Florida*

"Here is a contribution to your fine publication, FLAK NEWS, because I know there is some cost in sending it out. And thank you for your presentation on 8th Air Force 'bunching up.' It was very well received."

*Henry Grenley, Ballard Rotary, Seattle, Washington*

"I am from a small town in eastern Holland and last year I adopted the grave at Margraten of your Anthony Perry, who was killed among those on the Newman crew. My father had adopted this grave in 1948 and now I continue for him.

"Thanks to your wonderful web site (*398th.org*) I read more of this airman in William Frankhouser's account of the mission, 'What Happened to My Comrades?' Here I discovered that Perry was probably killed by German civilians.

"The history of Anthony Perry was very dramatic and I would like to continue seeking more information on him."

*Ron Siteur, Holland*

"Thank you for your heart-warming story. The 398th is fortunate to have friends like you. I will contact Frankhouser because I believe he will be interested in working with you in your research."

*Wally Blackwell, president, 398th BGMA*

"Here's a small donation to keep FLAK NEWS coming."

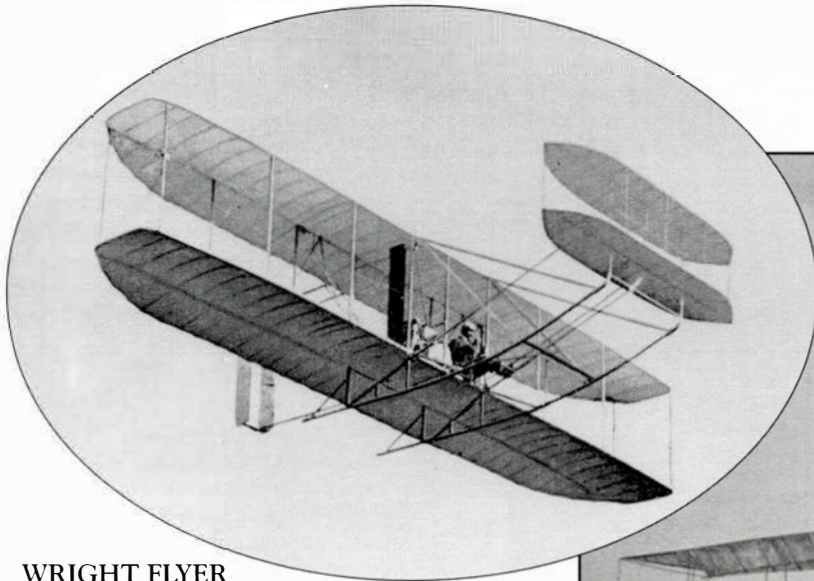
*Robert Holden, Sr., Janesville, Wisconsin.*

"I think of the 398th often. We are hosting the Aluminum Overcast in Denver again for our fourth successive year. We've broken records each year to have the best-in-nation designation each year. Hal Weekley will join us this year to add authenticity to our activities as well."

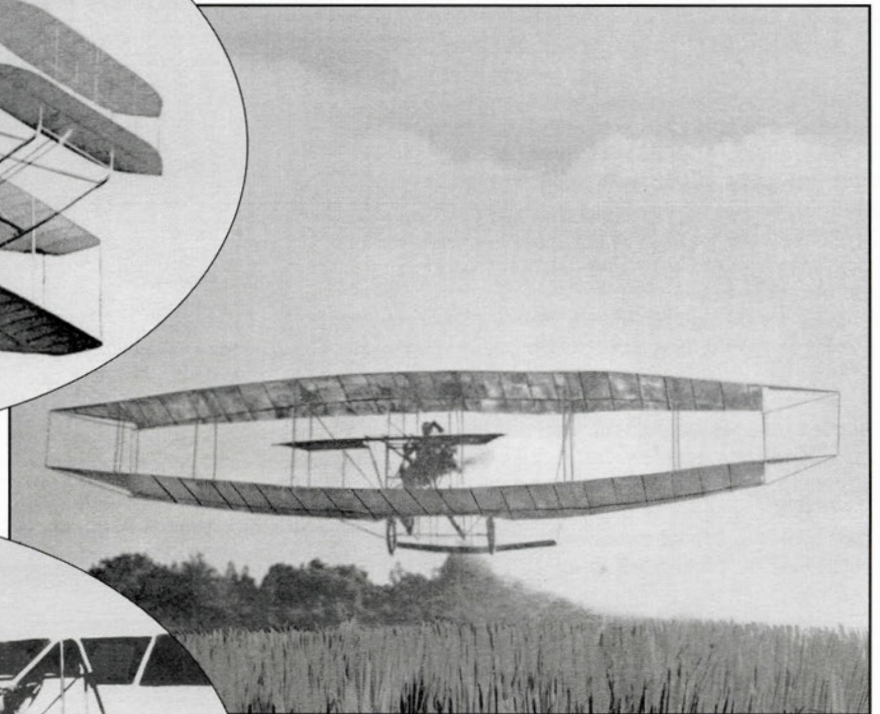
*Greg Anderson, Wings Over the Rockies, Denver, Colorado.*



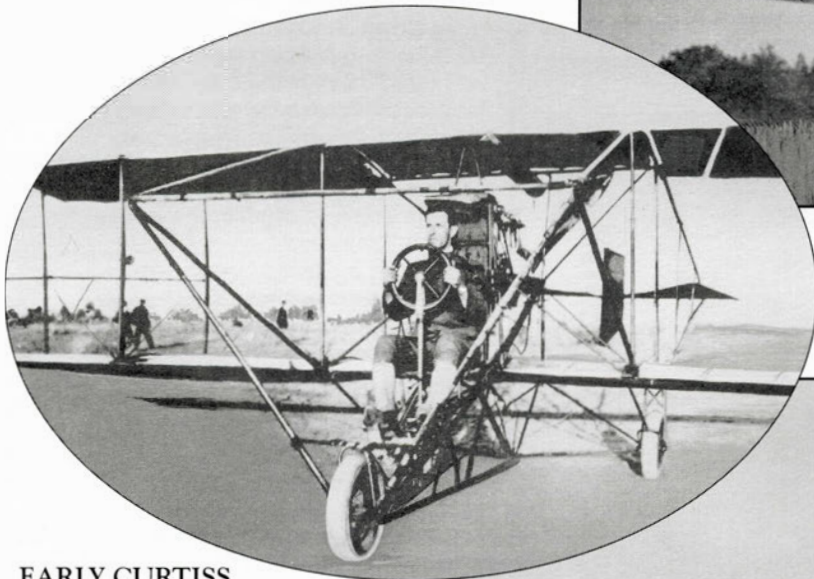
# From Out Of The Air Force Past



WRIGHT FLYER

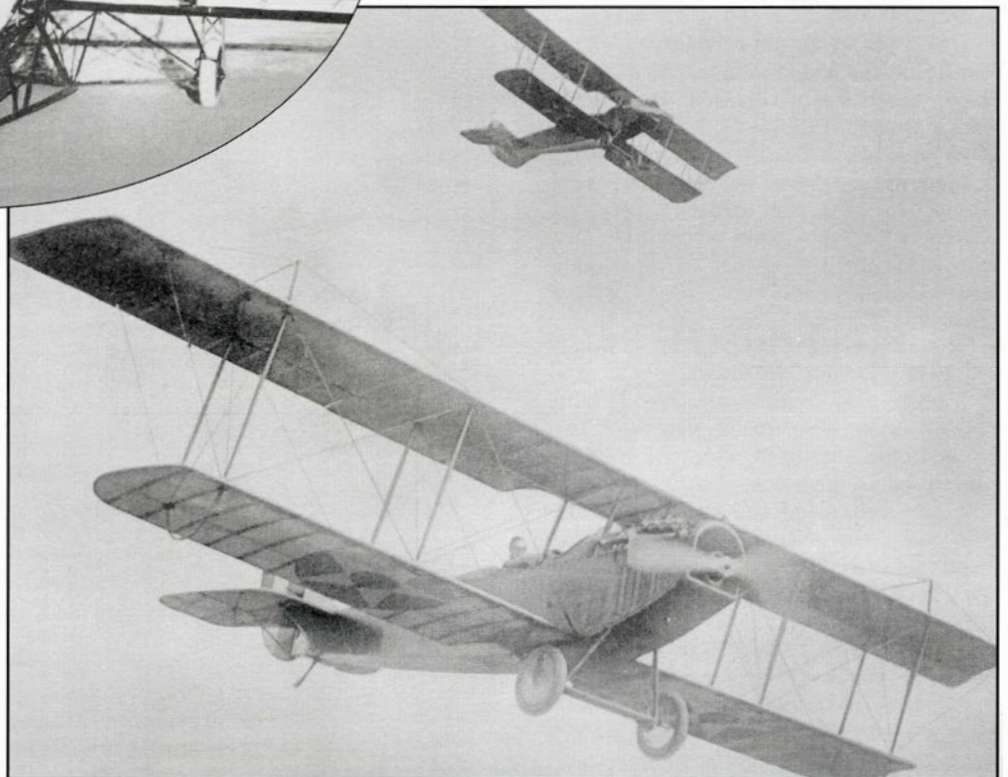


CURTISS "JUNE BUG"



EARLY CURTISS

HERE ARE four Air Force planes of years gone by. These and other prints to come were given by Elaine Moore, daughter of 603 pilot Vince Moore.



CURTISS "JENNIES"

# Belgian Remains “Search Active”

It is called the “Broken Wings Museum” and it is located at Erembodegem, Belgium. Or very near Aalst. Or some 15 kilometers from Belare, Belgium. Which is where Marcel Janssens lives.

All that to identify (again) our good Belgian friend who has been “hooked up” with the 398th ever since a 603 B-17 set (splashed) down near his hometown on October 17, 1944.

This would be the “Betsy Ross” of the Perry Powell crew that could make it only as far as Belare coming home from a mission to Cologne when it crash landed on a “meadow” that turned out to be a shallow, muddy field. The plane survived, as did pilot Powell and co-pilot Sam Walker. All the others on the crew had bailed out and eventually, the nine returned to Nuthampstead to resume the war.

Janssens was duly “taken” by what he had witnessed as an eight-year-old. And he has remained “locked in” on 398th (and 8th Air Force) history ever since.

Along with a nice Christmas greeting, Janssens sent along a number of photos from the “Broken Wings” museum, including a defused 500-pound bomb found near the airport at Brussels and the remains of a German Focke Wulf fighter.

Also, a photo of the Powell crew, whom Janssens has continued to research all these years. Even through the Powell crew’s eventual demise on February 3, 1945, mission to Berlin.

“And wonders will never cease,” said Janssens. “This past winter I received a large envelope from a friendly lady who runs a store nearby to the Cedar Grove Cemetery at Trinity Texas, where Walker is buried.

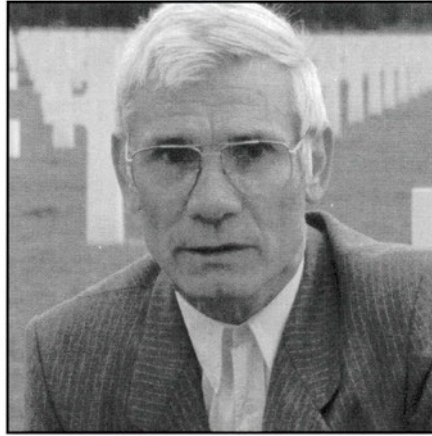
“It contained a photo of him. It was a happy day for me,” he added.

“I have also discovered that Powell had an uncle who was a pilot with the 351st Bomb Group at Polbrook and he completed 35 missions.

“I also contacted the family of Dave Bancroft, who joined the Powell crew later and survived the mid-air collision that took the lives of the rest of the crew.

“And the sister of Marvin Luckie. It has been an interesting search.

“My best good wishes to all the 398th air war veterans and all the FLAK NEWS readers.”



**MARCEL JANSSENS**  
Still Remembers After 64 Years



**SAM WALKER**  
“A Happy Day For Me”



**BELGIAN LANDING PLACE**  
End Of The Line For “Betsy Ross”

# Book Reaches Into Dad’s “Other Life”

There is a book upcoming that will be dedicated “to those Air Force servicemen who participated in the world’s first combined and most sustained strategic bombing campaign.”

That would be the 8th Air Force of World War II, and will feature one member of the 398th Bomb Group — Donald D. Dorfmeier, a member of the Nigel Carter crew of the 601st Squadron.

The book, still some chapters from completion, is the ultimate product of Dorfmeier’s son, David.

The book was started some 40 years ago by the father, Donald, featuring his time at Stalag Luft IV and subsequent 86-day march across Germany. It is now on the cusp of being completed by the son, with a “more expansive and over arching project to honor my father’s memory, characterize the life altering impact of war and how these influences have shaped my values and the course of my own life.”

All that to say that the father came home from the war to pursue a field in education ... and a life consumed by Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), “which he fought privately with self-medicating alcohol.”

“There was a discrepancy between his public presentation versus what I saw at home,” said David. “He never sought out formal psychological help largely because PTSD was not officially recognized as a disease until 1980. My father became a dark and brooding man.”

The son is a sergeant major in the Army Reserve, a Viet Nam veteran, and has a personal and professional interest in working with soldiers suffering from PTSD.

He has a master’s degree in Psychology and Counseling and is currently providing a variety of clinical counseling services to active duty soldiers and their family members.

Dorfmeier’s father was a waist gunner on the Nigel Carter crew when the plane was shot down over Peenemunde, Germany, on August 4, 1944.

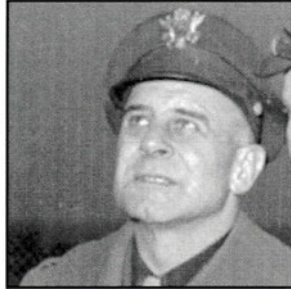
Others on the crew included Jason Axson, co-pilot; William Hembrough, navigator; Edward Castro, bombardier; Richard Kukukian, engineer; Robert Doll, radio; William Carr and Sanford Lewis, gunners. All became POW’s.

Dorfmeier may be reached at Paso Robles, CA 93446.

# BRIEF-things

**Peggy Wells** is still the caretaker of the 398th flag program at Nuthampstead (bless her heart) but is open to offers from the "younger team" to take over this responsibility ... our secretary, **Bob Bowen**, is still the recipient of our deceased veterans' flags and will forward them to **Peggy** (or whoever volunteers for the Station 131 job) ... an interesting addendum to **Mike Ryan's** retirement story read "JET NOISE, the Sound of Freedom" ...

at the start of WW II one would hear "God bless the pilot" in response to a high-flying airplane ... **Karl Issel** of San Francisco, who escaped from East Germany as a youth and went on to a major architectural career, feels that the Allied bomber command might have concentrated on the Nazi power plants and "the war would have been over in two weeks" ... **Richard Holub**, the Air Force test pilot who introduced the Rocket Assist feature to one of our



**JIMMY DOOLITTLE**

B-17's, recalls seeing similar installations on the post-war B-47's and some large Navy planes like the Neptune, but B-17 co-pilot **Bob Lucy**, who later flew B-47's, says he never had to call on the rockets for any of his take-offs ... it should be remembered that **Jimmy Doolittle** witnessed the rocket assist takeoff just off Station 131 and formed visions of utilizing them for close-in B-17 attacks on Japan (then came the B-29's) ... another Boeing engineer who had a part in the rocket assist drama at the time, **Bud Krafft**, went on to work on the B-29's in Seattle and remembers the day the big bomber's first landing wheels arrived for installation they did not fit (the wheels came with six lugs and the assembly was made for five) ... **Krafft** went on to a long career with Boeing, working on rocket engines ... your editor has to apologize to **Tom Guice, Jr.** — and **Floyd Deaton**, both of whom were placed on the January Taps list (both are alive and well) ... this past year has seen a spike in interest from 398th "kids" looking for information on their grandfather (thankfully we have **398th.org** and historian **Lee Anne Bradley**) ... **Derald Lyman** had a "great experience" in WW II, but now he thinks the 398th should "fly off into the sunset" ... sorry, but others don't agree and are looking for another reunion in Florida in September ... a Cathay Pacific Airline (China) pilot (American **Ian Wilkinson**) must have triggered lots of cheers from former WW II bomber pilots when he buzzed Paine Field in Washington after he took off with this brand new Boeing 777 and "cut the grass" at about 20 feet (Cathay, with no sense of humor, fired him) ... ground crew guy **Earl Hoefert** went to see the Aluminum Overcast in Indianapolis and he found that "the engine still sounds familiar" ... the England Tour folks visiting Duxford in June will have a chance to see the only P-40 B fighter still in flying condition; it survived Pearl Harbor in '41 only to crash later and lie undiscovered until restored in the 1980's ... the P-51 Mustang was our "Little Friend" in 44-45, but it was the P-38 that made the early air war history: first to destroy a German aircraft; first over Berlin; first to land in Japan; created more than 100 aces in the Pacific, including Medal of Honor winners **Dick Bong** and **Tom McGuire**; flown by both **Doolittle** and **Lindberg** ... and a warm "Cheerio" to **Elaine Tyler** and her partner **Richard** who will underwrite the England Tour members' entry and luncheon at **Churchill's** home at Chartwell ... if there is one book that should be in the library of every 398'er (young and old) it is **Cliff Bishop's Fortresses Over Nuthampstead** ... it's not just good, it's priceless ... order it from the PX ... a photo that ran in FLAK NEWS a while back found its way onto the pages of the AFA's very fine Air Force magazine ...

# 398th Bomb Group PX ORDER FORM (The Second Generation)

QTY	ITEM	UNIT COST	TOTAL
<b>CLOTHING</b>			
_____	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 (S, M, L, XL XXL, <b>please indicate size</b> )	\$28.00	_____
_____	Golf Shirts, embroidered Triangle W, 60% cotton, 40% poly mesh		_____
_____	Mens, light blue or white, S-XL	\$25.00	_____
_____	Ladies, light blue, S-XL ( <b>please indicate size &amp; color</b> )	\$25.00	_____
<b>CAPS</b>			
_____	Black, with logo (indicate 600, 601, 602, 603)	\$8.00	_____
<b>BOOKS</b> (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	_____
<b>JEWELRY</b>			
_____	Squadron lapel pins (indicate 600, 601, 602, 603)	\$5.00	_____
_____	Group lapel pin (Hell From Heaven)	\$5.00	_____
<b>LOGOS</b>			
_____	Squadron Patch (indicate 600, 601, 602, 603)	\$6.00	_____
_____	B-17 Jacket Patch (rectangular)	\$4.00	_____
_____	8th Air Force Patch	\$6.00	_____
<b>PHOTOGRAPHS &amp; PRINTS</b>			
_____	"Clearing & Colder" (8x10)	\$10.00	_____
_____	"Clearing & Colder" (14x17)	\$30.00	_____
_____	Anstey Stained Glass Window booklet (11x17 includes list of comrades Killed in Action)	\$10.00	_____
_____	Aluminum Overcast (8x10)	\$2.00	_____
_____	"Sunset at Nuthampstead" (8x10)	\$7.00	_____
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>			
_____	Bumper Sticker (black)	\$3.00	_____
_____	Blue Ink Pen (398th imprints)	\$5.00	_____
_____	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	_____

Cost of Items ordered \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Delivery and Handling add \$4.00  
 or \$5.00 if order is over \$20.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
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 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to "398th Bomb Group PX." Mail completed order form and check to Carolyn Widmann, Noblesville, IN 46062-7150,

# Super Soldiers and Superheroes

by Allen Ostrom

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The first time I saw a superhero comic book was when I was a kid. I remember the excitement of seeing a new issue arrive at the newsstand. The stories were so exciting, and the characters were so cool. I wanted to be like them. I wanted to be a superhero. I wanted to save the world. I wanted to be a hero.

As a child, I was fascinated by the idea of superheroes. I would read the comics every day, and I would imagine myself as one of the heroes. I would pretend to fly, and I would pretend to fight bad guys. I would pretend to be a superhero. I would pretend to be a hero.

As I grew older, I realized that being a superhero was not as easy as it seemed. It was a lot of responsibility. It was a lot of sacrifice. It was a lot of hard work. It was a lot of danger. It was a lot of risk. It was a lot of pressure. It was a lot of stress. It was a lot of fear. It was a lot of pain. It was a lot of suffering. It was a lot of death. It was a lot of destruction. It was a lot of chaos. It was a lot of madness. It was a lot of insanity. It was a lot of madness. It was a lot of insanity.

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