



FORTRESS FOR FREEDOM



388TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

**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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An artist's rendering of Project Ultimate Sacrifice, which will add to our existing Memorial the names of all 388th Bomb Group men who died in service. The project received overwhelming approval by members at the 61st annual reunion.

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<http://www.388bg.org> (Database)

<http://www.388thbg.org>

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From the President's Desk

I wish to express my appreciation to the members of the 388th Bomb Group Association for allowing me the honor of serving as your president for the past year. It was a challenging, rewarding, and humbling experience. We had thirty of our original members in attendance at the reunion in Lexington and as I talked with them and heard the stories of their experiences while based at Knettishall, I gained a better perspective of the time my cousin Bill Lentz spent when he flew with them.

It was gratifying when our members voted unanimously to approve the addition to our Memorial at Knettishall and then voted unanimously to approve a significant contribution to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum for the restoration of the "City of Savannah." Long after we are gone those who follow us will learn of the sacrifices and exploits of the men of the 388th Bomb Group during World War II when they visit our Memorial at Knettishall and see the "City of Savannah" at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum. I encourage our members to contribute generously to our Knettishall Memorial Addition fund and to the restoration of the "City of Savannah." Donations can be sent to our Treasurer, Bit Snead, for the Knettishall Memorial fund and to the Mighty Eight Air Force Museum in Pooler, Georgia for the "City of Savannah" restoration fund.

I have enjoyed the support of a strong Board of Directors this year and I know that our new president, Greg Staples, will have the support of an equally strong Board during his tenure as president. I welcome our newly elected officers; Henry Curvat as First Vice President, Ben Forrest, Jr. as Second Vice President, Neil Walker as Director, and Rickard Sundblad as Corporate Agent.

Our reunion planners Rachell and Joel Rary have begun planning our 2011 reunion in Colorado Springs. That should be an exciting reunion and I look forward to seeing everyone there.


Jim Morrow

The Lighter Side



Mission day:

The huge B-17's are trundling out of their revetments, forming a long line to the take-off end of the runway. First the one on the left side, then the right. This keeps the prop-wash to a minimum.

Our turn arrives. We taxi into position and await our final signal to go.

Now! Full throttle!

Half way down the runway, the right tire blows, pulling us off the runway and slewing us straight towards the control tower!

Power off, brakes on, prayers flowing all at once! IS IT GONG TO BE A TIE OR NOT?

Those on the tower's outside ramp vote "tie", for they are over the side and running for safety. In the cockpit, we are braking... and praying...

WE WON! WE WON! WE WON!



If you are enjoying the **LIGHTER SIDE** column we would like you to send us your story.

Please submit your story to the Editor by mail or email to be published in a future issue of the 388th BG Newsletter. Looking forward to hearing from those of you that promised a story at the reunion. Dick Carter, we know where you LIVE!

New Members:

Paul Boggs, son of Raymond R Boggs 562nd Sqd.

Raul Cummings, Air Force retiree and Dear Friend of David (561st Sqd.) and Esta Stewart

Ernest Devonshire, son-in-law of Paul Patten, 561st Sqd.

Denise Isaac – Husbands father John Parker Associate

Carl Giurgevich, son of John Giurgevich (560th Sqd)

& WE Gee.

Mike Jordan, son of Jewell Sam Jordan, 561st Sqd.

Joseph Lukas, son of Vincent Lukas, 562nd Sqd.

Michael Lukas, , son of Vincent Lukas, 562nd Sqd.

Rickard Sundblad, son of George Sundblad Associate

From the Secretary:

Many thanks to all members who wrote, emailed or telephoned to let me know of their military service. Your information, given in response to the Association's request to help maintain the Association's non-profit status, due to IRS regulations, has been noted in our records.

THANK YOU! Linda Soo

From the Editor: Please notify Linda if you served in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces. Contact information on Pg 2.

Thank you for your donations

Carl and Pat Giurgevich

The Giurgevich Family in Memory of
John Giurgevich

Andrew Haspel Joan Lemley Bob Fong One

James Zographos - Memorial Fund

If I missed anyone that made a donation I apologize.
Please notify me and I will be sure you are included in the next issue.

Quotes that hit home...

"I don't know what weapons World War III will be fought with, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones."

- Albert Einstein

HISTORICALLY SPEAKING...

By Dick Henggeler, HISTORIAN



At our reunion in Kentucky, it was decided that the historian should have a regular column in the newsletter. Hopefully I can provide some interesting information to the readership. For

my column debut, I thought that it would be good to explain some of my tasks and describe our library.

One of my most important duties has been to create a definitive list of the men, crews, missions and aircraft of the 388th. The database website (www.388bg.org) provides easy access to this information. The data is constantly being updated, corrected and expanded on a daily basis.

An offshoot of this work has been the establishment of a 388th Research Library (a spare bedroom in my house). This library basically contains reference material related to the 388th. Most of this is received through donation or purchased off of ebay. So far the library contains the following sources:

- 31 Books
- 73 Manuscripts
- 15 Videos
- 4 Audio Tapes
- 170 Newsletters

In addition to this, the library contains folders for each mission, crew, and crash. Various letters, official or unofficial documents (Xeroxed), emails, notes etc are collected in these folders.

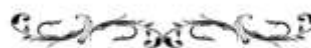
A major part of the library is the photo collection, which is a combination of

actual photos and digital copies. The website displays the following:

- 110 Aircraft photos
- 180 Crew photos
- 634 Individual photos
- 22 Mission photos

There are also hundreds of photos that are not on the website. The actual photos are categorized and stored in archival photo albums

Other photo related items of the library are document photos. The National Archives has the original Clearance Cards that show the crew members for each mission (we have over 9,000 of these photographed). Also the Air Force Historical Society has the operational papers for the group (we have 2 of the 25 months photographed)



From the Editor...

Dick is virtually a wealth of information on the 388th and as you can see, he has accumulated a vast library of reference materials. We have asked that Dick contribute a regular article in each Newsletter in the future. If there is anything you would like him to write about, feel free to let him know (see address, phone #, and email address on page 2).



Project Ultimate Sacrifice

A proposal to honor all 388th BG men who died during World War II, received enthusiastic approval by members attending the Association's 61st annual reunion.

The project, proposed by the 388th Memorial Trustees, will add two granite wing stones to the Memorial site. The stones, set at a 30-degree angle and spaced 24 inches from the center piece, will bear the inscription "In Freedom They Lived ... For Freedom They Died" along with depictions of the group's Square H. Names of all 388th BG war dead will be featured alphabetically (A-L and M-Z) and will be separated by American military stars.

Project researchers have counted, to date, 620 388th BG deaths, beginning with the crew killed in the Soda Springs, ID training flight on May 5, 1943, and ending with the crash of a sight-seeing flight on May 31, 1945. The numbers also include men from ground crews and fliers who died as POWs.

To verify the total numbers and ensure correctness, researchers have poured through the 388th BG Unit Histories, Missing Air Crew Reports, National Archives databases, and even genealogy services. A third and final verification, now in progress, should be completed in November.

The project is estimated at \$16,500.00, which will be raised entirely through contributions. It is hoped that a substantial portion of the funds can be received in time to purchase the stones and place the engraving order before Jan. 1, 2011, when the British VAT (value-added tax) increases from 17.5 to 20 percent. The work will be done by H.L. Perfitt Ltd. Stonemasons, who created the original Memorial.

Contributions should be sent to Association Treasurer Bit Sneed. To prevent contributions from being confused with donations to the treasury's general fund, it is critical that all checks be marked "**Project Ultimate Sacrifice**" in the memo section.

Regular updates will appear in future issues of the newsletter.



To the Members of the 388th BG Association

On behalf of the Officers and Trustees of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, the staff and volunteers, I want to thank all of you for your generous support of this Museum's B-17 project. The air crew that participated in the christening of the B-17 *City of Savannah* on 3 December 1944 in Savannah, GA, was subsequently assigned to the 388th Bomb Group at Knettishall. As a museum that is committed to preserving the stories of courage, character and patriotism embodied by the members of the Eighth Air Force, we welcome the opportunity to tell the story of the Ralph Kittle crew who flew the *City of Savannah* to England. Recognizing the heroic service of one air crew helps us all remember the sacrifice made by each member of the 388th BG who served so gallantly during World War II. For your military service and for your generosity, we honor you.

Sincerely,

 Henry Skipper
 CEO/President



Volunteers on restoration

The 388th's First Silver Star Recipient

On September 5, 1943, Barlow Brown became the 388th BG's first Silver Star recipient for his actions on July 26 during the Hanover, Germany mission. The following is the official public relations release written shortly after the mission.

When the records of courage and tenacity are written high on the list must be placed the name of Flight Officer Barlow Dean Brown of 817 East 88th Street, Seattle, Wash, and the crew of the Flying Fortress "Impatient Virgin," who brought their battered ship to safe landing in England after virtually every working part of it had been shot out of commission by German flak and fighters.

Flight Officer Brown has been recommended for the Silver Star and two injured crewmen have been recommended for the Purple Heart.

With the pilot injured by a 20 mm shell explosion in the cockpit and the vertical stabilizer torn away in collision with another Flying Fortress, the "Impatient Virgin" was brought through safely by Flight Officer after a two-hour battle with German fighters that extended far out to sea.

Here is what the crew found had happened to their ship when they made an emergency landing in England within 100 miles of their home base:

- A 20 mm shell had exploded in the right wing behind the no. 3 engine.
- Flak destroyed half the left aileron.
- Shell fire tore off most of the trim tabs.
- Another shell entered the left window of the pilot's compartment and exploded there.
- Two shells tore huge holes in the right horizontal stabilizer and another tore a hole in the left stabilizer.
- The vertical stabilizer, bent into an inverted "J" in a collision with another Fortress, had finally been blown free of the plane.
- Some of the instruments, including fuel gauges, were out.
- All the oxygen supply in the front half of the ship was out.
- Eight of the plane's guns would not fire.
- The electric system, the brakes and the hydraulic system were out.
- The intercommunications system was out.
- The plane was riddled with flak, bullet and shell holes.

The Fortress had completed its bombing run over Hanover in Germany and was heading for home with 2nd Lt. William P.



Flight Officer Barlow Brown, 560th Sqd., is congratulated by General Curtis Le May on receiving the Silver Star for gallantry in action.

Beecham, Omaha, Ne, the pilot at the controls. He and Flight Officer Brown had alternated in piloting the ship.

"We were in formation and had just left the target," said Brown. "I'm not sure whether Beecham had been hit then or not. I saw a plane going over top of us. I shoved the stick and threw the ship into a dive. I didn't feel anything myself, but the fellows say the vertical fin was knocked into a sort of upside down J. It was a B-17 that skidded across us and his horizontal stabilizer clipped our vertical."

It was shortly afterward that German fighters began their attacks on the ship with renewed fury and continued them as they saw the big plane was in distress.

The ship was flying at 22,500 feet when the 20 mm shell entered the cockpit and exploded behind the seat. Lt. Beecham suffered wounds from the fragments in his back, shoulder, neck, head, and left arm, and all the forward oxygen system wet out of commission.

Soon half the ship's controls were out and it was losing altitude rapidly. It started into a spin, but Brown managed to pull it out.

"The wing started to go down," said Brown, "and I couldn't get it up. I used up all the trim tab and it started going down. I told the boys to prepare for a water landing.

"We were going from one Fortress formation to another all the way back, for protection. The crew threw out everything that could be moved, even their chutes.

"Half an hour later the vertical finally fell off which again threw the ship off flying level. I sent the word back for the crew to bail out, but some of them had thrown away their chutes.

"We started into a dive again and I switched from AFC to manual control. I used the throttle and trim tabs. You could hardly move the rudder.

"I would speed up the engines on one side to turn right or left and also could use the aileron a little on manual."

The Nazi fighters followed the stricken Fortress more than 50 miles to sea, 6 or 8 of them diving at it continually. "I picked out the first field we saw in England, circled once, got the wheels down and came in," Brown said. "She seemed to float; she was so light I couldn't set her down. Couldn't get the flaps down either. She landed about midway in the runway. The brakes held for a moment, enough to straighten the ship out, and then they gave way. I reached for the emergency and that wasn't working.

"We went off the end of the runway and on to the grass, but the ship didn't turn over and it wasn't damaged any more."

Mail Call



Tom:

The rosters I created from researching official biographical public records of the USAF, Air National Guard and Air Reserve Command are of those officers who served with units of the 388th Fighter Bomber Wing or 388th Tactical Fighter Wing or 388th Fighter Wing and achieved general officer status. I subsequently added 388th Bombardment Group (Heavy) when I located names of two officers of that group who achieved general officer status.

To date the following officers are the only bios I have:

Brig. Gen Chester C Cox Retired Aug 1,'65 Died 5/28/10
Maj. Gen John R Kern Jr. Retired Mar 1,'75 Died 5/05/10

I hypothesized that being assigned to a specific organization had a favorable affect on an officer's career. My research revealed that 137 officers of the above wings and group achieved general officer status. I do not know if this is unique within the Air Force, I restricted my research to those general officers, whose bios listed assignment or attachment to the 388th FBW or TFW or FW or BG.

My rosters will not be distributed outside of the reunion committees of the above organizations. I am not writing a book or periodical on this subject. There may be an article in "Air Force Times" about the results of my research.

Statistics to date:

137 officers as of 25 August 2010. Rosters are posted as promotions/retirements/deaths are announced to the public:

Chief of Staff: 1

Gen: 9

Lt Gen 23

MajGen 55

BrigGen 47

Senior Executive Service (general officer equivalent) 2

Kindest regards,

Marvin S. Findling, CMSgt, USAF (Ret.)
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Juno Beach FL 33408.1446
findling@bellsouth.net
561.624.9033

These three men have been identified through the efforts of all you who read the Spring Newsletter. There will be more pictures in future issues for you to help identify. Thank you for your continued support of our World War II Veterans.



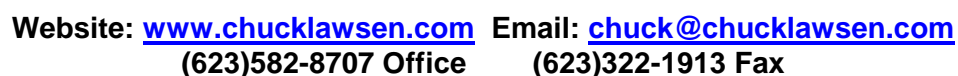
Ball Turret Gunner 003 Identified E H Leonard
Zengerle Crew 562nd Squadron POW 5/25/44



Engineer 002 Identified J P Hurdle
Zengerle Crew 562nd Squadron KIA 5/25/44



Lieutenant 001 Identified E M Lippert
Copilot 562nd Squadron



TWELVE HOURS OF MY LIFE

Submitted by Edward H Strachyra



Briefing at 0300, Sept. 28th, 1944. Our target: Merseburg, Germany. We were specifically aiming for the oil refineries, although Merseburg was also the headquarters for the Hitler Youth and the Gestapo strong arm elite. The anti-aircraft guns would be far from few; about 1100 guns

would bear upon the attackers...**the 8th A.A.F.**

It was a beautiful day as we flew over Brussels and Holland. The flower green house brightly reflected the sunlight. Everything looked so peaceful and settled. Is it possible that down below, devastation in the form of war, could be progressing? No, it just didn't seem possible...but never-the-less, a war was going on. We flew on.

At 12:15 p.m. we were about 10 minutes from the target. In the distance could be seen a black cloud in the sky. Already the "flak" (anti-aircraft gun fire) was thick in the barrage. All men on board our B-17 had their "flak" suits adjusted on. We are highly tensed. Each second brings us closer to that frightening wall of black smoke. We are now at 26,500 feet on the bombing run. Soon we will drop our 6000 lbs of death. The flashes of the anti-aircraft guns burst steadily. Won't we ever get there? Only a few more seconds and our load will vanish. Now, in an instance, the bombs are falling towards the target. It is a pretty picture!

Suddenly, our ship lurches, as it is hit in the right wing. The number four engine is burning and the wing tip is gone. Another burst shatters the nose, scattering all navigation equipment, breaking the radar system, bomb sight, oxygen bottles and the interphone system. Again, a burst hits the number two engine. Still another burst sends shards of plexiglass blinding the top-turret gunner and cutting the pilots face. (When will we hear the Air Corp song playing in the faint distance..."we live in fame or go down in flames"?)

Our ship is losing altitude and airspeed. We are out of the formation and far behind. The airspeed hovers at 130 mph as the altitude needle is slowly winding counter-clockwise down. In ten minutes, the formation can no longer be seen in the sun, as it heads for England. We are alone in the middle of Germany!

After first aid is rendered to the wounded, it is decided that we head toward American occupied France. The magnetic compass reads 265 degrees. Ahead can be seen "flak" coming through the layer of clouds which have accumulated during the past event filled hour. Slowly, we fly around the "flak" with a valuable loss of time, distance and gasoline. Can we get to France?

One hour from the target, we are still fighting our way towards safe ground. A slight break in the clouds reveals we are over a town...Again, "flak" is fired at us point blank. We are directly hit. At an altitude of 5500 ft., our ship is a "sure kill" for the Germans! The order to "bail out" is given and all the crew parachute out towards the enemy.

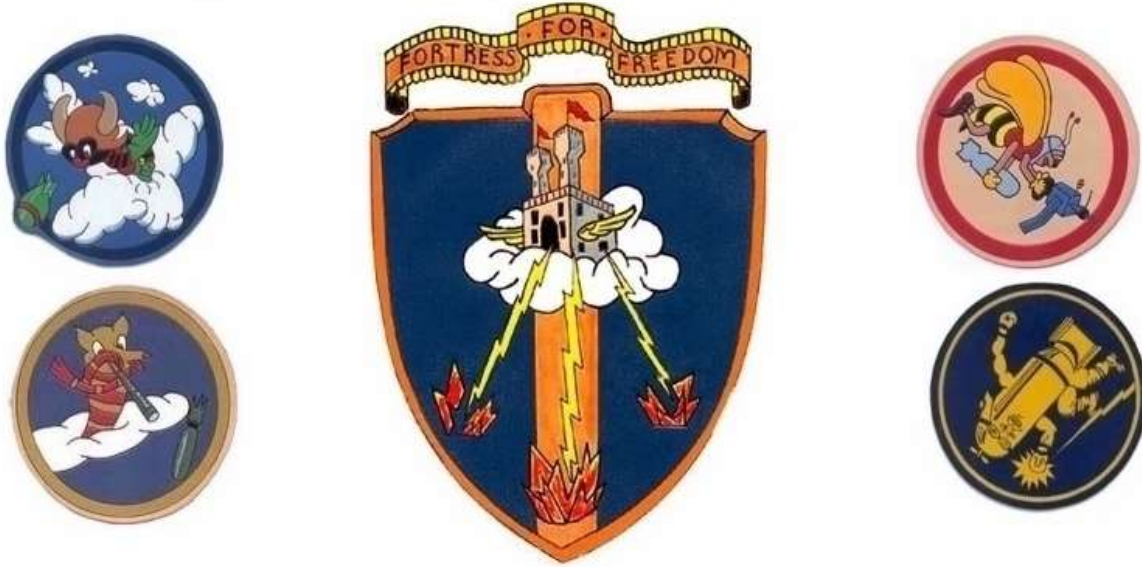
Just twelve hours ago, we were free men in England. Now, we will fight our war from a German prison camp.

Mission #204 to Merseburg, Germany
September 28th, 1944
G.I. Jane A/C #43-37520

P: 1st Lt. M.G. MICHAELS
CP: 2nd Lt. J. WAICKUS
N: F/O F. H. STACHYRA
B: 2nd Lt. R. S. PERLA
C: S/SGT. L.O. WHITE
RO: S/SGT. D. H. SCOTT
BT: S/SGT. T. E. PRUDHAM
WG: S/SGT. W. W. SWEENEY
TG: S/SGT. M. N. MALINICH

"G.I. Jane" was shot down at 1400 hours east of Alken, Germany.

388th Bombardment Group



Annual Memorial September, 2010

Brigadier General (Ret.) Chester C. Cox,
Commanding Officer of the 388th Bomb Group

Charles T. Cooke, 563rd
Wren M. Frith, 563rd
Samuel C. Gundy, 562nd
William R. Hudson, HQ
Otis Ingebritson, 560th
Neil McIntyre, 560th
Leslie E. "Gus" Meader
Herbert W. Moore, 562nd
W. Russell Moss, 561st
Elbert P. Moyer, 561st

Bruce Mitchell Muirhead, 562nd
Ray R Newmark, 561st
Paul H Patten, 563rd Squadron
Samuel Pezza, 29th Sta C
Manuel T. Rodriguez
Robert Johnson Seney, 563rd
Basil E. Smith, 562nd
Charles H. "Buck" Wallace, Jr., 560th
Omer O. Wildman, 561st
Elmer Wilson, Jr., 560th

To all those we have lost over the years we offer this simple Toast...

"...Until We Meet Again."

Taps



Raymond G. Pendergast, Jr.

Raymond Pendergast, Jr. died Oct. 18, 2009 in Hyannis, MA. The longtime resident of Centerville, MA was 87.

A Flight Officer in the 562nd Sqd. he was co-pilot on the Muirhead crew, flying 38 missions between May and Nov. 1944, mostly in the aircraft *Lotta Bull*. He remained in the Air Force, ultimately attaining the rank of Major. Awards included the EAME, WWII Victory Medal, Air Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, and the DFC.

Prior to his entry into the service, Mr. Pendergast was employed processing wool skins used in flying suits. After the war he embarked on a career in aviation, working as a pilot for Wiggins Airways, National Airlines, Northeast Airlines, and Delta Airlines until his retirement in 1982.

Mr. Pendergast is survived by children Raymond III, Holly, Heather, Gale, Scott and Leigh; and seven grandchildren. He was preceded in death by Elinor, his wife of 58 years. He was buried in Massachusetts National Cemetery, Bourne, with military honors.

Vernon J. Kramer



Vernon "Vern" Kramer died June 15, 2008 of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis. The St. Louis, MO resident was 86.

Volunteering for the U.S. Army Air Force in the fall of 1942, Mr. Kramer was radio operator on the Home Pou crew in the 560th Squadron.

The crew of "Return Engagement" was shot down during the March 8, 1944 mission #77 to Berlin. Trapped in the bomb bay with his parachute harness caught on a bomb, Sgt. Kramer was freed by bombardier John Mulligan. He was a POW for 13 months, being reunited with some of his crew, which made the experience a little easier.

In 1976, following a successful 30-year career with the National Cash Register Co., Mr. Kramer founded his own business, DCRS Solutions in St. Louis.

In addition to Marian, his wife of 62 years, Mr. Kramer is survived by five children and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Donald Marble



Donald Marble died April 15, 2010 at his Higgins Lake, MI home with son Thomas by his side. He was 90.

Mr. Marble was one of the 388th BG's original cadre, participating in the group's first mission on July 17, 1943. He was engineer/top turret gunner on the Richard Bailey crew, 561st Sqd. flying primarily in the aircraft *Big Red*. After completing his tour, he became a gunnery officer, transferring from Knettishall. Awards included the DFC and Purple Heart. He was one of the contributors to the *388th Anthology, Vol. II*, and donated personal memorabilia to the 388th Collection at Hillside Farm.

Mr. Marble worked as the assistant regional claims manager for AAA for many years before retiring and moving to Higgins Lake. His wife Mary, whom he married in 1949, passed away in 2002.

In addition to his son Thomas, Mr. Marble is survived by two granddaughters. He was interned at Flint Memorial Park Cemetery in Mt. Morris, MI.

Walter C. Tappan

Walter Tappan, 83, passed away June 10, 2008 in Pensacola, FL. Ball turret and tail gunner on the E. Rolland Carlson crew, 561st Sqd, he flew 21 missions between March 8 and April 18, 1944.

Following the war Mr. Tappan worked for Firestone, Goodyear, the United States Agency for International Development, and the International Rice Research Institute (as a botanist/horticulturist). His professional travels took him to Liberia, Nigeria, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam.

Mr. Tappan is survived by Lucy, his wife of 62 years; four children and nine grandchildren.

Paul F Harris

Paul F Harris, 84, long time resident of Weirton, WV passed away on October 14, 2009 at Trinity West Medical Center. He served as Bombardier-Navigator with the 560th Sqd. He remained in the Air Force Reserve until discharged in 1966 as a Captain. Paul was Director of Public Relations for Weirton Steel until he retired in 1972. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Pearl, their son, daughter and 5 grandchildren.

388TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ASSN., INC.
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OAK HARBOR, WA 98277
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388TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

DATE _____ NAME _____
WIFE/HUSBAND _____ PHONE _____
STREET _____ CITY _____ STATE _____
ZIP CODE _____ EMAIL ADDRESS _____
SQUADRON _____ POSITION _____ AIRCRAFT NAME _____
PILOT _____ NO MISSIONS _____ POW (DATE) _____ STALAG LUFT _____
ANNUAL DUES (\$10.00) _____ LIFE MEMBERSHIP (\$50.00) _____ DONATION _____
ASSOCIATE ANNUAL DUES (\$10.00) _____ ASSOCIATE LIFE MEMBERSHIP (\$50.00) _____

Please make Checks payable to: 388th BG Assn.

IF APPLYING FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP:

NAME OF RELATION WHO IS/WAS IN THE 388TH _____

RELATIONSHIP TO YOU _____ ☐

(Please fill in known information above, SQUADRON through POW information, for relative.) ☒ box if You have Prior Military Service

MAIL TO: LINDA SOO, SECRETARY 388TH BOMB GROUP ASSN. 3013 MOUNT BAKER CIRCLE OAK HARBOR, WA 98277

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