

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

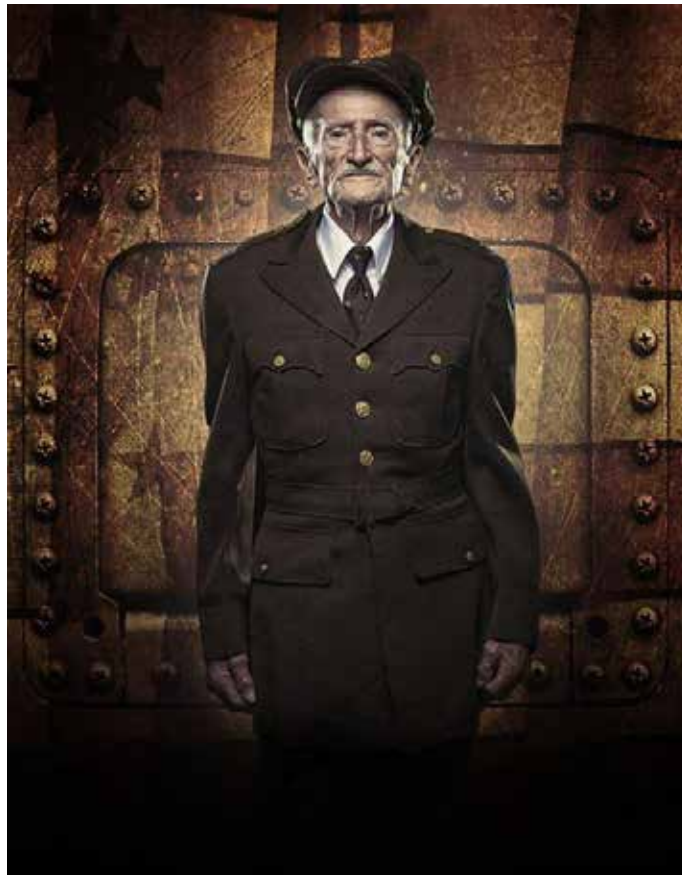
Station 136 Weather Detachment, Fersfield Air Base (Aphrodite Project), 434th Headquarters Squadron, 860th Squadron, 684th Squadron, 434th Air Service Group, 1211th Quartermaster Company, 1284th Military Police Company, 273rd Medical Dispensary, 1751st Ordnance Supply and Maintenance Company, 2019th 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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SUMMER 2015

THEY HELPED SAVE THE WORLD THE MEN ON THE BEACH REMEMBER D-DAY



THE 388TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION, INC.

PRESIDENT: TERRY WOODFORD-THOMAS

104 Arundel Place, St Louis, MO 63105
tthomas@danforthcenter.org

1ST VICE PRESIDENT: SCOTT LONG

1050 Lake Carolyn Parkway #2316, Irving, TX 75039
305-773-1268, longf16@reagan.com

2ND VICE PRESIDENT: DAVID MILLER

3906 Oak Dale Drive, Pearland TX 77581
281-482-4421, dlmillertx@att.net

SENIOR DIRECTOR: RICK THOMPSON

2995 Senior Road, Morrow, OH 45152
513-505-4234, rickthompson388@gmail.com

DIRECTOR: JAMES ZOGRAPHOS

293 Turnpike Road, #801, Westborough, MA 01581
508-366-7871, jchris766@hotmail.com

SECRETARY: CAROL ANNE LINZEE CHAN

1266 Dawnridge Drive, El Cajon, CA 92021
619-368-6777, Cadrastal@gmail.com

TREASURER: TOM DENNIS JR

5753G Santa Ana Cyn Rd, #438, Anaheim, CA 92807
714-296-7557, Treasurer@388thbg.org

CORPORATE AGENT: RICKARD SUNDBLAD

15456 Admiralty Circle, #9, N. Fort Myers, FL 33917
239-543-9855, Agent@388thbg.org

HISTORIAN; DICK HENGGELER

2708 Old St. Johns Lane, Ellicot City, MD 21042
410-750-3605, Historian@388thbg.org

PARLIAMENTARIAN: KELLY K MOORE

33 E Rockwood Drive, Ottawa, KS 66067
785-242-5270, k17moore@sbcglobal.net

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: STEVEN BUTNER

P.O. Box 270147, Flower Mound, TX 75027
972-591-1726, Newsletter@388thbg.org

REUNION ORGANIZER: HENRY CURVAT

1717 Lindsey Rd, Suite B, Jacksonville, FL 32221
904-781-4146, henry@twin-c.com

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

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From the President's Desk

Dear Friends,

It's coming! We are very excited to thank, recognize and reunite those who served in the 388th Bombardment Group during World War II at our annual reunion in September 2015. Our reunion committee has done a terrific job putting together all the arrangements. Among other events, we will have our own special ceremony as we salute our veterans at the WWII Memorial in Washington, DC. Don't miss it! It will be a wonderful time to remember and celebrate. Bring your family and good friends!

It's Memorial Day as I write this letter. I watched the American flag held high as it passed by, escorted by men and women in uniform, during the Memorial Day parade in my hometown of Belleville, Illinois, and I am filled with pride as I stand next to my father. On this day, especially, we think about all the brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country in their military and civilian duties. Earlier this month, on Friday, May 8, 2015, it was the 70th anniversary of the Victory in Europe (V-E) Day, the end of WWII in Europe. In 1945, millions of people around the globe poured into the streets to celebrate. In 2015, the world celebrated with services of remembrance and thanksgiving, and moments of silence. It has been a good month for remembering.

I was raised in a loving home with bookshelves filled with books on military history, soldier biographies, and aircraft and stacks of airplane magazines and manuals in the basement. I hung out in hangars and visited air bases and Air Force museums with my family. Our vacations often included airshows. They still do. I look skyward when a plane flies overhead. I have been reading accounts of American heroism during WWII and think about what it means to be a hero. As proud members of the 388th BG Association, it is our deep privilege to be in the company of our original members, our hero veterans- all of them. They are golden to us. We listen and learn from them. They all showed great courage. The term valor comes to mind; a word derived from the Latin term *valère*: to be strong. To be in harm's way for a just and noble cause- the fight for freedom. To have the strength of mind and spirit that enables a person to encounter



danger with firmness and resolve.

Not very long ago, in a paper published in a journal called *The Leadership Quarterly*, researchers asked 526 World War II veterans who experienced heavy and frequent combat to evaluate themselves on qualities that they showed during the war; qualities such as leadership, loyalty, patriotism, bravery, spontaneity, resilience and selflessness. There were 83 men in the group who had received a medal for meritorious service - either a Bronze Star, Silver Star, Distinguished Service Cross or Medal of Honor. Not surprisingly, veterans who had been awarded medals rated themselves high for qualities like leadership, adventurousness and adaptability. However, the majority of the veterans were described as quiet heroes- modest men who relied on a deep sense of duty and esprit de corps, that deep devotion to their crews and their squadrons. This sentiment was echoed by several of the medal-earning veterans as well. Most veterans downplayed any notion of heroism. Reluctant heroes. Humble. Maybe you have heard a WWII veteran say, like I have, when asked about their courage, "I did what I had to do at the time". "I did it because it was expected of me," "It was my call to duty." "I was just serving my country". Men held together by country and flag, and very strongly by camaraderie. Loyalty to each other in the face of danger and extreme challenge. Loyal to the cause and to their own convictions. This type of loyalty among WWII soldiers is described by author Stephen Ambrose in his book, "Band of Brothers". I think we'd all agree that what this Greatest Generation, these "bands of brothers" (and sisters) accomplished during WWII should never be underestimated or undervalued. The mission, preserving freedom, as it was back then in the 1940's, is still very much alive today. The next time you talk to our active servicemen and women, and retired or returning soldiers, honor them. Thank them for their service. Let them know that you appreciate them and what they are doing, or have done, in the name of freedom.

Some final thoughts. My father, Charles Woodford, is at the point in his life where he can talk more freely about his experiences during the war- especially to young people. He is an invited lecturer at our local high school each year where he speaks to the history classes about WWII, shares his stories and answers questions. I have accompanied him on some of these visits. The students are attentive, awestruck, inspired, sometimes shocked, and some-



NEW MEMBERS

David Larson
560th Squadron
Max Cederberg
nephew Donald Staples
561st Squadron
Sherry York Smith
daughter Raymond York
562nd Squadron
Joan Christo
daughter James Zographos
Patricia Dykty Montville
daughter Frank Dykty

I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU IN D.C.



GENERAL FUND

Henry & Betty Curvat
Paul Dell
Tom & Barbara Dennis
Terry and Bonnie Harris
Don & Martha Scott
Christy Wammack

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Henry and Betty Curvat
Tad Dennis IMO Grandfather
Thomas A Dennis Sr.561st

388th PX UPDATE

I'm looking for more items, if you have any ideas please call me!!!

Christy Wammack 928-581-1010.

Thank you!

Have a great Spring and Summer.

Hope to see you in D.C.



"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

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

Make checks out to: 388th Bomb Group Assn

Mail to:

Greg Staples

4715 W. Larchwood Court, Spokane, WA 99208

All profits go to our Memorial in Knettishall.

times in tears. I have learned much about my Dad's war experiences through his reflections, and I respect him greatly for sharing what is often hard to talk about, still, after all these years, with these students. My own two sons are now at the age that my father was when he enlisted and served as a tail gunner in the B-17G Lady Lillian in the European Theater of Operation. The impact my father has had on his grandsons is immeasurable as they come to know him, and his service to his country, more deeply. There are other veterans in our Association who share their stories as well. Who even write letters to students and school classrooms.

It is important for our young people to learn about this war, its history, the conflict, the human struggles, the strategies, personal cost, and what victory meant, through conversation, and living or written accounts and stories. Meeting a WWII veteran face-to-face makes a huge impression upon young people. Our youth are enthused about making connections with their grandparents, great grandparents, great aunts and uncles, and others of the Greatest Generation. We aim to help make these connections stronger. Along these lines, I am proud to announce William "Seth" McMurray of Mount Pleasant High School, Mount Pleasant, Texas, as the 2015 recipient of our very first 388th BG Association College Scholarship. Please take the opportunity to know Seth through his essay about his great grandfather, Elliot H. Hughes, Jr. Seth's essay will soon be available to read on our website and at the upcoming reunion. As you support our new scholarship program, our kiosk at Hill Air Force Base, our WWII Memorial at Knettishall, our historical archives and our reunions, you are helping to sustain our Association with its rich history and purpose, as well as lay the runway for an entire new generation as they take flight.

Best wishes and see you in N. Virginia/Washington DC soon.

Terry A. Woodfal-Thomas



A Lifetime of Memories in Washington DC



Since the last Newsletter was published, we have received confirmation that another honored guest will be able to join in the celebration of our Original W.W. II veterans, at the Associations special ceremony, being held on Thursday Sept. 3rd. Two of the highest ranking commanders of the United States Air Force, AF Chief of Staff, Gen. Mark A. Welsh and Maj. Gen. Richard M. Clark, Commander of the 8th AF, want to be a part of the celebration. An extraordinary ceremony in which the 388th Bomb Group Assoc. expresses its sincere appreciation for the sacrifices these men made to save our country. As the Generals say a few words and make this special presentation, to the Original veterans in attendance, family members will share a moment in time they can cherish forever... What GREAT Memories! So please make a special effort to bring your fathers, those who defended our freedom, and family members to be witness to this very special ceremony being held at the W.W. II Memorial.

Many have been asking about the Saturday evening banquet and entertainment. The Reunion Planning Committee has put together a special evening for all to enjoy. This year will offer a very special presentation to our Original W.W. II veterans. We will also celebrate the “**City of Savannahs**”, restoration and dedication, held earlier this year. As many of you know Ralph Kittle and his crew flew the “**City of Savannah**” out of Hunter Army Airfield, Savannah, GA. and later in combat with the 388th Bomb Group in Knettishall. We have heard from the family of Irwin Boxer, 1 of the 2 surviving members of the Ralph Kittle crew and they are planning to attend, if at all possible. Another 388th member, John Edelman & crew, flew 1 mission in the “**City of Savannah**”. He along with many of his family are planning to attend. Since we’re celebrating the “**City of Savannah**”, the Capital Wing of the Airman’s Preservation Society will be helping us with the entertainment this year.



They’ll also be with us for all four days in the Hospitality Room displaying wonderful memorabilia and putting on a special briefing presentation at our banquet. We’re going to have a lot of fun!!!



So come and join us in giving a big **THANK YOU** to our Veterans. They fought to save our country and gave us the right and the opportunity to gather once again at this year’s reunion. **THIS IS GOING TO BE A VERY SPECIAL YEAR...**





YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS THIS...
SEPTEMBER 2ND THRU THE 5TH



WASHINGTON D.C.

SO HURRY AND GET YOUR RESERVATION IN...IT'LL BE HERE BEFORE YOU KNOW IT. GOOD TIMES, GOOD PEOPLE, GOOD MEMORIES...AND WE WANT YOU THERE!!!

*****THE HOTEL IS OFFERING OUR SPECIAL PRICE FOR UP TO 3 DAYS BEFORE AND 3 DAYS AFTER (SPACE AVAILABLE) SO MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS EARLY. A WEB SITE HAS BEEN SET UP FOR OUR GROUPS RESERVATIONS: <https://aws.passkey.com/g/33030154> or call: 1 (800) 222-tree**



388th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION
66th Annual Reunion
Washington DC
Sept. 2 - 5, 2015

Registration Form

CUT-OFF DATE FOR REGISTRATION IS AUGUST 19th

ATTENDEE #1 FULL NAME: _____ MEMBER: LIFE / ASSOC. / NOT*

Phone: (____) _____ E-Mail Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

YOUR B-17 CREW MEMBER NAME: _____ WHAT IS YOUR RELATION TO HIM: _____

ATTENDEE #2 FULLNAME: _____ MEMBER: LIFE / ASSOC. / NOT*

ATTENDEE #3 FULL NAME: _____ MEMBER: LIFE / ASSOC. / NOT*

ATTENDEE #4 FULL NAME: _____ MEMBER: LIFE / ASSOC. / NOT*

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|---------|----------------|
| Registration Fee | Required for all attendees | \$45.00 | X_____ | = _____ |
| Thursday (3 September) 9:00am – 5:00pm | Udvar-Hazy Museum with Private tour plus WWII Memorial Ceremony <i>Lunch will be included.</i> | \$37.00 | X_____ | = _____ |
| Friday (4 September) Free Day | See Washington DC At your own pace Big Bus Tours On-Off of Washington DC <i>25% Discount Coupon provided during Registration Check in</i> | Members will pay Big Bus Tours Direct, when buying bus pass with 25% Discount Coupon for 48 hour All Loop Tour | | |
| Saturday (5 September) 5:00pm – 10:00pm | Banquet Doubletree | Roasted Tilapia with Dill Sauce | \$47.00 | X_____ = _____ |
| | | Grilled Chicken Piccata with Lemon Caper Sauce | \$47.00 | X_____ = _____ |
| | | Chicken Tenders w/ Mac n Cheese <i>Children 12yrs and under only</i> | \$30.00 | X_____ = _____ |
| | | Tax Deductible Donation | | _____ |

Write check payable to - 388th Bomb Group Association, Inc

Mail check **and** Registration form to:

T A Dennis, 5753 E Santa Ana Canyon Rd G438, Anaheim CA 92807-3296

TOTAL _____

To cancel, contact: Betty Curvat Betty@Twin-C.com
 Cancellations received after **August 19th** will forfeit all payments.

*If you would like to become a 388th BG member please fill out the Membership Application /Renewal on the back of the newsletter, and follow those instructions.

If you're already a life member, Please consider making a \$10 donation to help with printing costs of the NEWSLETTER.

For a Free Memory Book by email Please fill out information on the back of this form, and return it with the registration.





Memory Book

A *Free* Printable Memory book of the 2015 Reunion will be provided by Email so please make sure we have an updated Name and Email Address.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Future Reunions

There will be a suggestion box in the Hospitality Room for your preference for our Western States Reunion in 2017. The top three locations will be submitted to the members for a vote at our Saturday morning meeting.



Are you or a member of your family interested in helping with the 388th Bomb Group Association's reunions? Time, talent or treasure are all welcome **and needed!**

Name: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ E-Mail Address: _____

Please specify if necessary (i.e., a certain city, a certain year, a certain job, any contacts that may be helpful, etc:

THE BOMBADIER

(continuation from Page 1)

'I wonder how those guys lived through D-Day'

A Hoboken, N.J., native, Charlie Meyer was a B-17 bombardier with the 388th Bomb Group. He completed 34 missions over France and Germany in 1944, including two on D-Day. Now 95, and living in Greenacres, Florida.

The B-17 crew received strict orders before departing Knettishall, England, in the pre-dawn darkness of D-Day: "No aborts on this mission." Bombardier Charlie Meyer's target: The beaches of Normandy. His timing? Just before Allied troops went ashore.

Perched in the nose cone of a B-17, Meyer typically enjoyed the best view the Flying Fortress had to offer. "Beautiful. Up, down, sideways and all around." But as his plane crossed the English Channel early that morning, "you couldn't see a damn thing because of cloud coverage."

Their second time out, the B-17s bombed further inland. "This time, the clouds had cleared, giving us a panoramic view of this awesome undertaking," Meyer later wrote. "A bridge of ships across the Channel."

Although he wasn't able to clearly see troops on the beaches of Normandy — "They were ants on the ground" — it wasn't hard for Meyer to imagine what they endured. "It must have been hell. I wonder how those guys lived through D-Day. I don't know if I would have made it on the ground, truthfully."

But World War II was a true team effort, unlike any military conflict since, he says. "Our war was a lot different because 100 percent of the people were in it. Everybody was involved," he says. "Most of us who lived it all these years lived it quietly.

"I'm not a hero. Somebody said, 'Do it,' and we did it."

Posted in the Greatest Generations Foundation page in Facebook, 5 June 2015



CHARLES ALFRED MEYER
388TH BG B17 34 MISSIONS

ROBERT GEORGE MEYER
388TH BG B17 34 MISSIONS

SHARE YOUR STORY

**We know that every story
is different and would like
to hear from you.**

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: STEVEN BUTNER

P.O. Box 270147, Flower Mound, TX 75027
972-591-1726, Newsletter@388thbg.org



A graduate of South Park High School in Buffalo, NY, Mr. Heintz worked for Bell Aerospace and Worthington Pump Corp. prior to enlisting in the Army Air Corps.

Following the war he worked as a pilot for United Airlines, retiring as a Captain in 1984 after 30 years.

Mr. Heintz, who was preceded in death by his wife Clara, is survived by numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. Interment was held at Fort Logan National Cemetery in Denver.

RALPH A. NILES

Ralph Niles of LaPorte, IN, passed away March 24 at age 94. He was tail gunner and assistant armorer in Alek Bon-nucelli's 560th Sqd. crew, and flew 38 missions between March 27 and July 20, 1944, primarily in the aircraft Reuel's Revenge.



Niles

After his discharge in 1945, Mr. Niles worked at Servel, Inc. in Evansville, and later at Whirlpool Corp., as Supervisor of Engineering Records, LaPorte. He represented Whirlpool in the Administrative Management Society for ten years, serving as chapter president of the Michigan area and as a member of the board of directors. Following his retirement in March 1984, he served on the board of the Whirlpool Federal Credit Union (later the Grand Heritage FCU) and as secretary-treasurer of the Beechwood Golf Course Men's Club.

Mr. Niles is survived by Bettye, his wife of 72 years; daughter Connie, two grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and three great-great-grand-

children.

Burial with military honors was held at Pine Lake Cemetery in LaPorte.

RAYMOND C. YORK

Raymond C. York, 92, passed away March 15 in Drexel Hill, PA. Mr. York flew ten missions between February 6 and April 4, 1945, as ball turret gunner on the Edward Eaton crew in the 561st Sqd.



York

After graduating from Clifton Heights High School in Clifton Heights, PA, Mr. York worked at Atlantic Refining prior to his enlistment in the Army Air Corps. Following the war, he continued his military service in the Army Reserves.

He studied design drafting and worked for more than 25 years at General Electric Switchgear in Philadelphia.

Mr. York was a life member of the Clifton Heights Fire Company and the Highland Park Fire Company, where he was past president and a professional firefighter for Upper Darby Township. He was a charter member of VFW Post 6317 before transferring to Post 924 in Folsom, PA was past president of General Electric AFL-CIO Union Local 13, and was active in the YMCA Indian Guides and Indian Princesses programs.

Mr. York is survived by his wife UVee, daughters Wendy York-Feirn, Sherri Smith and Tracy Gormley, son Robert, daughter-in-law Susan York, 12 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his son Stephen.

Interment was held at Arlington Cemetery, Drexel Hill, PA.



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FLOWER MOUND, TX 75027

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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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 Associate Annual Dues (\$10.00) Associate Lifetime Membership (\$50.00)

How would you like to receive Newsletter: Mail Email

If paying for an Associate Membership:

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: Carol Anne Linzee Chan, Secretary, 388th Bomb Group Assn., Inc.
1266 Dawnridge Drive, El Cajon, CA 92021 Email: secretary@388thbg.org or Cadrastal@gmail.com