

New Regime Begins At Reunion

Austin, Texas Meeting Site

It all may seem a “little different” when the 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association convenes for its 26th annual reunion next September. But there will be a reunion and it will be held in Austin, the capitol city of Texas.

The dates are September 9-10-11-12, 2009.

For the first time since Bill Comstock took over as president among a small gathering in Dayton, Ohio, in 1976, there will be a lady at the helm.

Marilyn Gibb-Rice, the daughter of the late waist gunner Jim Crouch, ascended to the presidency at the untimely passing of Wally Blackwell this past January. Wally had served as president since 1986, following the passing of Comstock.

(The “26th annual” designation actually began in 1984 at Rapid City, South Dakota, when the 398th began meeting independently outside the umbrella 8th Air Force Historical Society.)

Thus, Marilyn, the lady who had been “groomed” as vice-president by Blackwell himself, now receives the opportunity to lead the Association, which already is well sprinkled with both men and women from the second generation.

One of Marilyn’s first order of business obviously will be the “grooming” of her



A PADDLE WHEEL PARTY IN AUSTIN

own vice president.

This will come during the initial meetings of the Official Board and later at the General business meeting. Both to be held on Thursday, September 10.

Holdover elected officers, besides Marilyn, are Bob Bowen, secretary; and Mellisa Ledlow, treasurer. Board of Directors are Lew Burke, Paul Roderick, Arnie Schneider and Joe Mansell. The English Friends director is Wilfrid Dimsdale.

Other officers are Sharon Krause, reunion chair; Dawne Dougherty, dues manager; Lee Anne Bradley, historian

and data coordinator; Carolyn Widmann, PX Manager; Dave Jordan, web master; Geoff Rice, photo researcher; Peter Brooke English Friends chairman; and Allen Ostrom, FLAK NEWS editor.

(The second generation officers include Gibb-Rice, Ledlow, Krause, Bradley, Widmann, Jordan, Rice and Brooke.)

The new president (Marilyn) has been known for her many “surprises” when serving as vice-president. One surprise, which turned out to be a smashing success, was her presentation of special medallions to all the veterans.

This was in Phoenix two years ago, and she repeated the idea last year in Cocoa Beach, Florida, adding the new members who missed out in Phoenix. She will do this again in Austin, and will encourage all the veterans to “pose for a picture” wearing their medallions.

The banquet programs (Thursday and Saturday nights at the hotel), have not been announced, but it can be taken for granted that England’s Malcolm Osborn will be there to tell his audience about the success of the 2008 England Tour ... and render a special invitation to the scheduled 2010 Tour. (See Page 6.)

The reunion actually begins with a dinner cruise on Austin’s downtown Lady Bird Lake, Wednesday evening, September 9, and ends with a hotel dance on September 12. All events are well recorded on Pages 4 and 5. Krause emphasized that Registration Forms be sent to her no later than August 10, and that individual hotel reservations be recorded with the Radisson North Hotel no later than August 18.



**55TH FG MEMORIAL
At Nuthampstead**

398th To Welcome The 55th

The 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association will have a welcomed addition to the reunion in Austin, Texas, this September.

The officers of the 55th Fighter Group have agreed to give the 398th a “try.” Since both groups’ memberships are decreasing in size each year, each group thought it would be beneficial to join forces.

The 55th Fighter Group was stationed at Nuthampstead, Station 131, before the 398th occupied the base. They were there from September 14, 1943, until April 16, 1944, when they transferred to Wormingford (www.55th.org). They flew P-38’s and P-51’s while escorting B-17’s on their missions to the mainland.

THE AUSTIN REUNION

September 9-10-11-12, 2009

Facts

Tours

REUNION CHAIR —

Sharon Krause, 11690 Paciocco Ct, Plymouth, MI 48170-5993. Telephone 743-416-5993. E-mail tink46@comcast.net.

HEADQUARTERS HOTEL —

Radisson North Hotel, 6000 Middle Fiskville Rd, Austin, TX 78752-4315. Telephone 512-451-5757.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS —

No mail-in reservations are required. Telephone the hotel at the above number or 1-800-333-3333. Ask for the 398th Bomb Group rate of \$99.00 E-mail rhi_auno@radisson.com.

REGISTRATION —

Use the Official Registration Form on page 5. Fill in completely itemizing the cost of each tour selected, banquet meals selected, registration fee of \$10 or \$20, and the yearly dues (if applicable). Send the form, with covering check to Sharon Krause. She will return a copy of your form, with accompanying receipt of your funds.



TOURS —

All tours will be conducted by Around Austin, Inc., 6836 Austin Center Blvd, Ste 250, Austin, TX 78731-3193. Telephone 512-371-9111. E-mail office@around-austin.com.

BANQUETS —

The Welcome and Farewell banquets will be held in the hotel ballroom on Thursday, September 10, and Saturday, September 12, respectively. Make your table reservations when picking up your Registration Packet. All Banquet Tickets must show a Table Number.

Blackwell Memorial

Many friends, members and relatives of Wally Blackwell contributed a total of \$1810.00 to the 398th BGMA, the funds earmarked for a special memorial in his memory at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum. These are the contributors —

Ambrose	Davis	Lee	Traeder
Averhart	Doerstler	Mansell	Underwood
Balint	Dougherty	Rhodes	Watson
Blackwell	Eberle	Rice	Weekley
Bradley	Faletti	Roderick	Yarmoski
Bowen	Jordan	Schneider	Yarmoski
Crouch	Ledlow	Stange	

WEDNESDAY, September 9, 2009 —

Lone Star Riverboat Barbecue Cruise 5:30 PM to 9:00 PM

It's a delightful cruise on Lady Bird Lake on a charming paddle boat. View the great city skyline as you enjoy a full Texas-style Barbecue. A great way to kick off the 26th annual reunion.

THURSDAY, September 10, 2009 —

Lady Bird Johnson Center & Zilker Botanical Gardens 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

This is a four-hour tour of Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center and Zilker Botanical Gardens. This tour is for the ladies, or those who choose not to take in the 398th business sessions and board meetings. The Center displays the native plants of the Central Texas Hill Country, South and West Texas (see Page 12). See the Zilker Gardens that are endowed by nature with handsome trees, natural grottoes and aquatic habitats that have been integrated into a design of spectacular beauty and tranquility.

FRIDAY, September 11, 2009 —

Hill Country & War Memorial Tour 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Fredericksburg and Nimitz National museum of the Pacific War. It's the old world flavor to Fredericksburg with its architecture and traditions of the German heritage of the quaint town. And many will enjoy visiting the famous Nimitz World War II museum.

SATURDAY, September 12, 2009 —

Austin Duck & War Museum Tour 12:30 PM to 3:30 PM

Experience Austin's newest interactive museum dedicated to the history and spirit of the Lone Star State. Many exhibits, IMAX theater, stores. And a ride on Lady Bird Lake in the Austin Duck, a British land/water carrier called the Stalwart.

Members Help Out

Last year a number of members and friends made contributions "over and above" to the 398th BGMA. Here are the last names who added funds of \$100 or more to the general treasury —

Bargreen	Erikson	Issel	Roberge
Beckley	Green	Johnston	Zinter
Bell	Grenley	Joseph	
Bowen	Holden	Muhle	

OFFICIAL REGISTRATION FORM

398th Bomb Group Memorial Association 26th Annual Reunion
Austin, Texas September 9-10-11-12, 2009

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN AUGUST 10, 2009

NAME _____ WIFE _____ 398th SQD. NO. _____
 55th FG

ADDRESS _____ PHONE (_____) _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP+4 _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

NAMES OF OTHERS IN PARTY.
PLEASE PRINT FOR NAME TAGs _____

WEDNESDAY, September 9 —

Registration 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM Memory (Elm) Room
Lone Star Riverboat Dinner Cruise 5:30 PM to 9:00 PM Via Coach \$65.00 x _____ \$ _____

THURSDAY, September 10 —

Registration 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM Memory (Elm) Room
Board Officers Meeting 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM Sycamore Room
Lady Bird Ctr & Zilker Botanical Tour 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM Via coach \$39.00 x _____ \$ _____
(Price does **NOT** include \$6.00 admission to the Lady Bird Wildflower Center.)
GROUP BUSINESS MEETING 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM Hill Country D
No Host Bar 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM Hill Country AB
Welcome Banquet 7:00 PM Hill Country AB \$34.00 x _____ \$ _____
(Table reservations required.)

FRIDAY, September 11 —

Registration 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM Memory (Elm) Room
Fredericksburg & Nimitz Museum Tour 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM Via Coach \$49.00 x _____ \$ _____
(Price does **NOT** include \$7.00 admission to the Nimitz Museum. **WW II** Veterans free.)

SATURDAY, September 12 —

Registration 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM Memory (Elm) Room
Austin Duck & Bullock Museum Tour 10:30 AM to 3:30 PM Via coach \$44.00 x _____ \$ _____
(Price does **NOT** include \$7.00 admission to the Bullock Museum.)
No Host Bar 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM Hill Country AB
Farewell Banquet 7:00 PM Hill Country AB \$44.00 x _____ \$ _____
(Table reservations required.)

Registration Fee One person \$10.00 Two or more persons \$20.00 \$ _____

2009 Dues (if applicable) \$20.00 x _____ \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

NOTE: Radisson North Hotel reservations must be made by August 18, 2009.

I/We will be staying at the: Radisson North Hotel
 Other _____

Please check all that apply:

398th Veteran
 55th Veteran
 Widow
 Relative
 Associate

Please complete form, enclose check, and mail to:

398th Bomb Group Reunion
Sharon Krause
11690 Paciocco Ct.
Plymouth, MI 48170-2870
(734) 416-5993
E-mail: tink46@comcast.net

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.**