

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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Mary Johnson, Carol Polewka, Betty Curvat and Merrilly Strom

A couple members of the LW Quilters recently took part in a charity project for the 388th Bomb Group Association, Inc. This year marks the 68th anniversary of the gathering of veterans and members. The reunions were started by veterans who served in WWII, flying B17s over much of Europe. Younger members have a strong desire to preserve and perpetuate the memory of the brave WWII veterans. That is why Betty and Henry Curvat came to the quilters for help. They wanted to give something to honor the veterans at their reunion this September.

Mary Johnson and Carol Polewka stepped up to the plate. Mary made 13 quilts for the organization and Carol created the labels.

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From the President's Desk

Hello everyone! This will be my last letter to you as the sun has set on my time serving as your President. I'd like to give you an update on all the things we've been working on over the past year. Here goes ...

Social Media - We are well on our way in this area. Mr. David Miller heads up our Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram sites. All of these sites are linked to our website. David keeps visitors interested with relevant content and photos. Our website is managed by yours truly. Our online store is up and running with lots of options. Many thanks to Christy Wammack. We were able to take on-line reunion registration for the first time this year. If you have anything you'd like to share, anything you'd like to see added, please send it along. We are always happy to support member posts and listen to your suggestions.

Communication - This project was started by our departing Senior Director, Scott Long. Scott put together a team of volunteers. Monthly, they rotate and call each of our reunion attending originals. This year, I'm pleased to announce, we will plan to expand that list by two - Mr. Soo and Mr. Sharp will be added to our monthly calls. It's our way of reaching out and staying connected.

Knettishall - Ms. Terri Woodford Thomas is our liaison here. She's done a wonderful job. Currently, she's working on plans to add two matching stone benches to the memorial. These funds have been secured through a generous donation from Mr. Hennessy on behalf of Smash Mouth. When she gets a little further along, I'm sure she'll be sharing more information with you. In addition, the investment fund, spearheaded by Ben Forrest Jr, has been created. This fund will perpetually fund the needs of the Knettishall Memorial - taxes, upkeep, insurance, etc.

Reunion - Wow! I was so pleased and excited with this year's reunion. A big thank you to our reunion planners Kim McDonald and Ann Turley. They really outdid themselves! As I mentioned at the reunion, my plan was to do things a little different ... more



entertainment, less talking - Padres Game, Fish Market lunch, Midway, Mr. Snyder, Mr. Williams, and the banquet. Oh that banquet! I couldn't have pulled it off without the help, dedication, and enthusiasm of Carol Anne Linzee Chan, her family and friends. They worked endless hours to put their production together. The color guard, provided by San Diego State, was charming. Their presentation of the hand made quilts, from Leisure World Quilting Club coordinated by Betty Curvat, was heart warming. The Bledsoe Award Medal presented to Mr. Dick Henggeler by Dr. Vernon Williams. A highly regarded award and an exceptionally worthy recipient. Good friends, lots of dancing, and fun door prizes. What a night!

As Taps plays for me, I leave you in the very capable hands of Mr. Rick Thompson. It has truly my pleasure to serve. Take care. And, I'll see you in Boston!

Much love and respect,

Cindy

To The 388th Members

Kindly accept the enclosed check in memory of my dearest friend and husband Robert Cooperman. Bob passed on March 8, 2016. As an educator and proud Life-time Member of the 388th, he would choose to share this gift with both maintaining the memorial in England and scholarship funds. The memorial, was dear to his heart.

Our association with the 388th Group dates back to the beginning in the summer of 1950, when Bob and I attended the first gathering at French Lick Springs, Indiana. We were a youthful enthusiastic group pledging to continue the organization, never realizing how we would grow and remain through our children and grandchildren.

Robert's love of flying began early as a youngster watching planes flying in and out of Floyd Bennett Field. When duty called, he enlisted in the Air Corp shortly before his 18th birthday, requiring parental permission. He became a member of the Richard Burris



NEW MEMBERS

Elizabeth Linzee
Jan & David Nelson

GENERAL FUND

Henry & Betty Curvat
Memorium for Don Scott

WE ACCEPT



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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postage!**

"City of Savannah"

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\$31

"B-17 Flying Fortress"

WWII Hats

\$25

388th Rhinestone Pins

\$12.75

B-17 Pins

\$12.75

Koozies

\$3.75

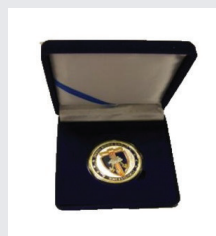
388th Lanyards

(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:



Crew. They were a blessed crew flew to England as a group, and were fortunate to return to the U.S. together. He never forgot them, maintaining friendships, and remembering them & his loves ones in a beautifully written farewell several years before his death; the letter to be read at his passing, not to cry as he led a good life.

Bob entered the education field earning advanced degrees after working at Grumman Aircraft. He loved teaching Biology and mentoring his students. Following his retirement from teaching, Bob went on to serve as an investigator for Consumer Affairs in Nassau County making offenders of the law accountable.

Participating in the Chowhound Food Drops was one of Bob's proudest achievements. He served as Chairman of the U.S. Contingent of Manna/Chowhound beginning with the 40th anniversary of the drops in May 1985. The first 20 representatives, two from each of the 10 Bomb Group, from the 8th Air Corp and their spouses flew into Schiphol on the inaugural flight from Pan Am to land in Holland. Our reception was breathtaking as they truly rolled out the "red carpet." We were met by representatives of the Dutch Government and other various officials. Our membership in Chowhound continued to grow as did the celebrations in Holland. Bob served as Chairman, coordinating the logistics for the celebrations in 1990, 1995 and 2000, with the Dutch & Manna an aging group was expected responsible for decline in the Association.

My dear companion of 67 years was laid to rest on Long Island in our family's resting place with Military honors. Bob left me, our son Mitchell, daughter-in-law Carole, Granddaughter Jennifer, Granddaughter Arielle & husband Richard, a legacy of love and compassion for others. To his pimplly engraved marker, I added: 8TH AIR FORCE - 388BG-B-17.

Bless You All,
Shirley Cooperman





Applications for the 2018 388th Bombardment Group Association Scholarship Program are now available.

If you are 16-20 years old, related to a 388th BG Veteran and/or Association member, and in the college selection process, or in your first year in college, you are eligible to receive a \$1,000 scholarship. We support you and encourage you to embrace your future, wherever it takes you.

Awardee selection is based upon an essay you submit on:

“The 388th: Past and Present- Answering Our Nation’s Call.”

Essays will be reviewed and judged by a selection committee that includes WWII 388th veterans, 388th association members, active and retired military personnel and history teachers.

Contact Terry Woodford-Thomas for information and an application today! tthomas@danforthcenter.org or 314-587-1436.

**The deadline to submit application and essay is
May 31, 2018.**



My story from POW to Liberation Day

by Donald H. Scott, Jr. S/Sgt- Radio Operator
Michael Crew - 560th Squadron



September 28, 1944 Eleventh Mission

Target – Merseburg, Germany I.G. Farbenindustrie Synthetic Oil Refineries

The Michael Crew was flying a different B-17 because our regular plane had received some minor flak damage on the previous mission, and was being repaired. This mission started off on sort of an ominous note, at least for me anyway. As per standard procedure, as soon as the plane became airborne on take-off, I plugged in the Identification Friend of Foe (IFF) unit at which time the self destruct charge went off. It was like a shot gun blast. The sides of the unit were bulged out with a good bit of smoke and some small flames. By the time I got the fire extinguisher off the radio room forward bulkhead, the fire had gone out. Apparently in the process of repair to the unit, the inertia switch had been tripped to the destruct position and not reset. I reported this on the interphone to the pilot; Lt. Michael and he made the decision to continue the mission.

We were in the lead group. The route across Belgium and enemy territory was followed to the Target. 8/10th clouds prevented visual bombing and PFF (radar) was used. Over the target we were at 27,000 feet. I was busy dispensing chaff to confuse the German radar directed flak guns. After bombs away, the flak began to inten-

sify and be much closer. The clouds below were breaking up and the Germans were firing visually. One blast closer and louder than all the rest left our plane in a badly crippled condition. As I was pushing out a bundle of chaff, a small piece of shrapnel suddenly appeared stuck in the side of the chaff chute, about an inch from my hands. The radio room was momentarily dark due to the black smoke of the shell explosion. Almost immediately, I experienced difficulty breathing. I looked at the gage on the oxygen line I was connected to and saw it was reading zero pressure, so I transferred my mask to connect to "walk-around" oxygen bottles. The good news was we were still flying straight and level, apparently under control. However, my radio was dead, as was the interphone. Two engines were out and we eventually lost the third. Bits of glass from the window had cut the pilot's eyes so he was temporarily blinded. Lt. Waickus, the copilot, was flying the plane. We couldn't keep up with the formation since we were losing air-speed and altitude. I opened the camera hatch in the floor of the radio room and we threw out everything that was loose. Still we were losing altitude. Mike gave us the word to get ready and then rang the bailout alarm bell. I bailed out, cleared the plane, pulled the handle and received one terrific jerk when the chute opened. I soon dropped into some low clouds, and then heard a popping noise and looked up at the shroud lines. They appeared to be tight. Then I realized it was the sound of gun fire. I was coming down over a large river. We found out later this was the Rhine River at Koblenz, Germany. I drifted over toward the west bank; the ground was coming up fast. I was headed toward a fairly large tree. I crashed down through the side of the tree and hit the ground like a "ton of bricks".

I unbuckled my chute, stood up, and started where Sweeney had landed. I heard someone shouting at me and saw a man in uni-



form, with a long rifle pointed at me. When I saw the swastika emblem on his helmet, I realized I was not in friendly territory. Another soldier captured Sweeney and we were faced with several military types. We were searched, they took my wrist watch, scout knife, escape kit and the Germans had the whole crew rounded up by nightfall. Fortunately, no one had received major injuries.

We were taken to Dulag Luft near Frankfurt for interrogation. We were separated at this point.

I was taken to a small cell, thus began solitary confinement and interrogation. The guard came and got me and took me to the Interrogator. He said he had a few questions and I would be sent to a permanent prison camp. He asked me about radio frequencies and organizational structure at our base. It was surprising how much they knew. I responded with the standard reply, name, rank, and serial number only. He then had the guard take me back to my cell. This routine went on for several days. After several days of more questions, and my same response, he said "How do we know you are who you say you are?" I said "Here is my identification tag". He said "You could have taken that tag off a dead body and for all we know you are a spy. Do you know what we do with spies"? I said "I have a pretty good idea". This was the end of interrogation and I was taken away and put on a train to a transient camp at Wetzlar. After a few days I was taken by train to Stalag Luft IV at Grosstychow which is now a part of Poland. This camp was divided into four compounds called Lagers A, B, C, and D -- 2,000 prisoners to a Lager.

Prison life consisted of lining up outside twice a day to be counted by the Germans. This being the winter of '44, '45 the days were short, with a lot of bad weather, including snow. The barracks were cold. In good weather, we would go outside and walk round and round the inside perimeter of the compound. German guards, we called them Goons, were sta-

tioned in towers, with machine guns and search lights.

For food, each barracks was issued a pile of Irish potatoes daily. We would take our German issue (silverware type) knife and scrape the skin off the potatoes. Peeling would waste too much of the potato. I was also issued an aluminum fork, but no spoon. I made a swizzle stick for stirring. The potatoes were cooked in a cook house. We each took turns working in the cook house. We were issued a portion of a loaf of swartzbrot (black bread). Its two main ingredients were rye and saw dust. Sometimes we had soup.

We received a limited issue of American Red Cross Food Parcels. These parcels consisted of prunes or raisins, biscuits, powdered milk, soluble coffee, sugar tablets, canned beef, meat and beans, meat and vegetable, chopped ham, salmon or tuna, cheese, oleo margarine, chocolate bars, jam, cigarettes, soap, and vitamins. A parcel would be assigned to a number of prisoners. Even with the above listed food, we stayed hungry all the time.

Through the American YMCA, we received religious items, necessary for conducting religious activities. We received recreational items, such as footballs, volley balls, baseballs, horse shoes, etc. I remember a wind-up record player and the big bands records of the '40s being played.

To receive war news, a group of us would gather in a room and an individual from another barracks would come in and recite the news. The news was obtained by use of a secret radio. Certain German Guards were bribed to provide radio components. The components were assembled and the person operating the radio would tune in BBC News, memorize it, and recite it to the person carrying the news. In this manner the news was disseminated throughout the camp. The radio would then be disassembled and the components hidden.

On Christmas Day 1944, I celebrated my 23rd birthday.



Early in 1945, we learned the Russians were getting close in their drive toward Berlin. We could hear the big guns. We were told by the Germans to prepare to evacuate the camp.

On February 6, 1945, we were marched out of the camp. We were first marched by a huge mound of Red Cross Food Parcels. You picked up what you thought you could carry. I picked up one for my pack and grabbed a second one in my hand. This second parcel probably had a lot to do with my making it through the march. Snow was on the ground and we marched on a road in a long column, three abreast. German Guards walked along the side.

Food on the march consisted mainly of Irish potatoes. Every farmer had a large supply of potatoes he had grown. The Third Reich requisitioned potatoes, which were cooked, and issued to us, along with a slice of bread. On occasion we were given soup.

We continued marching west and arrived in the vicinity of Hanover, where we were packed into box cars. This was a miserable experience. The train would stay in the railroad station all day and run only at night, because allied fighters would strafe everything that moved during the day. Eventually the train took us to a prison camp Stalag XI B at Fallingbomel. We were put in a huge circus tent with straw on the floor.

After all this walking my GI shoes were completely worn out. While at this camp I obtained a pair of British Army shoes. They were high top, made of heavy leather, with hob nails and heel and toe plates.

After about eight days in this camp, and with the Allied Armies getting close, on April 8, 1945 we were back on the march again. This time headed north in the general direction of Denmark. As the weather improved we were spending some of the nights out in the open.

There was almost a continuous air show. Almost every night there was a big show as we watched the RAF stage their raids which lit up the sky and shook the ground where we slept. By day the AAF came over. We witnessed fighter activity and waves of bomber formations as they were enroute to and from the target.

We needed to cross the Elbe River and this had to be done by ferry and while still dark. During daylight, allied fighters strafed everything that moved on the river. The plan was, in the early morning, before daylight; get us all across on the other side. This operation took longer than expected. When the huge group of prisoners were finally on the other side of the river, it became daylight. Before we had a chance to move out, we heard planes. We looked up river and saw two planes approaching – Spitfires! One plane peeled off and dived right at us. A huge group of prisoners, out in the open with no place to take cover. What did we do? All we could do, was wave at him. He pulled out of his dive and climbed out, rocking his wings. A beautiful sight! He knew who we were.

On May 1, 1945 we were stopped at a barn on the outskirts of the village of Zarrentin. We learned the British Army was close to the west of us and were poised to come the next day. The Germans in charge of us allowed a prisoner representative to go through the lines and contact the British for instructions. He was told for us to sleep in our clothes, which I always did, and be ready to evacuate the barns. That they would probably lob a few shells, to see if there was any resistance and they would come in the next day. That night I took off my shoes and went to sleep in the hay loft. I didn't hear a thing. The next morning, a couple of my buddies and I went about our breakfast activities. At about 9:30 AM someone near the road hollered "They are here"! We ran up to the road and saw a column of military vehicles, with a command type vehicle in front. As the vehicle stopped, we all



rushed to shake hands with our Liberators. I looked at the houses nearby; there were white flags out everywhere.

The British said they had to move on to take the next town. We were told to "stay put" and transportation would come for us. We did not "stay put" long. This was the happiest day of my life. A "Kriegsgefangener" no more!!

The next day my two buddies and I started out on foot down a road in a westerly direction. The rest of the ex-prisoners had already left. The side of the road was lined with abandoned German vehicles. We found a truck with a little gas in it, we took off in the truck and traveled some distance before it ran out of gas. We were back on foot again. A British soldier in a jeep gave us a lift to a small Army Detachment at the town of Boisenburg. There we were fed and stayed in an apartment building.

On May 6, 1945, an Army truck came and got us and took us to Luneburg, Germany, where there was an American Army Contingent for (RAMP) Recovered Allied Military Personnel. At this installation, I officially returned to military control. Later I was flown out of Germany on a C-47 to Camp Lucky Strike, LaHarve, France. On June 2, 1945, I left LaHarve on the U.S.S. Sea Robin troop ship and arrived at New York Harbor on June 11, 1945 and was shipped to Camp Shanks, New York, then to Ft. Meade, Maryland.

388th Update

Hello 388th BGA,

I want to thank everybody who attended and/or contributed to the outstanding experience that was created for our group. It was a busy week capped off by the Broadway Musical/ USO Show at the banquet. Our original members were transported back to the time in their lives when they were stationed at Knettishall. They had big smiles on their faces, tapping their feet and were up dancing with the performers. I started attending reunions in the late 80's and have not seen those members that excited in decades. We did spend more money than we intended and have taken steps to insure that we do not exceed our budget in the future. All in all it was another great reunion.

Looking to the coming year: Cindy Hayes is looking at setting up a private trip to Knettishall in the spring. Please contact Cindy if you are interested in that trip.

After establishing the Memorial investment fund last year we have seated a committee to

layout guidelines for the Scholarship Fund. We have had 3-4 donations to the fund this year and want to build the investment to the place where it is self-perpetuating like the memorial fund. We believe that the scholarship will create an interest in the 388th BGA for young people. This will help us to fulfill our mission as stated in the bylaws. That is keep the memory of what the original members accomplished, to share experiences and friendships to for all time. The 388th BGA has grown into an extended family. We are growing and adding new members each year while other associations are fading away. We have been and are doing a lot of work to make our organization successful and outstanding.

We have decided to create a fund raising committee to find companies and organizations to sponsor a part of the reunion and to contribute to the Scholarship Fund. Anybody who is interested in helping this group please contact myself or one of the other board members. Some people may get matching donations from their employer. I would encourage other people to re-



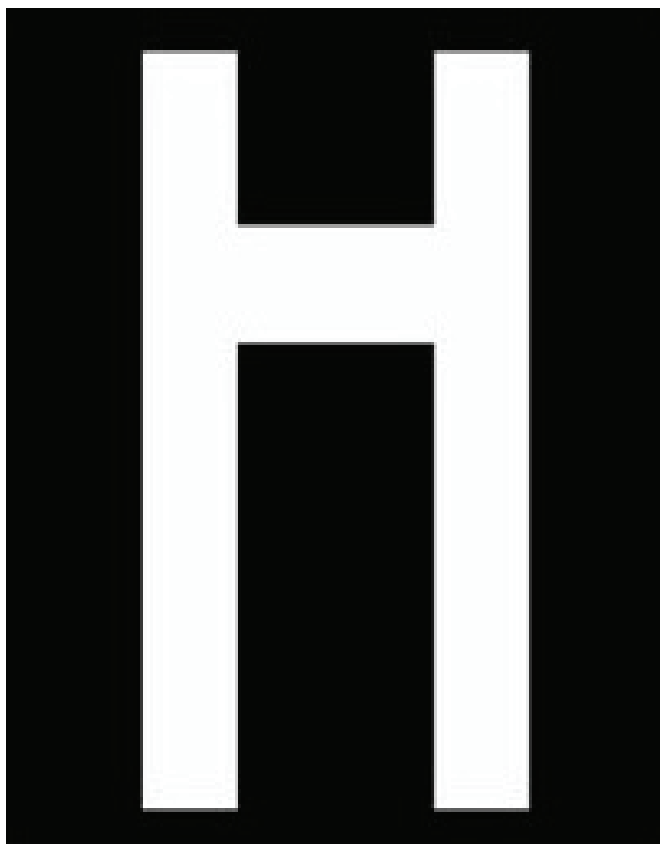
member us in your estate planning. You may feel that your donation is modest but every dollar will help make the scholarship a valuable part of our association.

As we work on the BOSTON reunion we are trying to get an idea of how many people want to attend or are planning to attend. This helps us to negotiate with the hotels for rates and concessions like the hospitality room etc. We are planning to be in the first 10 or 11 days of August. This will allow families with people in school to attend the festivities. I believe that the young people who have attended in the last 2-3 years have found the experience to be educational and rewarding. Especially when they are delivering mail and gifts to our original members. I know that our original members really 'light up' during that part of the banquet.

In closing we are looking forward to a busy and rewarding year. Anyone interested in calling the original members who attend the reunion throughout the year please contact me.

Rick Thompson

388th-bg-marking



TAPS



Joseph C. Hild



Joseph Charles Hild of La Grange was born in Baltimore, Maryland on February 21, 1923 to Joseph Conrad Hild and Anne Spahn Hild.

He died at home with loving family by his bedside on September 21, 2017.

Joe attended Holy Trinity High in Norfolk and Virginia Tech before joining the Air Force in 1942. He was trained as a navigator on B-17s and flew 35 heavy bombing missions over Europe. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters. Joe retired from the service after 20 years with the

rank of Major.

After the war he returned to Virginia Tech to earn a Bachelor's in Civil Engineering and a Master's in Environmental Engineering. He then formed his own company in Houston and worked as a consultant for many small cities and water districts around Texas and Louisiana. A group from Fayette County hired him to help with the Frisch Auf development, including a country club, golf course and water district. He designed and started the first well and section of the Fayette County Water System. He retired in 1988.

Joe was a member of Queen of the Holy Rosary Church in Hostyn, Knights of Columbus, Fourth Degree, The Equestrian order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, VFW, American Legion and 388th Bombardment Group (H) Assoc.

Donald H. Scott Jr.



Donald Hobart Scott Jr. of Marietta, GA passed away August 6 at age 95. A radio operator on Melbourne Michael's 560th Sqd. crew, Mr. Scott began his missions on August 11, 1944. On his 13th mission, Sept. 28, 1944, the crew's B-17 G.I. Jane was shot down over Merseburg, Germany. Mr. Scott spent four months in Luft 4 and three months on a forced march before being liberated by the British Army on May 2, 1945.

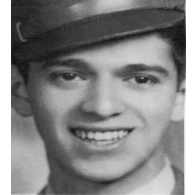
A graduate of Stuart High School in Stuart, VA, Mr. Scott worked for the CCC before enrolling at Virginia Tech in 1938. He enrolled in the Army Air Corps shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

He came to Marietta, GA to work for Lockheed as an electrical engineer. There he joined the First Baptist Church, where he met his future wife, Martha McLemore. They were married on June 24, 1956. He sang in the choir for over 50 years, was a Life Deacon and was the Sunday School Secretary for 50 years.

Survivors include Martha, his wife of 61 years; daughters Ann Hicks and Mary El-

len May, four grandchildren, two step-grandchildren, a great-grandson, and three step-great grandchildren. Internment at Mountain View Park Cemetery in Marietta followed funeral services on August 11.

Albert Soriano



Albert Soriano, 94, passed away August 25 in High Point, NC. A ball turret gunner on Robert M. Bailey's crew in the 561st Sqd., he flew 30 missions between November 1943 and March 1944, primarily in the aircraft Boomerang Barbara.

Survivors include son Richard Soriano, one granddaughter and five great-grandchildren. Mr. Soriano was predeceased by his wife Ofelia, and by a son, Albert Jr. Funeral services were held at Vista Memorial Gardens in Miami Lakes, FL.

Arlene Mae Worms



Arlene Mae (Golick) Worms of North Little Rock, AR passed away peacefully at Hospice Home Care, West Little Rock, AR on July 18, 2017. Born in New Baden, IL, She was the widow of Lt. Col USAF (Ret.) Delmar A. Worms, former 560th Sqd. navigator.

Lt. Col Worms' military career took the family to Puerto Rico, Paris, Belgium and various locations within the U.S. They spent their retirement years at the home they built in the Indian Hills area of North Little Rock. The Wormses, who were extremely active in the 388th BG Assn., had been married more than 50 years at the time of his death in 1996.

Survivors include daughter Brenda Highfill, son Cdr. Brent L. Worms, three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Funeral services were held July 24, followed by internment at Rest Hills Memorial Park in Little Rock.

388TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION (THE)
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388TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND RENEWAL

Date _____ Name _____

Wife/Husband _____ Phone _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email Address _____

Squadron _____ Position _____ Aircraft Name _____

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

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How would you like to receive Newsletter: ☐ Email (FREE) ☐ Mail (\$8.00 per year)

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.

RENEWAL and DONATIONS: ☐ Annual Dues (\$20.00) ☐ Donation

UPDATE CONTACT INFORMATION (*make changes above for update*) ☐ Address ☐ Email ☐ Phone

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