

FORTRESS FOR FREEDOM

388th Bombardment Group (H) Association



8th Air Force, 3rd Air Division, 45th Combat Wing
Station 136, Knettishall England, 1943–1945
333 Total Missions



306 Combat Missions, 19 Aphrodite Missions, 5 Chowhound Missions, 1 POW Mission, 2 Revival Missions

388th Bombardment Group Headquarters

Station 136 Weather Detachment, Fersfield Air Base (Aphrodite Project), 434th Headquarters Squadron, 860th Squadron, 684th Squadron, 434th Air Service Group, 1211th Quartermaster Company, 1284th Military Police Company, 273rd Medical Dispensary, 1751st Ordnance Supply and Maintenance Company, 2019th Engineering and Fire Fighting Platoon, 452nd Sub Depot, 29th Station Complement, 587th Postal Unit, 877th Chemical Company, 214th Finance Detachment
560th Bombardment Squadron, 561st Bombardment Squadron, 562nd Bombardment Squadron, 563rd Bombardment Squadron

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From the President's Desk

Hello to all of the people who are active and inactive in the 388th bomb group association.

This year's reunion will be in DAYTON OHIO from AUGUST 1st until the 5th. Make your reservations between 8AM and 5PM so that they go directly to the front desk. Please let them know any special room requests ie. roll-in shower. Also tell them your flight number so that they can schedule the free shuttle to meet you at the airport.

Going to Dayton will be more centrally located and easier to get to for our original members. We like to keep the reunions both educational and entertaining. Thursday morning we will tour Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Hopefully we will get to tour a C-17 while we are on base. Then we will go to the Carillon Historical Park to lunch at the brewery which serves several German dishes. Besides the museum there is a theater which has a production that includes information about the Wright brothers, Patterson who created NCR, Kettering who designed autos so that we do not have to crank start them and the Dayton code breakers who broke the German Enigma code.

Friday we will be touring the National Museum of the USAF. Besides the theater there are four hangers full of displays. Wheel chairs and scooters are available for our members at no cost. The Memphis Belle is a new attraction that will be available when we are there. The displays start with the Wright flier, WWI, WWII, Viet Nam, the jet age, the missile age right up to today's Air Force. Maps will be available so that we can plan our tour of the museum so everybody can see the exhibits that they want to see.

In recent months I have become aware of two members of the 388th bomb group who wonder if 'what they did was worth it'. One was a member who has attended some reunions and the other has never attended a reunion and until recently would not even discuss his experience. As I thought about the question I looked at



the world today. War in the Middle East, discrimination against races and women, attacks on the president and students marching to protest things that they want to change. Also genocide and attacks on police. It feels like I am back in the sixties. Goebbels used negative propaganda to motivate Germany. In the states we used positive propaganda – buy war bonds, loose lips sink ships and save rubber, steel, copper and gas. They fought in temperature of 50 degrees below zero, had to wear oxygen masks and suffered 50% casualties.

If the people in the Army Air Corp had not gone to war what would the world look like today? Most likely democracy would only exist in remote or secluded areas. Wars instead of being civilized would be much more brutal. There would be no one to defend the oppressed, no one to promote freedom, no one to protest genocide and the discrimination against all protected categories would be running wild. I want to thank the members of the 388th Bomb Group (H) for helping to create a world where we have the opportunity to live free. If they had not done what they did then we would be in a real mess. It may be messy, inefficient, slow and divisive but democracy is the best form of government that I have seen.

We are very grateful to all of our veterans for what they have done for our world.

Rick Thompson

Please remember us in your estate planning. When the scholarship fund is self-perpetuating like the memorial fund, we will be able to honor our veterans for a long time. They have earned this recognition.

My Two D Day Missions

Author, Stephen Ambrose, states in his book on D-Day, that the allies flew 1400 sorties that day. Before we bombed on the morning mission of June 6, the British landed 130 men near Pointe du Hoc, who used a homing device called Eureka to get to their target, which was our target also. On that famous day, 2,876,000 Allied troops were involved, and there were 10,500 planes and 5,000 ships crossing the English Channel. By the time we took off for our second mission, there were already over 100,000 troops on the French beach. The U.S. Air Corps put in the air the largest Air Force ever committed to battle in a single day.

For me, D-Day was the continuation of an unusual three-day episode. June 4 was a Sunday and there was some kind of celebration going on at the base so we got little sleep for that mission to Wissant, France. On June 5, we were supposed to go on the invasion, but it was postponed, so we bombed Cape Gris Nez, France as a diversionary target. Again, little sleep.

On D-Day, during the navigators prebriefing, I received all the maps and general instructions concerning flak batteries, and I was told that our target was a 16 inch gun on the coast near Point du hoc that was encased in tons of concrete on a hillside. Briefing for all crews for the first D-Day mission was at 2300 hours, and during the briefing we heard General Eisenhower tell us that we were embarking on a "Great Crusade."

H hour was scheduled for 06:30 a.m., when the Higgins boats, with just two feet of draft, were to land. After we bombed, the 2nd Ranger's Battalion was to make sure that they could make it to France and back



COMING SOON!

Your 388th PX will be available online with many new items at www.388thbga.org under the store tab.



All
merchandise
INCLUDES
postage!

"City of Savannah"

Polo Shirts

\$31

"B-17 Flying Fortress"

WWII Hats

\$25

388th Rhinestone Pins

\$12.75

B-17 Pins

\$12.75

Koozies

\$3.75

388th Lanyards

(not pictured)

\$2.75

Bumper Stickers

\$1.75



COIN \$8.00 each

KEYCHAIN \$10.00 each

VELVET BOX \$4.00 each

Shipping \$3.00/up to 5 coins

\$8.00 for 6 coins or up to two gift boxes.

we accept:



before heading over the Channel. Ordinarily, if you had trouble getting back to the base you could ditch in the Channel, usually nose up, and air-sea rescue would pick you up from your last position, after you gave a "mayday mayday" signal.

During navigation training, we practiced ditching, and we were supposed to evacuate the B-17 in 30 seconds, the average time it would float. We were also told during briefing that "Guns will be manned but not test fired. Gunners will not fire at any planes unless attacked." Also, "No secondary runs will be made on any primary target."

After briefing, we took the jitney to our plane. For the first mission, the 388th supplied two groups. Our group was headed by Lt. Colonel Cox, with Lt. Col. Henggeler as deputy leader. You might be interested in knowing how Leavitt described Col. Cox. He wrote, "Lt. Chester C. Cox, of Superior, Wisconsin, strolled around operations with his hands in his pockets. This morning flying in the lead ship of the earliest formation of American heavy bombers to cross the enemy coast on D-Day, had given him the honor of being the first U.S. bombardment pilot to drop bombs in direct support of the landings in France."

It was a very epic occasion. We were part of the A Group of 16 aircraft and 2 PFF planes. As I said, our objective was a German battery, which could fire as much as 13 miles off shore. The takeoff was over four or five trees that were at the end of the runway,

which was another story. When we took off with bomb loads about one-third heavier than normal, we needed the whole runway to just make it over those trees, and we often hit the leaves. I believe that

Colonel Goodman had gone earlier to the local constabulary to ask if we could cut them down, but apparently you needed approval from the crown. When we returned to Knettishall in 2003 for the 60th anniversary tour that I sponsored, those trees were still there.

At 03:58, we headed for the English coast at Beachy Head, which is a triangular piece of land about 15 miles east of Brighton Beach in Southern England. We made it to the target at heading of 238 degrees.

The flight was a milk run, and because it was



10/10ths undercover, the targets were attacked by PFF methods. Bombs wer'e away at 06:56 hours from 15,050 feet After bombs away, according to the official mission statement, "An excellent pattern of release was noted." We encountered no flak or enemy aircraft although there were 25 ground rocket fired at us near the target. All aircraft "returned over Beachy Head for letdown and landing." We landed at 10:00 a.m.

According to Stephen Ambrose, in the two months before DDay, the Allied Air Forces lost 12,000 men and 2,000 planes. Nevertheless, we were able to put 1,200 Flying Fortresses in the air for the D-Day Landing. In that one day in just two hours the 8th Air Force dropped more tonnage than was dropped on Hamburg in 1943— the most heavily bombed city of Europe in World War II.

After we returned, we had a very quick de-briefing and we all hit the sack totally exhausted. Very soon after, our sleep was interrupted by a sergeant with a flashlight who yelled "Mission." In this audience, I can't tell you the exact words I shouted at him, but it meant "go away." He said, " The mission is in jeopardy, you have to go back." We dragged our "you know whats" to briefing, where we were told that "the Germans are pushing us into the sea." We had to go back on a tactical mission to support our troops.

For me, this was a more difficult mission. As you know, the B- 17 has a nose hatch that is above your head. When I first saw a Flying Fortress, I learned why we had to do all those chin ups in navigation school. Well, on the second mission of June 6, I couldn't make it up wearing my flying suit, Mae West jacket, flak suit and carrying a parachute. You might remember that Gregory Peck had the same problem in "Twelve O'Clock High." I got to the nose by the rear door, crawling though the bomb bay. Colonel David led our second mission, which took off at 17:37 p.m., and we assembled over buncher 10 at 12,000 feet. The instrument assembly was achieved at 24,000 feet over Knettishall. We left the English coast at 15.000 feet at 19:55 hours, and we reached the IP (the initial point of the bomb run) at 20:15 at 20,000 feet. We did not bomb the primary target, however, and after several turns, we found a "target of opportunity" a "rail-

road choke point in the southern part of Flers."

The mission report tells us that we bombed at 22,000 at 20:58. It was a visual bomb run at Pont L'Eveque on a heading of 160 degrees. The target is on the Touques River, about 20-25 miles east of Caen. Bob Kerns, our ball turret gunner, said that on the second bomb run, he returned his guns straight down and he could see the structure of the bridge that we bombed. He said he heard the "clackclack," those were his words, of the anti-aircraft guns that were firing at us. He also mentioned all the gliders that were on the ground in various positions, some crashed into trees. I can confirm that we could see gliders.

The 388th at War, tells us that there were only 12 planes that reached the IP at 20,000 feet on a mag heading of 148 degrees, and the strike photos showed that we did not hit the MPI, but we did hit a choke point and a road intersection. We returned to

Knettishall at 23:40, which was over 25 hours later than when we first started out on June 5. Six of our aircraft landed at other fields, probably because of bad weather. When I talked to our bombardier, Charles Kemp, about the second mission he said that using a B- 17 for tactical missions is a mistake, because of the great danger of hitting your own troops and pattern bombing is too wide for close engagement. This is confirmed by author, Stephen Ambrose, who wrote that the B-17 raids were a bust

"because of the weather and the airmen not wanting to hit their own troops . . . most blockbusters came down in Norman meadows." When we finally returned to our barracks, we were allowed to sleep all day on June 7, but we had a mission on June 8 to Tours, France.

At this point I need to inject some later news. In April 2014, My wife TJ and I went to Normandy to celebrate the 70th anniversary of this invasion. When we arrived at the hill, some French citizens asked me what I was doing there, and when I told them of my June 6 experience I became a celebrity. I was offered several gifts and persons lined up to have photos taken with me. Our next stop was even

(continued page 8)



2018 Reunion



We will be staying downtown about five blocks from the Great Miami River. The Hospitality room and Dining room are on the top floor and we will have a grand view of the town and the river.



Above left is an F-35 at Wright-Patterson AFB which we will be touring by bus on Thursday morning. Of course the first F-35s deployed were at Hill AFB for the 388th Fighter Wing. Above right the National Museum of the USAF is preparing the Memphis Bell for our visit. It will be on display by the end of May. We will spend about six hours Friday at the museum. Wheel chairs and scooters are available for visitors. We can get lunch at the restaurant and have time for a leisurely tour of the museum. There is a theater and four hangar buildings to explore. Look for more in the next newsletter.



The 388th Bomb Group Association 69th Annual Reunion Registration

Dayton, Ohio
August 2 - 4, 2018



CUT-OFF DATE FOR REGISTRATION IS July 14, 2018

To cancel and receive a full refund, contact Ann Turley before the cut-off date of July 14. Cancellations received after July 14, but before July 31, will forfeit tour payments and registration fee. No refunds will be made for cancellations received after July 31.

Thursday, August 2
9:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Join us for a tour of Wright Patterson Air Force Base - this will be a "stay on the bus" tour
Lunch at the Carillon Brewing Company
Explore Carillon Historical Park



Friday, August 3
9:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Tour the National Museum of the United States Air Force
Lunch on your own
See the newly restored Memphis Belle and the 388th Memorial



Saturday, August 4
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM
6:00 PM - 10:00 PM

Business Meeting
Social/Cocktail Hour
Dinner, Raffle, President's Address
Cash bar open through dinner

REGISTRATION FORM - 388th Bomb Group Association Reunion, August 2 - 4, 2018

NAME _____ PHONE _____
EMAIL ADDRESS _____ CELL PHONE _____
MAILING ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____
GUEST(S): Full names please _____

REGISTRATION FEE REQUIRED FOR ALL ATTENDEES **\$42.00** X _____ = \$ _____
Thursday Wright Patterson AF Base & Lunch & Carillon Park **\$52.00** X _____ = \$ _____
Friday National Museum of the US Air Force (lunch on your own) **\$42.00** X _____ = \$ _____

TOURS SCHEDULED AFTER JULY 14 ARE SPACE AVAILABLE ONLY

Saturday Banquet (includes tax & service charge)

Grilled Chicken with Honey Dijon **\$37.00** X _____ = \$ _____
Grilled Salmon **\$39.00** X _____ = \$ _____
Herbed Prime Rib **\$43.00** X _____ = \$ _____
Chicken Tenders (ages 3 - 12) **\$14.00** X _____ = \$ _____
Cheeseburger Sliders (ages 3 - 12) **\$14.00** X _____ = \$ _____

MEMORY PHOTOS KEEPSAKE **\$16.00** X _____ = \$ _____

DONATION (optional) \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Make checks payable to 388th Bomb Group Assn. Mail check and registration form to:
Ann Turley - 4083 East Luther Road, Floyds Knobs, IN 47119
(Phone 812-728-8060, Email turleya99@yahoo.com)

more important. Across the beach was the American cemetery. As far as we could see were white crosses, and we were told that there were over 9,200 graves. As we reached the superintendents' building, he came out flanked by two assistants and they saluted me. We talked about 70 years earlier and he told me to wait as he went inside. He returned with two small flags—one French and one American, and he said, "When you go to the World War II Memorial in Washington, put these flags on the European side."

Several months later, I decided to carry out his wishes. We arrived at the Memorial not knowing what to do with our small flags. I noticed a small window with three women sitting there. I told them my problem and soon the head of the Memorial came to me. He said follow him and we planted the two flags. He said that he would protect them, and that they would become part of the museum when it is built. I thanked him, but I did not speak to him

about the problem of the museum when the Memorial was constructed. Because the Memorial abutted the Washington Monument, there was great fear that digging close to the Monument for a museum would weaken its base and could cause it to tip like the leaning tower of Pisa.

My D Day Missions

Presented at the 388th Bomb Group Meeting
Albuquerque September 10, 2005

Buenos Noches

Me gusto mucho de conocerle a uds. y de hablar en espanol in este muy linda ciudad, Nuevo Mexico. I was told to try to work in some southwestern culture in my talk, so this is it What I said was that I am pleased to be here to talk to you in this beautiful city.

pero no puede recordar todas las palabras, porque es muchas anos do que yo estudi-

ardo espanol, meaning that I cannot remember all the words in Spanish because its been a long time since I studied Spanish novels in college.

Hell, I can't remember a lot of English words or events now, and don't forget that D-Day was 61 years, 3 months and 6 days ago, I decided to telephone the surviving members of our crew: Charlie Kemp, our bombardier is here; Bob Vogt, our engineer is in Tennessee, living next to an oxygen bottle, and our ball turret gunner is in the State of Washington, with a fibrillating heart.

When I finished talking to them about D-Day, I remembered a course I took at the University of Michigan in 1947 in psychology. The professor was lecturing on the human brain, and he said that under stress, the brain deteriorates. Apparently there has been a lot brain deterioration among our crew, because we didn't agree on much, so I did hat A1 Smith said to do when he ran for President, "Let's look at the record."

Now. we flew the first and third mission on D-Day. In reviewing this history, I referred to four sources: my fortieth anniversary audio cassette, which I dictated on June 6, 1984; Ed Huntzinger's 388th At War; the mission statements of the National Archives and the June 18, 1944 Yank magazine, in which Saul Leavitt, a Yank reporter, flew on the first mission with our group with Jim Gabler's crew.

For those who are interested in doing research on our missions at the national archives, in my last letter as president of this group in the fall of 2001, I gave information on getting mission statements by mail. I'll repeat that info here: write to the National Archives, College Park Branch, and ask for Record Group 18, stack Area 190, Row 58, Boxes 1200-1300.

Because so many persons here tonight may not remember I am going to begin with a few bits of information about D-Day. Stephen Ambrose in his book on D-Day states that the allies flew 1400 sorties that day. Before we bombed on the morning mission of June 6, the British landed 130 men near Pointe du Hoc, who used a homing device called Eureka to get to their target, which was our target also. On that famous day, 2,876,000

Allied troops were involved, and there



were 10,500 planes and 5,000 ships crossing the English Channel. By the time we took off for our second mission, there were already over 100,000 troops on the French beach. The U. S. Air Corps put in the air the largest air force ever committed to battle in a single day.

For me, D-Day was the continuation of an unusual three-day episode. June 4 was a Sunday and there was some kind of celebration going at the base so we got little sleep for that mission to Wissant, France. On June 5, we were supposed to go on the invasion, but it was postponed, so we bombed Cape Gris Nez, France as a diversionary target. Again, little sleep.

On D-Day, during the navigators pre-briefing, I received all the maps and general instructions concerning flak batteries, and I was told that our target was a 16 inch gun on the coast near Point du hoc that was encased in tons of concrete on a hillside. Briefing for all crews for the first D-Day mission was at 2300 hours, and during the briefing we heard General Eisenhower tell us that we were embarking on a "Great Crusade."

H hour was scheduled for 06:30 a.m. We were to land. After we bombed, the 2nd Ranger's Battalion scheduled to use steel hooks to scale the 100 foot cliff to get to the 150 millimeter gun if we failed to take it out.

The Colonel told us that there was no place to ditch, so all pilots were to make sure that they could make it to France and back before heading over the Channel. Ordinarily, if you had trouble getting back to the base you could ditch in the Channel, usually nose up, and air-sea rescue would pick you from your last position, after you gave a "mayday mayday" signal.

During navigation training, we practiced ditching, and we were supposed to evacuate the B-17 in 30 seconds, the average time it would float. We were also told during briefing that "Guns will be manned but not test fired. Gunners will not fire at any planes unless attacked." Also, "No secondary runs will be made on any primary target."

After briefing, we took the jitney to our plane. In 1978, when Thora and I met George Stebbins for a tour of the old base, I mention this jitney. He had never heard of it before, and I think he ques-

tioned whether the jitney really existed. Later, he wrote that I was correct about it.

For the first mission, the 388th supplied two groups. Our group was headed by Lt. Colonel Cox, with Lt Col. Henggeler as deputy leader. You might be interested in knowing how Leavitt described Col. Cox. He wrote, "Lt. Chester C. Cox, of Superior, Wisconsin, strolled around operations with his hands in his pockets. This morning flying in the

lead ship of the earliest formation of American heavy bombers to cross the enemy coast on D-Day, had given him the honor of being the first C. J. S.

bombardment pilot to drop bombs in direct support of the landings in France."

It was a very epic occasion but a very routine mission. We took off at 02:19 and we assembled over Buncher 10 to 20,000 feet. Our pilots, Dan Houghton, and co-pilot, Julian "Tex" Carr took us up in aircraft 666, which, I believe was an old plane named "Quarterback." We were part of the A Group of 16 aircraft and 2 PFF planes. As I said, our objective was a German battery, which could fire as much as 13 miles off shore.

The takeoff was over four or five trees that were at the end of the runway, which is another story. When we took off with bomb loads about one-third heavier than normal, we needed the whole runway to just make it over those trees, and we often hit the leaves. I believe that Colonel Goodman had gone earlier to the local constabulary to ask if we could cut them down, but apparently you needed approval from the crown. When we returned to Knettishall in 2003 for the 60th anniversary tour that I sponsored, those trees were still there.

At 03:58, we headed for the English coast at Beachy Head, which is a triangular piece of land about 15 miles east of Brighton Beach in Southern England. We made it to the target on a heading of 238 degrees. The flight was a milk run, and because it was 10/10ths undercover, the targets were attacked by

PFF methods. Bombs were away at 06:56 hours from 15,050 feet. After bombs away, ac-



ording to the official mission statement, "An excellent pattern of release was noted." We encountered no flak or enemy aircraft, although there were 25 ground rockets fired at us near the target. All aircraft returned over Beachy Head for letdown and landing." We landed at 10:00 a.m.

According to Stephen Ambrose, in the two months before D-Day, the Allied Air Forces lost 12,000 men and 2,000 planes. Nevertheless, we were able to put 1,200 Flying Fortresses in the air for the D-Day landing. I remember well standing at the astrodome and looking in all directions and seeing nothing but contrails. What an impressive sight. In that one day, The 8th Air Force dropped more tonnage in two hours than all the bombs dropped on Hamburg in 1943—the most heavily bombed city of Europe in World War II.

After we returned, we had a very quick de-briefing and we all hit the sack totally exhausted. Very soon after, our sleep was interrupted by a sergeant with a flashlight who yelled "Mission." In this audience, I can't tell you the exact words I shouted at him, but it meant "go away." He said, "The mission is

in jeopardy; you have to go back." We dragged our "you know whats" to briefing, where we were told that "the Germans are pushing us into the sea." We had to go back on a tactical mission to support our troops.

For me, this was a more difficult mission. As you know, the B-17 has a nose hatch that is above your head. When I first saw a Flying Fortress, I learned why we had to do all those chin ups in navigation school. Well, on the second mission of June 6, I couldn't make it up wearing my flying suit, Mae West jacket, flak suit and carrying a parachute. You might remember that Gregory Peck had the same problem in "Twelve O' Clock High." I got to the nose by the rear door, crawling through the bomb bay.

Colonel David led our second mission, which took off at 17: 37 p.m., and we assembled over buncher 10 at 12,000 feet. The instrument assembly was achieved at 24,000 feet over Knettishall. We flew ,next to buncher 12 and we circled waiting for the 452nd A Group that was 5 minutes late. Lt Kneemeyer was lead pilot in aircraft 627,

and we were just behind him flying in 666 again. There were 17 aircraft and only 1 PFF airplane that started out.

We left the English coast at 15,000 feet at 19:55 hours, and we reached the IP (the initial point of the bomb run) at 20:15 at 20,000 feet We did not bomb the primary target, however, and after several turns, we found a "target of opportunity" a "railroad choke point in the southern part of Flers."

The mission report tells us that we bombed at 22,000 at 20:58. It was a visual bomb run at Pont L'Eveque on a heading of 160 degrees. The target is on the

Touques River, about 20-25 miles east of Caen. Bomb Kerns, our ball turret gunner, said that on the second bomb run, he turned his guns straight down and he could see the structure of the bridge that we bombed.

TAPS



Floyd G. "Marc" Marcusson

Floyd George "Marc" Marcusson died December 6, 2017 at Fallbrook, CA, 18 days before his 96th birthday. As engineer/top turret gunner on the William Brenner crew in the 560th Sqd., he flew 29 missions, including three to Berlin, between November 1943 and June 1944. Awards included the DFC, Air Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, and the European Theater Ribbon with two battle stars.



Born in Tacoma, WA to Norwegian immigrants, Mr. Marcusson graduated from

high school in 1939 and joined the Army Air Corps three years later.

At war's end, he moved to California, graduating with a degree in Political Science from USC in 1950. He shifted from real estate sales to housing developments and land investments, and was for several years the planning commissioner for the City of Bellflower, a Los Angeles suburb. He and his wife Nancy (Baker) moved their family to Fallbrook, in San Diego County, in 1972.

Survivors include daughters Paulette Eby Smith, Cynthia and Lisa Marcusson; sons Matthew and Eric; six grandchildren and two grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his wife Nancy in June 2012.

Interment with military honors was held at Tahoma National Cemetery, Kent, WA on February 16, 2018.

Percy J. Prentice

Percy James Prentice, long-time British supporter of the 388th Bomb Group and Association, died February 18 at the Stowlangtoft Hall Nursing Home, where he had resided for the past few years. He was 86.



Born in Fen Tree Corner, East Lopham, Mr. Prentice came to Hopton with his parents and four elder siblings as a child. The family later moved to Market Weston, shortly before the arrival of the 388th BG at Knettishall in 1943.

Befriended by some men at the 452nd Sub Depot, the 12-year-old became a regular visitor to the base, working odd jobs in exchange for meals and sleep-overs, often to the consternation of his parents who fretted over the amount of school he was missing. Frequently seen in the mock Army uniform given him by Martin Kozelka (1751st Ordnance Supply) and his wife Marie, he eventually became an unofficial mascot for the group. He described some of his experiences in the 388th Anthology, Vol 1.

After completing his mandatory

National Service in 1951, Mr. Prentice took a series of jobs driving trucks, some long-haul, some local. He retired in the mid-90s. A member of the original 388th Memorial Committee, he cleared the parcel of land, donated by local farmer John Wallace, for the Memorial. For many years, he took it upon himself to mow and sweep the grounds of the Memorial. He also assisted Dave Sarson, curator of the 388th Collection at Hillside Farm, mowing the collection's lawns and greeting visitors.

Following the death of Memorial Trustees Chair George Stebbings, Mr. Prentice assumed the duties of laying representing the 388th BG Assn. and laying a wreath at the annual Memorial Day Ceremony at the American Cemetery at Madingley.

During services held at St. Mary's Church in Coney Weston, Deborah Sarson, current chair, spoke on behalf of the Memorial Trustee Committee and read tributes by 388th BG Assn. President Rick Thompson and Historian Dick Henggeler. Interment followed at the church cemetery. Survivors include sons David and Tony Prentice.

Leola L. Ragland

Leola Lee Ragland, wife of Jim Ragland, passed away on February 28, 2017 in Allen, TX.



For nearly four decades, the Raglands served as Baptist missionaries in Beirut, Lebanon, before being ordered to leave in 1987 by the Reagan Administration.

With her husband, Mrs. Ragland attended 388th BG reunions in Dayton, Washington, Kissimmee, Oklahoma City and Albuquerque.

In addition to Jim, her husband of 68 years, Mrs. Ragland is survived by daughter Rebecca Cherry, sons James, John and Steve, seven grandchildren and several great-grandchildren. A celebration of life was held March 25, 2017 at Hunter's Glen Baptist Church in Plano, TX.

388TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION (THE)
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UPDATE CONTACT INFORMATION (make changes above for update) Address Email Phone

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2 Beaver Ridge, Conway, AR 72032-8229 Email: secretary@388thbga.org or rcastleberry.fcds@gmail.com