

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

VOLUME 72

ISSUE NO. 3

FALL 2016



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From the President's Desk

It was such a tremendous honor and privilege to be part of an Association whose only mission is to honor the sacrifice and legacy of our members of the Greatest Generation. As President, my goals were to 1. Advance the legacy of the 388th Bomb Group, 2. Ensure an outstanding reunion at Oshkosh, and 3. Increase communication. With the help of a great Team, I am confident that we were successful on all three.

Our 67th annual reunion at Oshkosh was incredible! We got a chance to honor 9 of our original members-- Mr. August Bolino, Mr. Chuck Neff, Mr. Paul Dell, Mr. Charles Woodford, Mr. Wayne Daniels, Mr. Don Scott, Mr. David Stewart, Mr. Jack Vann, and Mr. Tom McElherne.

General Robin Rand, our guest speaker, was exceptional, and clearly demonstrated how the US Air Force continues to support its veterans. Having Dean Sergeant, a member of the Airmen's Preservation Society, present with his incredible collection of authentic WWII memorabilia was also very special. I want to thank Ann Turley and Kim McDonald for doing such a great job providing everyone who attended a wonderful and memorable experience.

At the annual meeting, we were able to approve several motions, which should help keep the Association viable, including new newsletter delivery procedures and a balanced increase in annual and lifetime membership dues. We selected Boston, MA for the site of the 2018 annual reunion, and we elected new officers.

Of course the flight in Aluminum Overcast was amazing, and something I'm sure those who got to fly in will not soon forget. What a fantastic memory.

I want to thank everyone who attended the Oshkosh reunion—especially our heroes from the 388th Bomb Group. I sure hope you had a great time. I know Staci and I did. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as President—it was truly special and an honor I will never forget. I look forward to serving this



year as Senior Director, and I look forward to seeing everyone again next year in San Diego.

Sincerely,

Scott

Our Historian

Knettishall

The men of the 388th all say that they were stationed at Knettishall, England. If you have ever been to Knettishall, I know that you had a hard time finding it. Knettishall today is more of a spot on the map rather than a village. The village of Coney Weston is easier to find and today remains a peaceful little cluster of houses with its own pub, The Swan. The base effectively laid between the two villages.

I once heard that the reason Knettishall was associated with the base was for tactical reasons. If the Germans tried to locate Knettishall on their maps, it was most likely that they could not find it. Well how true that story is I do not know but it certainly is amusing in a way.

When you go to Knettishall today, you will find an almost idyllic country scene of farm lands and scattered houses blending in nicely with the country side. Small little villages on roads that have limited amount of traffic. It is not hard to imagine what the Knettishall area was like in 1942 before the 388th came.

World War II was so amazing in so many ways. One aspect was what happen to quiet little corners of the world that were suddenly swamped by the enormity of a world war happening around them.

In late 1942, the Knettishall area was first invaded by workers building a massive runway system. A concrete runways 150 feet wide and 6,000 feet long, two other intersecting runways were 4,200 feet. Along with hardstands for 40 B-17s. All of this overseen by a concrete control tower in the middle. Can you imagine the amount of concrete suddenly pouring into this sleepy countryside.

In June 1943, the 4 squadrons of the 388th arrived at the base. They are initially house in tents until



See what your missing!



Visit the 388th Bomb Group Association Facebook page and see videos and photos of Oshkosh.

www.facebook.com/388thbga

We are now accepting credit card payments!

People can pay reunion fees, membership fees, make charitable donations and much more.

A link to this can be found on www.388thbga.org under the store section. See you there!

COMING SOON!

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



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Greg Staples

4715 W. Larchwood Court, Spokane, WA 99208

All profits go to our Memorial in Knettishall.

their Nissen huts can be built. Concrete communal shower and toilet buildings providing washing facilities for the men. In addition all of the other buildings - briefing room, px, mess halls, officer club, library, gym, medical facilities, etc. popped up over night. Suddenly there is a village of 5,000 Americans.

Outside the base, army vehicles of all types are now crowding roads that barely had any traffic. Fuel trucks are constantly bring fuel to the base for its thirsty B-17s. Men are going into Thetford to catch the train to London for their 3 day pass. Some men are visiting locals who will do their laundry for money or some scarce food gotten from the base.

Overhead the B-17s are flying non stop. The air is filled with their roar early in the morning as they take off for the day's mission. During the day, practice flights take off intermittently and in late afternoon the shot up B-17s are returning from battle with flares being shot into the air.

This goes on for two years and then in May 1945 it comes to a complete standstill. The base begins to empty out. In August the last B-17 leaves and the base is a ghost town. Over the years the base is torn down and the runways are dug up. And then Knettishall area returns to being the sleepy community tucked away in Suffolk. Little remains that would indicate what took place there from 1943 to 1945. It is hard to imagine what took place not so very long ago.

US Air Force dog tag found near RAF Knettishall site to be returned to its 92-year- old owner

For former USAF serviceman Raymond Odam, the memories of his brief stint on





Repatriation of GI Dog Tags at Knettishall on August 12, 2016. (L-R) John Wallace, Deborah Sarson, chair of 388th Bomb Group, Dr Bob Mackay, Cpl Ed Stanley, Wing Commander Matt Cornish, Col Derek Salmi, Andy Fuller, Squadron Leader Fryer, Senior Master Sergeant Boisvert, David Sarson. Photos by Will Drummee.

a Norfolk airbase during the Second World War are far behind him.

However, the past came back to life this month as a military dog tag belonging to the ex-private, which was discovered near the former site of RAF Knettishall, began its 4,000 mile journey back to him.

Mr Odam, 92, was based at the airfield near Thetford with the 388th Heavy Bombardment Squadron of the Eighth Army Air Force, which occupied the base from 1943 to 1945.

The dog tag was discovered by Andy Fuller, a groundsman from RAF Honington, while he was out metal detecting on farmland on what was once the bomber airfield

Cpl Ed Stanley, an armourer at RAF Honington, researched Mr Fuller's find and discovered the tag's owner was alive and well, living in Louisiana. He got in touch with Mr Odam's daughter Debbie, who was thrilled with the news.

RAF Knettishall was an US Air Force base between the villages of Knettishall and Coney Weston in Suffolk.

Built in 1943, it was a heavy bomber airfield built to Class A specification and was home to the 388th Heavy Bombardment Squadron

of the United States Eighth Army Air Force. It was the only place the unit was based during its two years in the European Theatre of Operations (ETO).

The group flew Boeing B-17 Flying Fortresses on 331 raids over occupied Europe and also sent the 560th Bombardment Squadron to nearby RAF Fersfield, to fly missions with Operation Aphrodite in 1944.

The base was inactivated in 1945 after the 388th squadron returned to South Dakota.

After being briefly used by the Royal Army Service Corps, the base was sold in 1957 – all that remains are a few wartime buildings and parts of the old runways, used as farm roads. Four years ago an airfield memorial was unveiled to members of 388th Bomber Squadron.

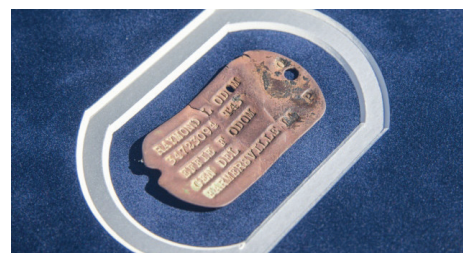
"It is only in the past couple of years that my father had started to talk about his time in the war. It was still difficult for him to talk about his crew mates leaving for missions and never coming back," she said.

In order to get Mr Odam's dog tag across the pond, another USAF air base in Suffolk, RAF Mildenhall, offered to help.

During a ceremony at the memorial to 388th Bomber Squadron in Knettishall, Wing Commander Matt Cornish from RAF Honington, Cpl Stanley and Mr Fuller met Col Derek Salmi, operations group commander at RAF Mildenhall, and USAF historian Dr Bob Mackay to officially hand over the now framed dog tag for its onward journey.

Wg Cdr Cornish said: "It is the forethought of Cpl Stanley and his passion for history that has allowed us all to be part of this special occasion."

The tags will now be sent on to the Eighth Air Force headquarters at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana to be presented to Mr Odam at a later date.



LIAISON REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE 388th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION AT THE ANNUAL MEETING IN LAYTON, UTAH

College Scholarship Program Report

The 388th Scholarship Program was created with the purpose of better connecting our young people with the legacy of their own family members, and other members of the 388th BG, who flew B-17s out of Knettishall and bravely fought and served in the European Theater during WWII. The Association is completing Year 2 of its College Scholarship Program. Our first scholarship award was given to Seth McMurray from Mt. Pleasant, Texas in 2015. Seth is the great-grandson of 388th veteran, Elliot Henderson Hewes, Jr, who was the engineer on veteran Thomas A. Dennis, Sr's crew. Seth is majoring in mechanical engineering at the University of Texas-Tyler. His \$1,000 scholarship was disbursed by Tom Dennis, Jr., interim Treasurer, to UT-Tyler for Seth's studies.

For the 2016 solicitation, information was disseminated to attendees of the 388th annual reunion in Washington, DC in September 2015. Additional call-outs were posted on the website and in 3 consecutive newsletters thereafter (fall, winter, spring). We are proud to announce that Ms. Addie F. Todd of Cumberland, Maine, was selected as the 2016 awardee after her essay was reviewed by members of the 388th Board of Directors. Addie is the granddaughter of William W. Worthen, 388th co-pilot with the Casimer Edmond (Casey) Sulkowski crew. Addie will be a freshman at the University of Maine-Orono this fall, majoring in business management. Again, her \$1,000 scholarship award will be directly turned over to the accounting office at the University of Maine in Addie's name. Information on Addie will be available at the Annual Reunion at Oshkosh, WI and in an upcoming association newsletter.

Solicitations for 2017 will begin immediately following the reunion. Please help us to spread the word about the 388th Bombardment

Group Association's College Scholarship program. Information is available on our website, and once again, materials will be distributed in Oshkosh. We trust that all association members support this program and find strong value in it. Thank you to Charles Woodford, original member, for coming up with the idea that forms the basis of our current scholarship program. We appreciate all donations to the 388th Scholarship Fund to sustain this important endeavor on behalf of our membership.

*Respectfully submitted,
Terry Woodford-Thomas
Liaison College Scholarship*

Historian Report

The following represents activities of the historian over the past 12 months

Special Orders

Special Orders (SO) were issued every day to authorize a variety of activity including transfers, TDYs, investigations, training etc. These are an invaluable source of data about personnel (name, rank, serial number, unit, MOS).

Much time has been spent scouring each SO for information. To date 7 combat months out of 23 have been processed. The 6,000 references to individuals by name account for 43% of all 388th personnel. This effort has greatly improved the amount of information and accuracy of the personnel database.

Audio Tapes

Cassette audio tapes containing interviews of veterans were converted to CD format.

Video Tapes

VHS video tapes containing interviews with veterans were converted to DVD format.



Three copies of all video files were backed up on external drives. One copy was sent to Rick Thompson for his work with Hill AFB kiosk.

Books / Manuscripts

Several books referencing the 388th and veterans manuscripts were acquired and cataloged in database

Photos

A number of photos have been scanned, categorized in the database and added to the online photo collection. There remains many photos not yet processed but the vast majority of them are problematic for a variety of reasons (very poor quality, uninteresting content, etc.)

Website

Command Pilots (those who led combat groups) have been identified with command pilot wings on their personal page.

Current Data Status

The following represents the current status

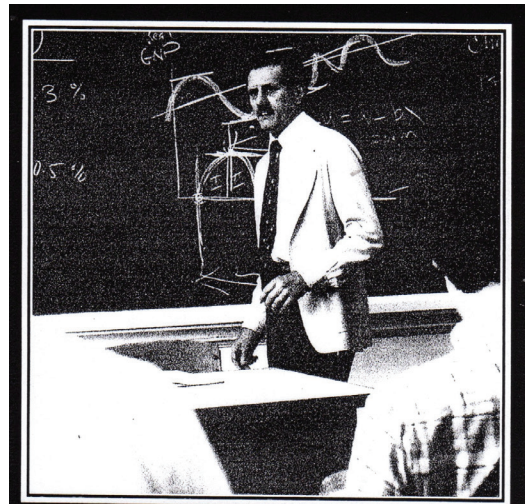
- Personnel 8,200 combat and base personnel identified in the database
- References 8,800 references to a person, crew, plane or mission in a newsletter, book, manuscript, Special Order, video, audio etc.
- Online Photos 2,700 photos of personnel, aircraft, off and on base, mission maps etc.

*Respectfully submitted,
Dick Henggeler
Historian*

August C. Bolino



My Life



Author and Professor Emeritus August C. Bolino looks back at his scratch-and-scramble childhood in East Boston, his World War II days as a B-17 navigator, his forty-year career in education and government, his work on the restoration of Ellis Island, and raising four children with his beloved wife, T.J.

My Life by August C. Bolino

This book covers the first 93 years of August Bolino's life. There are sections on his 40 years of teaching, his years as Vice President of the Ellis Island Restoration Commission and the years as navigator, when he flew 30 missions, including 2 on D-Day, and when he received the Distinguished Flying Cross.

The printer is offering this book to the 388th Group for \$15, which is the total of \$12 for printing and \$3 for postage. (this is about one-half the retail price). To order send check to:

August C. Bolino, 8515 2nd Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910.



388th BG Association College Scholarship Program



In Fall 2016, applications will be available for high school students who are sons, daughters, nephews, nieces, or grandchildren of 388th Bombardment Group Association Members who are interested in applying for a \$1,000 scholarship to attend the college or university of their choice. The purpose of this program is to bring young people into closer connection with the (1) the history of the 388th during WWII, our 388th veterans, their missions, their patriotism, their courage and the sacrifices they made in the name of freedom, and (2) to better understand the valor and dedication shown by servicemen and servicewomen in the armed forces on the global front and at home.

Who is eligible? High school seniors who are family of 388th BG Association members, and are planning to attend an institute of higher education in Fall 2017.

What is required? A three-page, ~ 1,500-word essay on the topic, "The 388th: Past and Present- Answering Our Nation's Call" to be submitted in both hard copy and electronic form. A cover letter is advised. As you think about your writing, there are many areas to explore and include in your essay. Focus on something that is meaningful to you and your family. You may want to research about a specific crew or crew member, a base or base event, specific targets, specific sorties, the roles of the air and ground crews, B17 aircraft mechanics, what a mission briefing was like, or compare 388th aircraft today with those used during WWII, just to give a few examples. One award is given each year to the special recipient.

What are the evaluation criteria? More details will be sent to you, but briefly, the highest scoring essays will be written with personal integrity, creativity, originality, clarity, and accuracy, with appropriate references, citations, and sources given, using a variety of media and resources. Communication with 388th BG veterans and active duty 388th FW servicemen and servicewomen is strongly encouraged. We can help you with that.

How will the selection be made? A dedicated scholarship committee composed of internal and external reviewers including 388th veterans, association members, and secondary and post secondary level educators, will review the applications, read and score the essays, and make the final selection. During this process, the author's name will not appear on the final copy of the essay.

When will the award be presented? The scholarship award will be announced during the summer preceding the Annual 388th BG Reunion. The presentation will take place at the reunion banquet to which the recipient will be invited and honored. Attendance of the awardee is not required, but is highly encouraged.

How do I start? Contact Terry Woodford-Thomas with your inquiries and intentions, and an application and further details will be sent to you. The deadline to receive all applications and essays is March 2017.

Terry Woodford-Thomas
Tel: 314-587-1436
tthomas@danforthcenter.org

Terry Woodford-Thomas
388th Bombardment Group Association, Inc.
104 Arundel Place, 975 N. Warson Road
St. Louis, MO 63105



388th BG Association College Scholarship 2016 Essay Winner

The members who were involved in the 388th Bombardment Group made a stable contribution to America's involvement in World War II. The group's first attack took place in Amsterdam on July 17th, 1943. The group flew over 300 war missions, lasting until May 20th, 1945. The B-17 Flying Fortresses in the European Theater mainly targeted France and Germany, but also flew over other countries. In total the 388th Bombardment Group completed 206 combat, 19 Aphrodite, 5 Chowhound and 2 Revival missions, and 1 POW mission. During their two years of active duty, the group lost 91 aircraft and about 1,325 men due to combat death or hardships as prisoners of war. The soldiers who fought during World War II and throughout the bombardment were extremely strong and giving Americans who remain historical idols for current and future Americans. Fortunately, my grandfather, William Worthen, a member of the 388th Bombardment Group, is still alive today. My grandfather is 93 years old, and still lives by himself in Burlington, Vermont. He was a co-pilot serving on 35 missions during this war period. He is my only grandparent left, and to me, an extremely important figure in history.

In 1942, at age 20, my grandfather, William Worthen, enlisted in the Army Air Corp at the University of Vermont. His sister convinced him to join the Corp, and he never completed his first semester of college. He chose to join the Army Air Corp because it interested him more than the infantry. In 1943, he was called in to serve in the 388th Bombardment Group. He went to boot camp in Georgia for a few months, which was followed by six months in flight school in order to receive his wings and commission. Boot camp was very hot, and the soldiers would pass out periodically due to the heat. My grandfather then traveled to Florida to complete flight school. He explained to me that he got along very well with his flight instructor and crew of guys who were in training with him. He was a First Lieutenant and co-pilot with Cashmere Sulkoyski, flying 35 missions on a collection of planes from July 1944 to December 1944 (but one was never counted as an official mission). He flew his first combat mission out of England, flying over France and Germany. Some of his flight commands in the air were given in German. He could understand German, but he could not speak it. There were many casualties; one or two planes would go down on each mission, with each plane carrying ten men. My grandfather flew an Aphrodite mission in August 1944. He and his crew also made special missions to deliver supplies to Free France. These were very long trips that lasted for 7 to 10 hours. My grandfather was awarded air medals for both good conduct and service, and for surviving the war. These included the EAME and AM (Air Medal) with a 5 Oak Leaf Cluster. On top of that, he received a star to add to his citations for every five missions that he and his crew completed. My grandfather was never injured during his two years of service.

My grandfather stayed in touch with his friends and family at home through letters. He couldn't give out any information about his missions, and had to censor the names of others enlisted with him. At the base in Knettishall, England, they ate three meals a day, unless they were flying. They were fed powdered eggs and mostly canned food. They had three or four outfits each, and an "everyday" flight suit. A "Pass" referred to the times when the soldiers were able to have a break from flying. Usually, my grandfather and his crewmembers would go into London during this time and hangout in the city. His crew also traveled to Scotland on leave for four days where they relaxed and rode horses. There was a bar on the base where the men would have drinks, play cards, and occasionally watch movies. While my grandfather was serving, there was a Glen Miller band concert on the base that he dearly remembered. Before each mission, the crews would meet and discuss the mission's location and details for



an hour or two. "I was always under pressure and stressed while flying", my grandfather explained. My grandfather's service ended in early 1945, and he was discharged from the service in Massachusetts. His pilot came and visited him after he was discharged, but tragically ended up committing suicide about six months later.

My grandfather never kept an official journal or diary, but fortunately another man who flew in a B-17 Flying Fortress named Joel Punches did. Mr. Punches' writing clearly portrays how he was feeling and what it was like to be in battle on a mission. The following excerpt from Punches' diary is dated February 21st, 1944. It gives a sense of members of a B-17 crew went through on a very bad mission. "We were bombing Hamburg, Germany on my next to the last mission, at 25,000 feet. Over the target we were hit by flak from the ground, which knocked two engines out. We had to leave the formation, and drop down and back. Ten minutes later two German fighter planes spotted us and attacked us head-on. They knocked one more engine out. We then were at 6,000 feet and going down 1000 feet a minute with one engine on fire. The German fighter planes were circling and getting ready for the kill. So we decided that if we kept flying we would never make it back to England and would have to ditch in the channel, which in the winter was suicide. We all bailed out through the bomb bay. I was fairly sure we were over Holland, and not Germany. I hit the ground and hid my parachute and opened my escape kit and got my compass and silk maps out and started walking southwest." This passage shows the reality of a mission in one of the worse case scenarios. It shows how brave Mr. Punches was and how he reacted to the situation. At this point in his service, he had to do whatever he could to remain alive. After successfully escaping the plane, Mr. Punches traveled back to London, which took a series of months. He had to stay in towns and houses with different families in order to be safe and protected. He traveled mostly by foot and had to be on high alert in order to make it back to London alive. Once Mr. Punches got to London he was promoted one rank, given \$1,500 in back pay, given a new uniform, and put on a boat back to New York. I am certain that each veteran of the 388th has his own story of bravery to tell.

Members of the 388th Bombardment Group and their service during World War II is extremely important to our nation's history. The 388th Bombardment Group was a key component of World War II, and contributed a massive effort in stopping Hitler and ending the war. Today, our world would be a very different place without the men and women who defending freedom and our country during WWII. The soldiers who fought during World War II and throughout the Bombardment were extremely strong and giving Americans, who remain heroes for all time. Personally, I have so much respect for my grandfather and anyone who serves in our nation's military. Leaving behind your family, friends and home to serve our nation is a truly amazing thing, and that takes an amazing person. I will continue to look up to my grandfather, William Worthen and all the others who served, and are still in service for our country. I am thankful for this experience I received to better know my grandfather in order to apply for this scholarship. It was extremely interesting and helpful to hear his stories and experiences from his service. It is a memory I will forever hold very close to my heart.

Addie F. Todd
April 22nd, 2016



Research Help Needed

Dear 388th BGA Team,

Thank you very much for your kind inclusion of my request for information on the Brux mission of 12 May 1944 in the Summer 2016 newsletter! So far I have received three contacts from 388th BGA members in response to that ad, including Director, Mr. Zographos.

On a completely different subject, whilst looking for something else I ran across a Willys Jeep vehicle website that posted a wartime photo of a 388th BG jeep that was on sale in EBay last year with a question as to what the jeep's markings were about. The photo has since been sold on eBay but the picture and identification question remains on the Willys Jeep website, at the link below. I've also attached a copy of the picture in .jpeg format.

Perhaps an Association member would know what is written on the hood of the jeep, though it is a bit difficult to read? Maybe even recognize what site or part of the base the photo was taken at? Or identify the man in the driver's seat? Not a burning mystery, but something interesting, nonetheless.

Related to this, it might be a subject to dig into in a Newsletter, perhaps, the kinds of vehicles, numbers, types, characteristics/specifications in the group and supporting units were authorized during the war. These vehicles, though not winged, contributed to getting all those men and machines into the skies to accomplish the unit mission.

Sincerely,

Terry Popravak
(360) 608-4878

terrylin105@yahoo.com

Picture can be seen online at:

<http://www.ewillys.com/2015/01/26/388th-bomb-group-photo-on-ebay/>



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Pilot _____ No. Missions _____ POW (Date) _____ STALAG LUFT _____

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Name of relation who is/was in the 388th _____

Relationship to you _____ ☐ (☒ box if you have prior military service.)

Please fill in known information above, Squadron through POW information, for relative.

Mail to: Ruth Castleberry, Secretary, 388th Bomb Group Assn., Inc.
2 Beaver Ridge, Conway, AR 72932-8229 Email: secretary@388thbg.org or rcastleberry.fcds@gmail.com