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

VOL. 19 NO. 3

FLAK NEWS

JULY 2004

ONE LAST LOOK: *Memories Abound On 2004 Tour*

"There are no memorials left behind from World War II in those tormented skies over Britain and the Continent, but we do have our remembrances – some in stone, some in glass, some in our minds and some in our hearts. We cherish them all, especially our Friends of the 398th."

So said the speaker as the 40 "One Last Look" tour members tapped their memories and emotions at the close of some fabulous days in France and England.

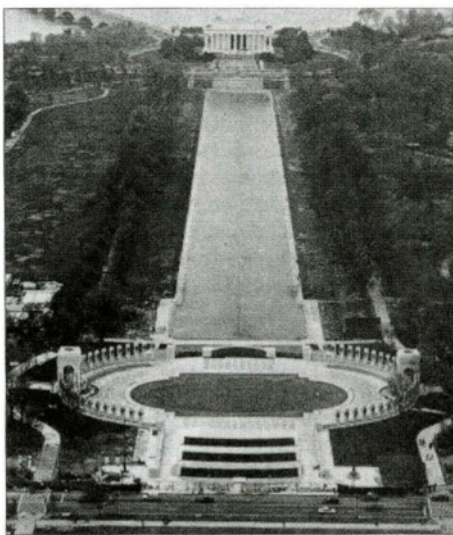
The tour was held between June 3 and 15, the 12th such official visit to Station 131 in Nuthampstead, but the first to take in a D-Day celebration.

The "One Last Look" tour included the ceremonies of the 60th anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy in 1944 and concluding with remembrance services, tours, luncheons and dinners at Nuthampstead and Anstey.

Along with a special assortment of stops along the way carrying such names as Villedieu-les-Poeles, Courseulles-sur-Mer, Cambridge, Hertford, Bayeux, Gatwick, Heathrow, etc., etc.

Not to mention President Bush of America and President Chirac of France speaking to some 10,000 veterans, friends and family members at the American Military Cemetery at Omaha Beach. Includ-

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**WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL
On 398th Reunion Tour Program**

Memorial Is A Must See

Of all the historic memorials in and surrounding Washington DC, a "must see" for the 398th members coming to the 21st annual reunion in Falls Church, VA, is the newly-dedicated World War II National Memorial. See page 4.

"If you want to go on a tour during the reunion you must register by July 30."

This was the warning issued again by reunion chair Sharon Krause as she urged members to send in their registrations for the 398th Bomb Group Association reunion at Falls Church, VA on September 8-9-10-11, 2004.

Registration forms were printed in the April issue of FLAK NEWS.

"Send them in now!" she pleaded.

Such is the demand for tour coaches in the Washington, DC area, particularly after the opening of the National World War II Memorial.

There will be no "last minute" tour tickets available after the July 30 deadline, according to Krause, who is "under the gun" to pre-pay for the required coaches by July 30.

Tours are scheduled to Mt. Vernon; the WWII Memorial and the Udvar Hazy Air & Space Center; and to the Spy Museum, Capital City and Arlington Cemetery.

The reunion will be held at the Marriott Fairview Park Hotel in Falls

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Last Call For The 398th PX

BY WALLY BLACKWELL
President –
398th Bomb Group Memorial Association

All good things come to an end and I must inform the 398th membership that it is time to end Joe and Rozanne Joseph's 398th PX operation.

We all know of the magnificent effort that they have put in for us for years. Joe and Rozanne also know that we appreciate and are grateful for what they have done for all of us. The plan for the close out of their PX operation is as follows –

The Josephs will conduct their PX activity as usual at this September's 2004 annual reunion at Falls Church, VA. They will come prepared to take nothing home with them at the end of that reunion. This announcement informs our membership of the PX close out and furnishes all an opportunity to make PX purchases until then as they wish. At the reunion there will be an effort to sell certain, if not all, the remaining inventory at reduced rates. Everything goes. (See Page 11).

There will be an opportunity at this September's reunion for a presentation by anyone interested in starting a follow-on PX activity. We would all be grateful for someone to accept the responsibility for such a task.

The 398th PX operation is a major undertaking and has required the efforts of two people. The task requires a continuing workload of finding and maintaining contacts for ordering products, processing and mailing user purchases, furnishing detailed financial reports to the 398th Board, maintaining their own storage space, shipping the PX inventory to and from reunion sites, and of course setting up and operating the PX at reunions.

Presentations by those proposing a new PX activity must be comprehensive and convincing. They are invited to contact me as soon as possible to discuss such proposals.

Recently the Eighth Air Force Historical Society abandoned their PX operation and transferred their whole PX business to the Mighty Eighth Heritage PX at Savannah, GA. That PX is in full operation with all sorts of B-17 caps, jackets, jewelry, etc. and they will welcome our future business.

Greg Anderson Takes New Post In Colorado

A good friend of the 398th, Greg Anderson of the EAA, is moving from Oshkosh, Wisconsin to Denver, Colorado.

Anderson has accepted a position of President and CEO of Aviation and Space Center of the Rockies, whose Wings Over The Rockies Museum is located at Lowry Field.

"The museum has big plans to develop youth outreach and flight operation initiatives," said Anderson, "as well as a possible relocation to Centennial Airport on Denver's southeast side."

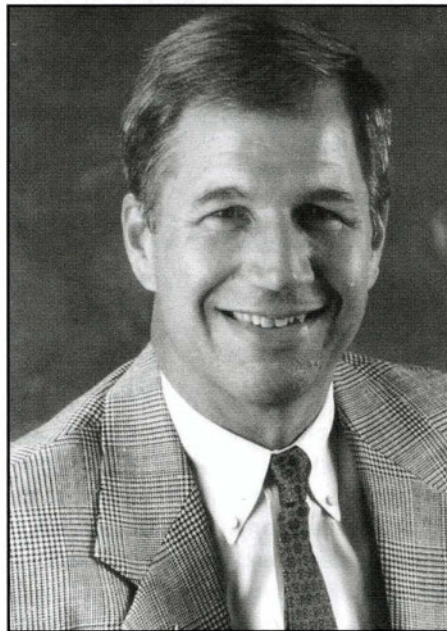
Anderson leaves Oshkosh and the EAA as Senior Vice President for Development. This responsibility included the operations of the Aluminum Overcast, the B-17 identified with the colors and markings of the 398th.

Anderson, in a letter to president Wally Blackwell, said –

"Thank you for your generous investment of confidence and support these past many years. My association with the 398th, dating back to the days of Bill Comstock, have been a joy and blessing."

Anderson returns to Colorado, where he graduated from the Air Force Academy in 1971.

His position at the EAA, Oshkosh, will be assumed by Elissa Lines, who comes with experience in development at two museums, Pima Air and Space, Tucson, and the Museum of Flight, Seattle.



GREG ANDERSON

Texas, Mid-West States Due For The Dues

Six, big Mid-West states and the Lone Star state of Texas have the honor of supporting the 398th Memorial Association this quarter with their annual dues.

One quarter of the Association's support can be expected when members from the following states send their \$20 to dues manager Jim Haas, Perry, IA 50220-0163.

Remember, it is quite acceptable to do "more than the dues" with financial support. Many members do this with added contributions to the publication of FLAK NEWS.

Dues envelopes for the following states are included – Texas, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Ohio.

If the dues envelope happens to be missing, just use your own envelope and send your contributions to the above address. Remember, only dues paying members will be kept on the FLAK NEWS mailing list.

New Bomber Magazine Available

A sparkling, new, full-color magazine dedicated to preserving the history of bomber crews of World War II is now on the market.

BOMBER LEGENDS Volume 1 No 1 "hit the streets" in April, 2004, filled with stories and photos on the B-17 and B-24, but not neglecting the "other" bombers known as the "mediums."

"Heroism Aboard The B-17" and "Low Level Ploesti Reunion" (B-24) are only two of the articles to be found in the inaugural issue.

"Every aspect of the bomber will be included," said Editor-in-Chief George Welsh, promising to "produce a magazine that will include stories and letters from everyone associated with WW II bomber aircraft."

The quarterly magazine will cost \$20 per year for WW II veterans or \$24.99 to all others. Write to Bomber Legends, 1672 Main St., Ste. E, PMB 124, Ramona, CA 92065-5257. Telephone 866-788-3624. E-mail –

subscriptions@bomberlegends.com.

For WWW information –
bomberlegends.com.

The hardest thing to learn in life is which bridge to cross and which to burn.



Los Angeles Times Photo, courtesy James Yip

Triangle W B-17 "Grounded" In California

The "398th's own" B-17, Aluminum Overcast, is expected to be out of commission for several months after its main gear collapsed following its landing at Van Nuys, California on May 5, 2004.

It had just flown in from Edwards Air Force Base and was completing its 4,000-foot landing roll when both main gear mechanisms collapsed. The airplane was estimated to be traveling approximately 30 miles per hour at the time and was about to turn off the runway.

There were no injuries among the crew or passengers and all persons aboard exited the airplane.

The remainder of the Spring/Summer EAA tour was cancelled.

Hal Weekley, who had been with the crew at Edwards but did not accompany the plane to Van Nuys, said –

"What happened was impossible to have happen. Both jack screws in the landing gear broke in the exact same place at the same time. It couldn't happen, but it did. It never happened before as well as we can determine. I expect it to be on its feet in record time. I'll wager that it will be at the airshow in Oshkosh in July."

Weekley, 601 pilot, had flown the AO on behalf of the EAA for 24 years, recording 413 flights in 30 states. He retired as first pilot in 2001, the last of the WW II B-17 pilots "still on the job."

He had been at Edwards Air Force Base to address the graduating class of the Pilots Test School.

The EAA has owned the AO since 1981 and spent more than a decade restoring it to full flying condition, some \$55,000 having been contributed by members of the 398th Bomb Group Memorial Association.

"We have been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support," said president Tom Poberezny. "EAA members and non-members alike have stepped forward with offers to help in many ways. We are truly grateful for these offers and expressions of support."

The EAA web site is www.b17.org. The 398th web site is www.398th.org.

Reunion Registrations Due By July 30

Continued from page 1

Church, VA, located about halfway between downtown DC and Dulles Airport.

It will be the group's 21st meeting after deciding in 1984 to meet independently of the 8th Air Force Historical Society. There has been some discussion of returning to the Society meetings, although current plans call for another independent meeting in 2005.

Another major decision upcoming for the 398th at the reunion will be what action to take after Joe and Rozanne Joseph relinquish their PX responsibilities following the Falls Church meeting (See Page 2).

Sharon Krause can be reached at Plymouth, MI 48170-2870.

The Marriott Hotel is located at

3111 Fairview Park Dr., Falls Church, VA 22042.

For hotel reservations call 1-800-228-9290. Rates for the 398th are \$89 per night.

The PX, Memory Room and Registration will be established at the hotel by Tuesday, September 7. Registrations will begin September 8. The board will meet September 9 in the morning and the general membership in the afternoon. A tour, primarily for the ladies, will take place September 9 to Mt. Vernon. The Welcome Banquet will be held that evening at the hotel.

The tours to the WW II Memorial and Udvar Hazy come on September 10. The Spy Museum, Capital City and Arlington tours come on September 11, followed by the Farewell banquet at the hotel.

Remember – Registrations must be received no later than July 30 to be assured of tour tickets.

Lights Out For 97th Bomb Group?

Another bomb group association is about the shut down. The 97th, which operated in North Africa, has cancelled its proposed 2004 meeting and is seeking input from its members whether or not to try one more time in 2005.

"If it comes to pass that 2005 will be the closing reunion, then consideration may be given to the Washington, DC area, which would be a fitting location because of the new World War II memorial," said 97th secretary Rob Paris.

Ed's Note: The 398th will visit the WWII memorial on one of the group's reunion tours (Friday, September 10) as part of the 21st annual meeting in Falls Church, VA. There is no talk of "shutting down."

NOTE: The dates of the reunion are Wednesday – Thursday – Friday and Saturday, September 8-9-10-11, 2004. The dates were improperly printed on the hotel reservation form.



THIS IS HOW the Boeing 307 looked from the air in Seattle two years ago after ditching during a post-restoration test flight (it ran out of gas). Another restoration followed, and today it is exhibited at the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center in Washington DC. The 307 may be seen along with many other vintage aircraft when the 398th tours the Smithsonian's new facility during the annual reunion September 11-14, 2004. Ex-Fortress people will immediately see the similarity between the two Boeing planes, such as wings, tail, landing gear and engines.



A Look At The World War II Memorial

The National World War II Memorial in Washington DC features a sunken oval plaza that will serve as the new public gathering spot, with the Mall's reconstructed Rainbow Pool at its center.

The plaza is framed by architectural features laden with symbolism, including 56 granite pillars representing the states and territories that joined forces during WW II, and two arched pavilions that symbolize the Atlantic and Pacific theaters of the war.

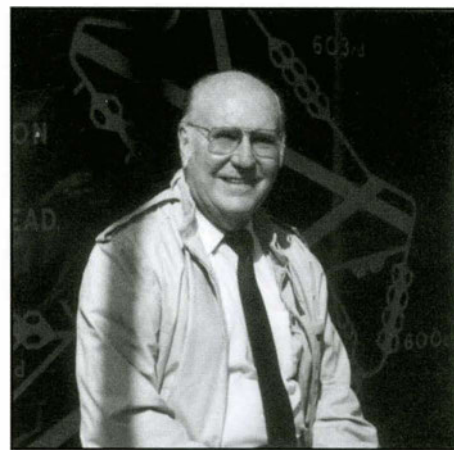
A curving "Freedom Wall" contains 4,000 sculpted gold stars, commemorating the more than 400,000 Americans who gave their lives. The gold star was the symbol of family sacrifice during the war.

398th Represented

The National WW II Memorial in Washington DC was dedicated on Saturday, May 29, 2004. It was called, "A Tribute To A Generation."

And among the thousands of visitors, as a member of that generation, was our 398th president, Wally Blackwell.

Due to the long walk and long wait involved, Teedy gave up her ticket in "Section 1" to historian Lee Anne Bradley.



BILL MARKLEY

Bill Markley, who began his 398th assignment in 1943 as the pilot of "Crew No. 1," passed away May 18, 2004 at Air Force Village, California. He had moved up to operations officer and then, in September, 1944, assumed command of the 600th Squadron, replacing Bruce Daily. His wife, Ada, preceded him in death by a few months.

Markley continued to serve the Air Force for 30 years after World War II, flying with SAC in B-47's and KC 135's. He was also the wing commander of Airborne Command, the unit responsible for the presidents' plane, Air Force One. He was a graduate of the War College and earned an MBA degree from George Washington University and BS from Texas.

Markley is survived by his son, William III, two grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

New Book On 398th B-17's Due Soon

A book that has been in the making for many years, "Fortresses Over Nuthampstead," will soon be coming off the presses in England.

And hopefully available to 398th members at the Falls Church, VA reunion September 8-11, 2004.

After long and detailed research, Cliff Bishop of East Anglia Books has compiled a 300-page, hard cover history of all B-17 aircraft assigned to the 398th from 1944 through 1945.

The book will include all aircraft losses operational and non-operational, 300 black and white photograph, maps, charts and diagrams and a 16-page color section and a day by day description of all missions.

For more information write East Anglia Books, Station Road, Elsenham, Bishop's Stortford, Herts CM22 6LG, England.

E-mail – sales@eastangliabooks.com.

It Was Medal Day At Normandy

ANDERSON BLACKWELL BOWEN COSCO DEAN KRAFT
MARKHAM MILLS OSTROM POWELL RAY REED

ONE LAST LOOK: Continued From Page 1

ing the veterans of the 398th, who did not come ashore on D-Day with the infantry, but who came to Normandy to remind one and all that the Air Force did indeed have a presence in what General Eisenhower called, The Great Crusade.

That presence included a D-Day bomb run on Juno Beach at Courseulles-sur-Mer on the morning of June 6, 1944. That run helped clear the way for the Canadian troops storming the shore 30 minutes later. The tour members made an emotional "connection" with the city fathers by presenting a memorial wreath in town center – by the tracks of a Sherman tank! The presentation was made by 602 lead bombardier John Cosco.

Later, at a reception at City Hall, president Wally Blackwell presented deputy mayors Simon Remy and Fransoise Travert a plaque with a color photo of a B-17 saying, "We Were There" along with a text by journalist Andy Rooney proclaiming that the invasion by the Allied forces represented the most "monumentally unselfish" act in history.

Also on hand from his duties with the American EU mission in Brussels was Col. Mike Ryan, the son of the late 602 navigator on the Arthur Shirk crew. Col. Ryan provided the translations in French at the Courseulles-sur-Mer ceremonies.

And there was more to come, both on Normandy and in England. It was difficult to sit back and savor the moment because there were so many "moments." Especially at St. George's church in Anstey, where Rev. Gerald Drew came out of retirement to preach a great sermon entitled, "One Last Look," drawing on the tour title to compare to Jesus' last meeting with his disciples before his ascension.

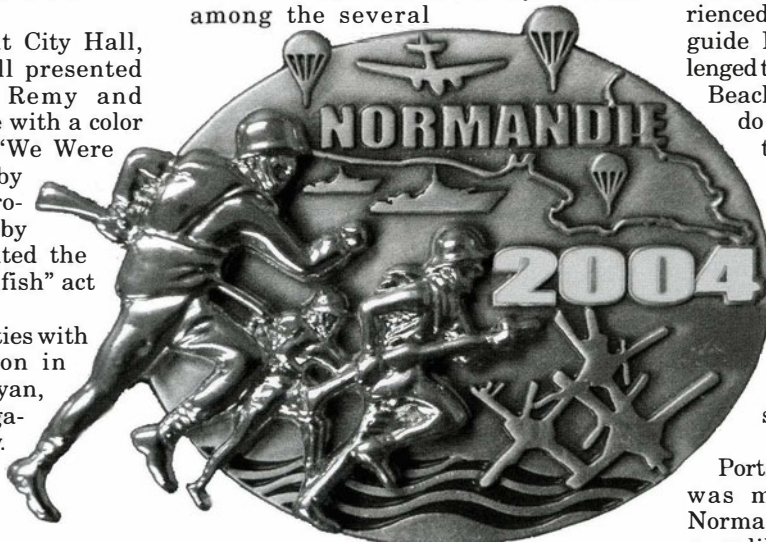
Much was made over the possibility that 2004 might just be the last visit to the old base. Tour leader Allen Ostrom, noting the ages of the veterans, raised the issue in his reading during the church service, saying, "for us the bell does toll." But he also noted that there were nine children and grandchildren on the tour.

"Will they be coming in the years ahead? He asked. "You can count on it!"

Rev. Drew, admitting he was wearing his 398th shirt under his vestments, looked out upon the gathering at the Memorial and said, "what a wonderful sight," seeing some 250 residents of Nuthampstead and surrounding communities – plus the Tour visitors. He proclaimed, "this surely is the largest gathering since the memorial was dedicated in 1982."

Agreeing with this statement was Malcolm (Ozzie) Osborn, the man who along with the late Vic Jenkins, conceived not only the memorial, but also the relationship that now exists between the Yanks and the Friends of the 398th.

Osborn and his wife, Joyce, were among the several



Friends

attending the Farewell dinner at the Gonville Hotel in Cambridge. It was there that tears flowed freely as members recounted the dramas of the previous days. One after another rose to proclaim the joys and emotions experienced during the tour. Many expressed the desire to "come back again" in the coming years.

To again see the airfield, Woodman Inn, Duxford air museum, Madingley

Every veteran visiting Normandy, including the 12 on the 398th Bomb Group One Last Look tour, received a "Normandie Memoire 60^{EME} Anniversaire" commemorative medal. Each was individually engraved. The presentation for the 398th (and Royal British Legion) was made in a school auditorium in Bayeux, near Omaha Beach, on June 7, 2004.

American cemetery, the Anstey memorial window and, of course, meet and celebrate with the people known as the Friends of the 398th.

The "young people" seemed to ignore the "One Last Look" syndrome as they gathered at the Farewell Dinner for a special photo. This included Ann Collins and her best friend Barbara Yates; Dave Jordan, 398th web master and his wife, Beez; Trudie Kirkland; Karen Neff; Lee Anne Bradley, the group's historian and data coordinator; Karen and Steve Clement, Randy Stange and Cate Ludlam.

The weather, unlike that of England in 1944-45, was letter perfect on both sides of the Channel. Even if some experienced a bit of sunburn. Especially tour guide Pär Nilhammer, who had challenged the sun during the hours at Omaha Beach. Some of the "challenge" had to do with the difficulty retrieving the tour coaches from their parking area miles from the cemetery.

The coach problem following the President's speech was monumental, and only some very friendly and timely water bottle delivery by the military averted a "scene." Pär, a stickler for timely coach schedules, was not pleased with those responsible.

The Channel crossing from Portsmouth to Ouistreham, near Caen, was made via the Brittany ferry, Normandie. No little boat, this one, but more like a cruise ship with room for dozens of coaches and trucks, plus an assortment of British Army re-enactment types with their WW II jeeps, trucks, weapons carriers, etc. They were to be seen throughout Normandy during the D-Day activities, which lasted for several days.

The American, British and Canadian veterans aboard the Normandie were in for remarkable surprises upon disembarking. All were channeled between two rows of British Naval and Marine personnel, all there to applaud (and shake hands with) the veterans. And to be met at the end of the line by French Admiral Jean-Louis Battet and England's First Sea Lord & Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Sir Alan West, GCB DSC ADC. That was heavy stuff!

So heavy that Dave Mills, 601 pilot, and Ruthanna Doerstler, widow of Wayne

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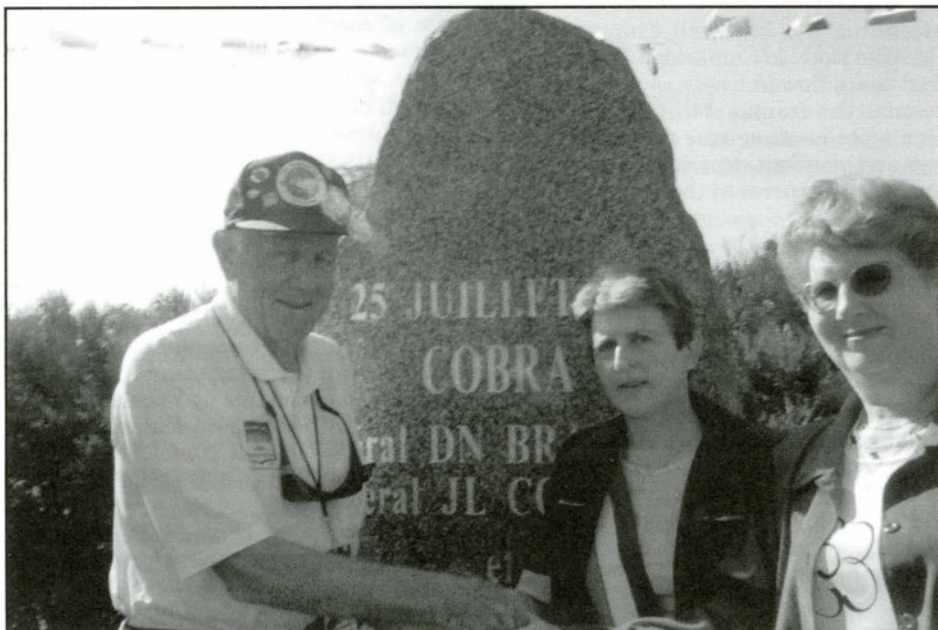
THE FORTRESS, Sally B, did a fly past at Nuthampstead and also formed a backdrop for the One Last Look tour group at Du



DEPUTY MAYOR Simon Remy (center) of Courseulles-sur-Mer receives the special plaque from the 398th Bomb Group on behalf of the group's 1944 D-Day mission to nearby Juno Beach. Presenting the plaque are Wally Blackwell, 398th president and Col. Mike Ryan, whose father was a 602 squadron navigator.



← **KEITH ANDERSON** poses in front of the Cobra Memorial at LaChapelle-Enjager, France, with mayor Nelly Villegieu (center) and memorial caretaker Therese Marquerel. Keith discussed the bombing strategy that resulted in the "St. Lo Breakthrough." The 398th was a part of that strategic mission.

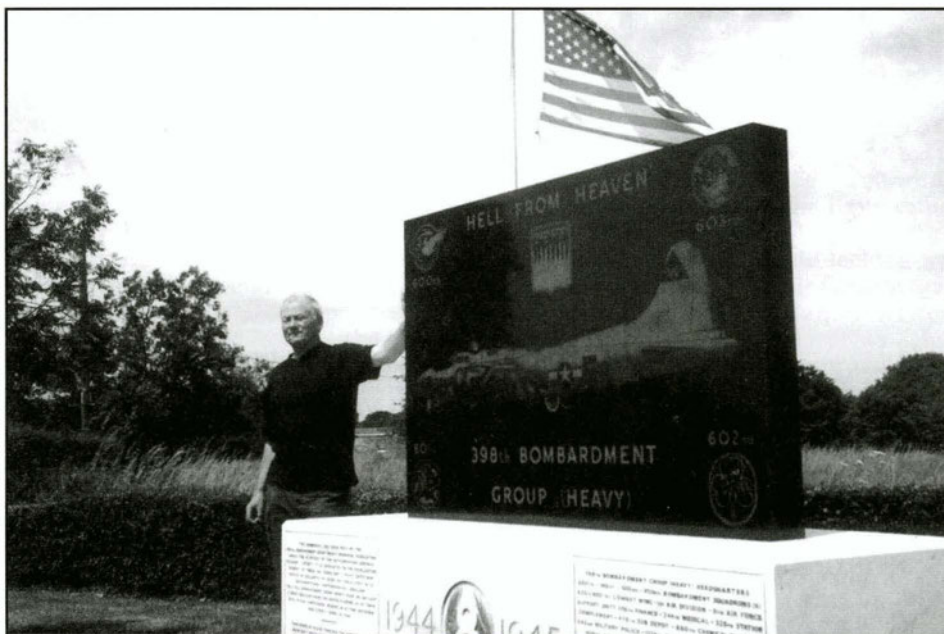




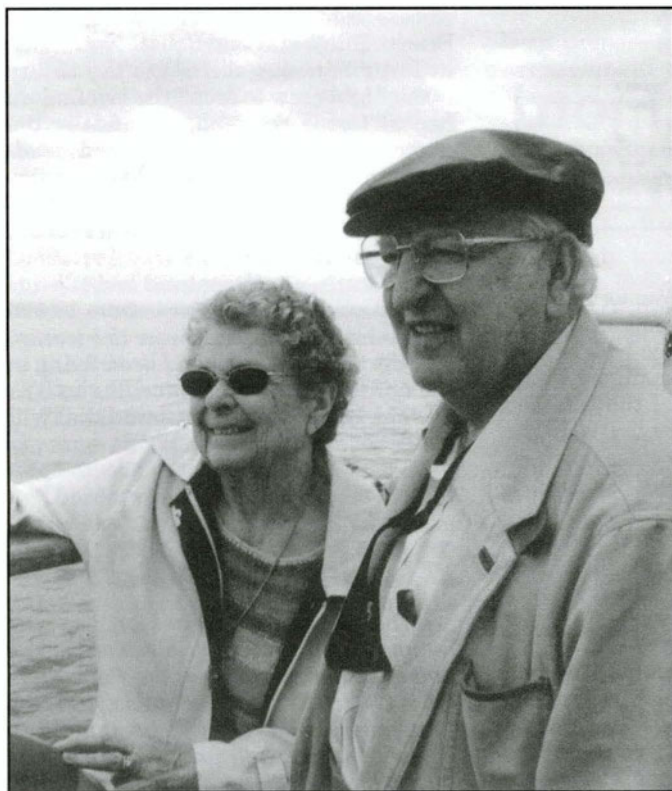
Duxford

Photo By Randy Stange

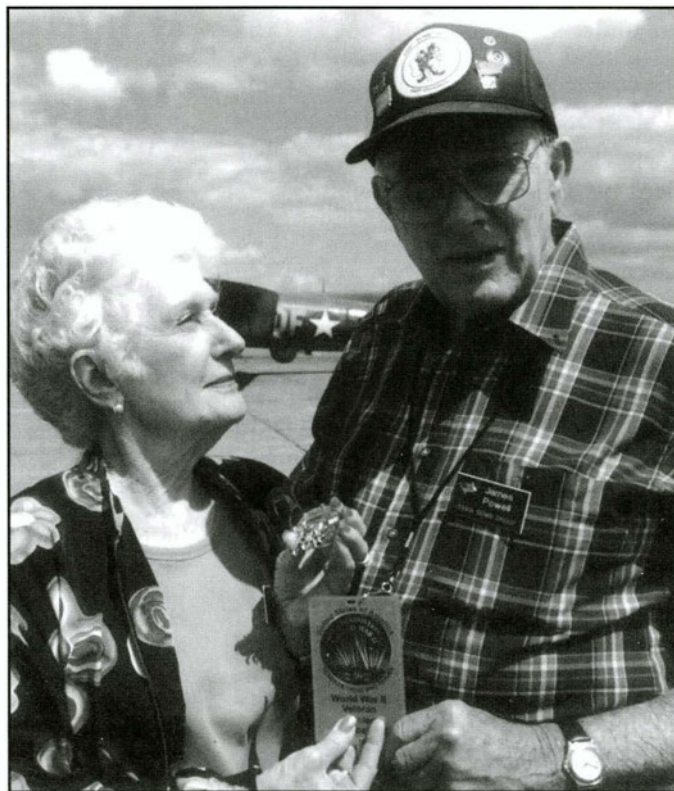
← **ALLISON CASSIDY** of the HALS Hertford Record Center in England and 602 pilot **Bob Bowen** hold up one of the many documents that are preserved for viewing. Cassidy contributed the monumental recording and cataloging of the hundreds of 398th records being preserved at Hertford, the county seat for Hertfordshire.



MALCOLM (OZZIE) OSBORN poses with the monument he and **Vic Jenkins** designed and had constructed in England for the 398th Bomb Group following a fundraising campaign in America in the late 70's. The memorial was dedicated in 1982, and is said to be the finest among all the 8th Air Force Memorials in England.



MANUAL RAY and his wife, **Linda**, had the honor of throwing a floral bouquet into the Channel from the stern of the Brittany ferry, Normandie, on the way to France. This was in memory of the members of his crew that perished in the Channel. A host of news and television people covered the event.



JAUNICE POWELL looks admiringly at her husband, **James**, as he shows off his D-Day anniversary medal and "Ancien Combattant" badge, required for security and admission to the Omaha Beach ceremonies featuring Presidents Bush and Chirac.

A Flight Never To Be Forgotten

“Bluie West One, Where Are You? We’re Coming In”

BY NEWT MOY
Pilot, 603rd Squadron

In January 1945, on a flight from Dow Field in Maine to Goose Bay, Labrador, we had a malfunction of the fuel valve on the outer right wing fuel tank (tokyo). The valve was not repairable at Goose Bay, which resulted in our inability to take on a full fuel load for nonstop flight to Iceland. As a result we had to make shorter flights to Greenland, Iceland, and Scotland.

When we were briefed on our flight to Greenland, we were shown photos of the entrance to three fjords. The center fjord would lead us 50 miles into the mountains where the airfield (Bluie West One) was located. This was in January when there was only a couple of hours of daylight, so we had to arrive at the entrance to the fjord at sunup for a visual flight into the fjord to the airfield.

On our flight from Goose Bay, over the Davis Strait to Greenland, we were over an undercast and could not see the Greenland coastline for a visual fix on the entrance to the proper fjord. At this time, Charlie Berthoud, our navigator, advised he had lost contact with the radio beacon (BW-3) at the entrance to the fjord. At this point, our visibility was limited and we had to make a quick decision on what to do because we had no way of knowing how far we were from the coastline as the clouds below us blended right into the ice and snow on the mountains.

I contacted BW-1 traffic control for the status of the radio beacon at BW-3 and was advised the beacon had suddenly gone off the air with no chance of immediate repair. There were no other navigational aids available and our only choice was to return to Goose Bay, our preplanned alternate (No one wanted to return to Goose Bay with temperatures of 30 to 40 degrees below zero).

As I was about to get a flight clearance back to Goose Bay, BW-1 traffic control advised that a C-54 transport plane had just departed the airfield and should be rising through the undercast in our vicinity and to contact the pilot for advice on weather conditions in the fjords. At that moment, Archie Kritchman (copilot) saw the C-54 raising out of the clouds below. I contacted the pilot and he advised the ceiling was high enough for a CFR (contact flight rules) with good lateral visibility. Since we were fairly close to the coastline he advised we could de-

scend through the undercast away from the coastline to reach CFR conditions.

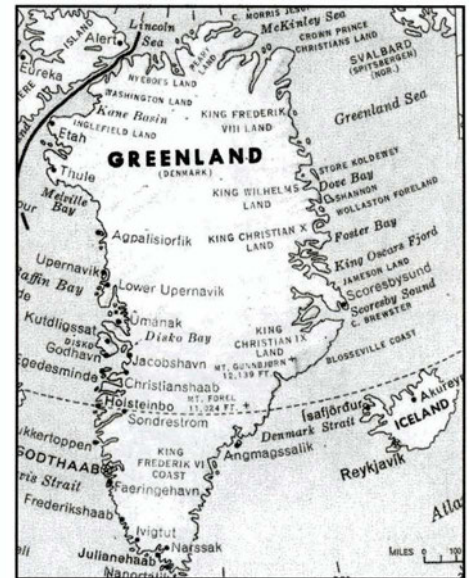
All went well until we returned to the coastline looking for the fjord leading to BW-1, the airfield. That is where our real problems began. All we could rely on was our visual recognition of the photos we were shown at the briefing to identify the proper fjord. Our problem was becoming further compounded by the lowering ceiling restricting our visibility to see the coastline.

We entered a fjord and thanks for the photographic memory of Ken McLaughlin (bombardier) and Charlie, we realized we had entered the fjord which was to the left of the one we should have entered. At this point width of the fjord was too narrow to allow us to turn around and the

It Was Not “Any Old Fjord In a Storm”

ceiling was too low to allow us to climb out because of the high mountains on both sides. Our only choice was to continue flying up the fjord hoping we would not miss seeing a channel that crossed over to the fjord leading us to BW-1. The ceiling was continuing to close down on us and it was just like flying in a tunnel, with rocks on both sides. I flew as close as possible to the left side of the fjord because I had to make a full 90 degree turn as soon as we reached the crossover channel. That was the sweetest 90 degree turn I ever made in a B-17.

As we entered the correct fjord, we recognized a positive fix which was about 25 miles from the airfield. As we got a little closer to the airfield, we came into radio contact with the tower. The operator advised us to abort the approach, the weather was below minimum. At that moment we flew over a positive fix, a sunken ship in the fjord, and we advised that we were proceeding to the base. At that point we had no safe way out. Shortly after we landed and parked the aircraft, the visibility was zero-zero.



The other crew members on the flight were: Joe Joseph, Homer Roades, Benny Bracia, Bill Wight and Robert Notarpole.

I attribute our success to the ability of the flight crew to recall the briefing we had at Goose Bay and, specifically the photos we were shown of the fjords leading to the airfield. I might add that seeking the advice of another aircrew was an acceptable procedure in the WWII era.

In June 1945 (after VE Day) I returned to the States via Greenland and BW-1. I had a clear view of the fjords from 13,000 feet (minimum altitude over the icecap) and the thought that I had been flying in the fjords under 500-foot ceiling to BW-1, etched a memory in my mind that will never be forgotten.

POW MEMORY

“The above named person has just returned from a “Missing in Action” status and is authorized to be in the Paris area. He is billeted at the Hotel Fracia, 100 Rue Lafayette, Paris. He will be unable to comply with existing uniform regulations due to his recent return to duty”

*—R. E. Fecteau, Capt., AGD, Adj – Gen.
(This POW memento was sent to FLAK NEWS by Harry Overbaugh, Sellersville, PA. He was on the 602 Coville crew, shot down over Pilsen, Czechoslovakia on the Last Mission.*

ONE LAST LOOK: And It Was Spectacular

Continued From Page 5

Doerstler, both broke down and openly wept as they accepted the honor and respect offered them. And there were others.

During the crossing, a raft of television and news journalists descended on the 398th party as they got wind of a special ceremony that was to feature the throwing of a floral bouquet into the Channel by Manuel Ray in memory of the members of his 601 Kearie Berry crew that perished in the Channel in 1944.

It was supposed to be a private little ceremony, but it was witnessed by about 200 on the ship's stern. And then followed by numerous interviews by journalists from England, all there to follow the veterans to Normandy.

Among the "pretty Navy girls" to be seen at the dock welcome was Jacqueline Sheriff, who turned out to be a lieutenant commander in the Royal Navy. She described herself as a "frigate driver."

Keith Anderson, 600 pilot, who wrote the fine FLAK NEWS story on the "Cobra" missions, got a great opportunity to expound on the Air Force's contribution to the "St. Lo Breakthrough."

A museum in St. Lo attests to the Army's successful ground attack that captured St. Lo, but little was recorded as to what made that "breakthrough" possible.

The town of LaChapelle – Enjurer, on the outskirts of St. Lo, was the "epicenter" of the 8th and 9th Air Force "Cobra" missions that devastated the German defenses in the area and opened the gates for the ground forces. Anderson "held court" at the rarely visited memorial at LaChapelle and told the mayor and local onlookers of the part the Air Force played in the monstrous aerial bombardment centered in an area 3 ½ miles wide and 1 ½ miles deep.

Ernie Pyle was to write –

"The thundering of the motors in the sky and the roar of the bombs ahead filled all the space for noise on earth."

There was also "thundering of motors in the sky" as Nuthampstead when the B-17, Sally B, made several passes over the memorial. Cameras by the dozens followed the Fortress as it made pass after pass over the gathering at the Me-

morial. If it was for "One Last Look," the Sally B crew made it a good one.

Linda Mason, special events coordinator at Duxford, had welcomed the tour party earlier and had made the static B-17, Mary Alice, available for the 398th visitors. A very special One Last Look remembrance.

There were five widows on the tour – Gertrude Neff, Dawne Dougherty, Jeanne Stange, Ruthanna Doerstler, and Mary Ludlam. They had the honor of presenting memorial wreaths at both Madingley and at the Nuthampstead memorial.

A look at all the stored records on the 398th at the Hertford Archives and Local Studies record center was made available by director Susan Flood. A monumental recording of this material has



been prepared by Allison Cassidy in an arrangement with Friends chairman Wilfrid Dimsdale and underwritten by the 398th led by president Blackwell.

Arrangements for the coaches and hotels, including the Defense Department security badges needed for entrance to the Omaha Beach ceremonies, plus the Normandy tour schedule that included St. Mere Eglise, Bayeux, Courseulles-sur-Mer, Villedieu-les-Poeles, Pegasus Bridge, Caen and St. Lo were under the direction of Destination Europe of Luxembourg.

Bill Dean contributed the scriptural reading at the Station 131 ceremonies and Bob Bowen was called on to read during the St. George's Church service at Anstey.

Barbara Fish contributed a slide program at the Luncheon at High Hall Farm, depicting memories from previous visits to the old base.

In dealing with the Defense Department prior to the trip, Barbara advised a Defense Department lance corporal of some detail via E-mail. The reply came back – "Roger that, Ma'm."

Tour members will begin looking for the October edition of the Air Force magazine called, AIRMAN. Senior writer Orville Dejarlais and photographer John Lasky spent many hours with the 398th members in both Normandy and Nuthampstead in preparation for their upcoming article.

Dr. Robert Kraft, 602 navigator, retired pathologist and amateur astronomer, came prepared to view the solar eclipse of Venus during the Normandy tour. Many enjoyed the experience, noting that no one was alive today who had seen the last such eclipse some 120 years ago

Cate Ludlam came on the tour with a special proclamation from Oyster Bay, New York, her late father's home town, honoring her father and all the veterans of World War II.

Yes, there was a naval presence during the D-Day activities. America was there with the carrier, USS Nimitz; Aegis guided missile destroyer, USS Ross, plus an assortment of other British, Canadian and French vessels.

Four men from the Ross' helicopter performed a dramatic rappelling from their chopper, landing on the stern. They immediately came to the side of the deck and smartly saluted the Normandie. . . and all the veterans on board.

The Ross, proceeding side-by-side in escorting the Normandie, was captained by Commander Lisa Franchetti.

The American flag was proudly carried by Russ Reed at the services at St. George's Church.

Dr. Ken Peirce, a friend and neighbor of the tour leader, was not called upon for his neuro surgeon skills (thankfully), but he did make a "primary care" house call on Gertrude Neff when she was "grounded" with a congestion problem. (He walked to downtown Cambridge and bought her a bottle of Robitussin).

Another Printing In The Offing For History Book

A modest re-print (copy) of the 1946 398th history book, initiated by president Wally Blackwell, has been sold out.

"They went very fast," said Wally, "so I may have to re-order if another 25 orders come in." They sold for \$20 each.

Persons interested in obtaining a copy should contact Wally at Rockville, MD 20850-3067.

The Tour Loading List

Bob & Jane Bowen; James & Jaunice Powell; Manuel & Linda Ray; Wally & Teedy Blackwell; Mary Ludlam & daughter Cate Ludlam; Dave Mills; Keith Anderson; Jeanne Stange, son Randy Stange, daughter Karen Clement and Grandson Steven Clement; Dr. Robert Kraft; Bill Dean; Jan Kolb; John & Rosemary Cosco; Ruthanna Doerstler;

Dawne Dougherty; Lee Anne Bradley; Dr. Ken Peirce; Gertrude Neff and daughters Karen Neff and Trudie Kirkland; Jim & Mildred Hill; Dave and Elizabeth Jordan; Ann Collins; Barbara Yates; Bill Markham; Russ & Millie Reed; travel guides Barbara and Rick Fish; tour leader Allen Ostrom.

The Pledge Of Allegiance:

By John McCain
United States Senator, Arizona

As you may know, I spent five and one half years as a prisoner of war during the Vietnam War. In the early years of our imprisonment, the NVA kept us in solitary confinement or two or three to a cell. In 1971 the NVA moved us from these conditions of isolation into large rooms with as many as 30 to 40 men to a room.

This was, as you can imagine, a wonderful change and was a direct result of the efforts of millions of Americans on behalf of a few hundred POWs 10,000 miles from home.

One of the men who moved into my room was a young man named Mike Christian. Mike came from a small town near Selma, Alabama. He didn't wear a pair of shoes until he was 13 years old. At 17, he enlisted in the US Navy. He later earned a commission by going to Officer Training School. Then he became a Naval Flight Officer and was shot down and captured in 1967. Mike had a keen and deep appreciation of the opportunities this country and our military provide for people who want to work and want to succeed.

As part of the change in treatment, the Vietnamese allowed some prisoners to receive packages from home. In some of these packages were handkerchiefs, scarves and other items of clothing.

Mike got himself a bamboo needle. Over a period of a couple of months, he created an American flag and sewed on the inside of his shirt.

Every afternoon, before we had a bowl of soup, we would hang Mike's shirt on the wall of the cell and say the Pledge of Allegiance.

I know the Pledge of Allegiance may not seem the most important part of our day now, but I can assure you that in that stark cell it was indeed the most important and meaningful event.

One day the Vietnamese searched our cell, as they did periodically, and discovered Mike's shirt with the flag sewn inside, and removed it.

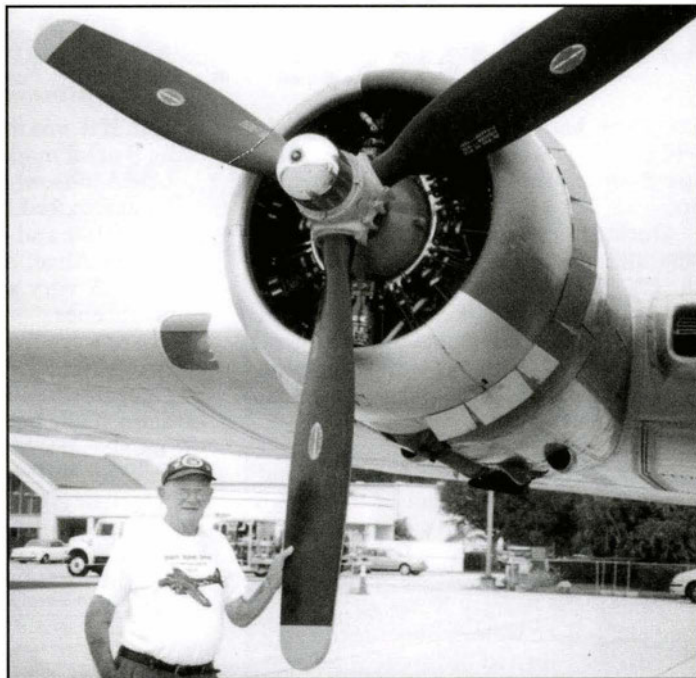
That evening they returned, opened the door of the cell, and for the benefit of all of us, beat Mike Christian severely for the next couple of hours. Then, they opened the door of the cell and threw him in. We cleaned him up as well as we could.

After the excitement died down, I looked in the corner of the room, and sitting there beneath that dim light bulb with a piece of red cloth, another shirt and his bamboo needle, was my friend, Mike Christian.

He was sitting there with his eyes almost shut from the beating he had received, making another American flag. He was not making the flag because it made Mike Christian feel better. He was making that flag because he knew how important it was to us to be able to Pledge our Allegiance to our flag and country.

So the next time you say the Pledge of Allegiance remember our duty, our honor, and our country.

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation UNDER GOD, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."



RUDY KURISH
"Up In The Sky With That B-17"

"Rudy passed away in February, but not before experiencing the thrill of his lifetime last November. He came to Vero Beach to see the Aluminum Overcast, wearing his 398th shirt and cap. He was noted by the crew and two reporters. Soon he was given a free flight, seated behind the pilot and later was asked to sign the inside cover of the Mechanics Log Book. We drove the 30 miles back to our house but I could tell that Rudy was still back on that plane. After Rudy took his last breath, my son commented, "I know Dad is now up in the sky in that B-17."

Doris B. Kurish, Fort St. Lucie, Florida.

ED'S NOTE: Rudy Kurish was a ground crew airplane mechanic with the 603rd, working with George Hilliard.

"I deeply appreciate your web site (398th.org). From it I learned about my third cousin, Charles Searl, who was killed along with his crew near Penn. England. His sister, Charlotte France, who died recently, visited the crash site and ceremonies in 1990 and was so touched. I have spent 30 years researching the Searl family history and found that Charles' third great-grandfather, Reuben Searl, fought in the Revolutionary War and his father, Niles, was in the Marines in WW I in France."

Pamela Sharpe

"Sorry to have to report that we have lost another member of our crew. Benny Braica, my ball turret gunner, passed away February 5, 2004. Six down, three to go – Joe Joseph, Homer Roades and myself."

Newt Moy, Salt Lake City.

Ed' Note — Thanks for the note. Next Taps list will be January, 2005.

"Over the years the 398th Bomb Group and its members have donated \$46,000 to the Mighty Eighth Museum. It is our hope to continue this support so that our grandchildren will be able to learn about the courage, commitment and sacrifice embodied in the service of the members of the Mighty Eighth."

Judy W. Walker, Executive Director, Mighty Eighth Foundation, Savannah, GA.

BRIEF – things

Don Hayes, editor of the B-17 Flying Fortress Association's newsletters, insists that a more fitting location for the WW II National Memorial could not be found anywhere in our country – on the Mall flanked by the Lincoln and Washington Memorials. . . England Friend **Tony Clark** had always been “up to date” in writing about his farm and the price of wheat, but today he admits that television, mobile phones, digital cameras and high-speed internet has “left me behind” so he and Beryl are concentrating on lawn bowling and gardening (can the FLAK NEWS editor be far behind?). . . **Fred Wismer** and his crew went down over Merseburg with the loss of one life, **Marvin Clark**, but the rest came home and no less than three retired as Air Force LC's — **Wismer, Eugene Reaves** and **Eldon Severson**; and **Herman Hager** went on to become the group's prime mover in building the 398th Memorial at Nuthampstead along with the Brits' **Ozzie Osborn** and late **Vic Jenkins**. . . those members who visited the Czech Republic in 1995 (and 2000 and 2003) will remember the Czech pilot/general **Alois Siska**, an RAF hero in WW II; he died late last year at the age of 89. . . it was only after the fall of communism in 1989 that **Siska** and his fellow Czech RAF airmen received the recognition they had earned during the great air battles in the defense of Britain. . . the 398th tour to St. Lo in Normandy was especially meaningful to **James Powell**, whose brother was killed there while serving with the 90th Division, one of the first infantry groups to hit the beach on D-Day.

FINAL AD FOR 398TH PX? ➔

This may be the final FLAK NEWS advertisement for the group's PX. See Page 2 for the Board's proposal regarding the 398th PX inventory and future operation.

Wally, our president, touched us all when he said, “we (398th) are a house of cards and we must continue to adjust to reality”. . . **Ray Armor's** ball turret gunner, **Bill Cole**, has one son, Major **Steven Cole**, working as foreign affairs specialist at the Pentagon; and another son, **Terry Cole**, working as chief pilot for Majestic Air Service; Dad Cole was at the WW II Memorial dedication last May. . . **Ed Arbuthnot** was one of the early pushers for building the Nuthampstead memorial, and many (including himself) are happy to learn that the announcement his demise was premature. . . Every GI in Europe has now read about the 398th visit to England, what with **Ron Jensen's** fine article in the June 14 issue of Stars and Stripes telling of the Station 131 visit, including a great photo of the Anstey memorial window. . . **Jan Kolb**, the “rifleman's daughter” from Arizona, was a smash hit at the Villedieu-les-Poeles hotel lobby piano with her “As Time Goes By” music renderings, plus “Battle Hymn” and “America”. . . **Saul Marias** ball turret gunner **Phil Collins** had no interest at all in returning to Station 131, but daughter **Ann** Said she wouldn't have missed the 2004 experience for anything. . . the June issue of AIRMAN magazine had a marvelous photo of **Hal Weekley** and the Aluminum Overcast, plus a great 398th D-Day mission story featuring **Ike Alhadeff** and **Armand Fugge**; look for another feature in the October issue. . . Anstey's beloved **Eunice Fox** died last year and is buried just outside the front door of St. George's Church, where she was organist for 50 years. . . **Lesley Rolfe**, one of the 398th's “English daughters,” was at the Memorial with her daughter, **Kate**, who has joined her mother in seeking her Yank “bloodlines” through music and song. . . Brighton is a lovely seashore town in the south of England, but it also offers a major gambling monstrosity on its famous ocean pier. . . the FLAK NEWS editor is campaigning the Air Force to award a DFC to **Richard Holub** for his famous B-17 “rocket” takeoff; can anyone out there help with this project?

398th Bomb Group PX

Please circle squadron, size and/or color choices.

Qty.	CLOTHING	Cost	Total
___	Cap – Fits All Sizes	\$8.00 ea	___
___	600, 601, 602, 603, Group		
___	Jackets – Navy, B-17 on Front	\$25.00 ea	___
___	S, M, L, XL, XXL		
___	T-Shirts – B-17 on Front	\$10.00 ea	___
___	Navy – White – S, M, L, XL, XXL		
___	Sweat Shirts – B-17 on Front	\$15.00 ea	___
___	Navy – White – S, M, L, XL, XXL		
___	Golf Shirts – Group Logo on Front	\$20.00 ea	___
___	Navy or White – S, M, L, XL, XXL		
___	Turtle Neck Shirt – B-17 on Collar	\$20.00 ea	___
___	White, Black, Navy – S, M, L, XL		

JEWELRY

___	Squadron Lapel Pins – 600, 601, 602, 603	\$5.00 ea	___
___	Group Lapel Pin (Hell from Heaven)	\$5.00 ea	___
___	Group Lapel Pin – Special Design	\$5.00 ea	___
___	B-17 Lapel Pin (Silver)	\$2.00 ea	___
___	B-17 Earrings (Silver – Pierced only)	\$5.00 ea	___

CD's & VIDEOS

___	CD Jack's Books	\$15.00 ea	___
___	CD Flak News	\$15.00 ea	___
___	Video Anstey Window Dedication	\$10.00 ea	___
___	Video Return to Station 131 Memorial	\$10.00 ea	___
___	And Anstey Window Dedication		
___	(CD-ROM) Statistical History of 398 th B.G.	\$30.00 set	___
___	Set of 2		

LOGO PATCHES

___	Squadron Patches – 600, 601, 602, 603	\$6.00 ea	___
___	Group Patch (“Hell from Heaven”)	\$6.00 ea	___
___	Jacket Patch – Rectangle B-17	\$4.00 ea	___
___	8 th Air Force	\$4.00 ea	___

PHOTOS

___	Booklet w/Loc. of Names On Anstey Win.	\$10.00 ea	___
___	Anstey Window Post Card	\$2.00 ea	___
___	Photo (11x17) Anstey Window	\$4.00 ea	___
___	With list of 398 th Fallen Comrades		
___	Photo (Control Tower) Station 131	\$2.00 ea	___
___	Photo (398 th Memorial) Nuthumpstead	\$2.00 ea	___
___	Photo (8x10 Aluminum Overcast)	\$2.00 ea	___
___	Print (11x17) “Clearing & Colder”	\$10.00 ea	___

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

___	B-17 Sun Catcher	\$10.00 ea	___
___	Folding Umbrellas – Red with White	\$18.00 ea	___
___	Note Paper with B-17 (Packet of 12)	\$4.00 pkt	___
___	Tote bag, Navy with White B-17	\$7.00 ea	___
___	Golf Towel, White w/Black B-17	\$7.00 ea	___
___	License Plate Holder (398 th B.G.)	\$2.00 ea	___
___	Round Coaster with B-17 Aluminum Overcast in color	\$5.00 ea	___

Cost Of Items Ordered \$ _____

Delivery And Handling Add \$4.00

Or \$5.00 if Order is Over \$20.00 \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone _____

Make checks payable to 398th Bomb Group Association PX

(US funds).

Mail to: Joe Joseph

New Smyrna Beach, FL 32168-6168