

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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TINKER AIR FORCE BASE



1943



2013

U.S. AIR FORCE

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

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From the President's Desk

Hi Fellow 388th devotees.

Jennifer Womack has done a remarkable job cajoling, contacting, organizing and rescheduling to assure we will all have a good time in Oklahoma City in October. Please note the new schedule for the trip to Tinker AFB. This involved navigating the "Sequester" budget cuts that eliminated positions at the Tinker Public Affairs office. Great job Jen for keeping the faith and not taking "no" for an answer.

Also, thanks to Betty and Henry Curvat for their support retaining Anhaeuser Bush support for our Hospitality suite. Big deal and many thanks to AB who will be in the middle of the Oklahoma Football season during our reunion.

Planned Activities:

- Thursday Tinker Field/Officers Club lunch/ 45th Infantry Museum 9:30 to 3:00
- Friday "Let's see OKC" Tour 9:00 to 4:00
- Saturday Banquet

Update on Dad, Ben Sr.

He is a happy camper in the Sunrise facility in Edmonds WA, 20 min from me and 2 minutes from Ward, my brother. He enjoys visits from his family. Ward and I recently took him to a nearby ball field in his wheel chair and set him up with a driver and raised tee to hit some golf balls. He finished his exposition by hitting a 75yd drive through a fence into my new car! Way to go Pops! He also just received a 40 minute call from Chuck Neff, 388th vet, subject of the harrowing B-17 return from Berlin and longtime Pal. You will see Chuck at the reunion.

I am looking forward to a terrific reunion. Sign up as soon as you can so Jen can get good numbers to the Hotel and bus folks.

All the Best

Ben Forrest Jr.



The Lighter Side



The German air controllers at Frankfurt Airport are renowned as a short-tempered lot. They not only expect one to know one's gate parking location, but how to get there without any assistance from them. So it was with some amusement that we (a Pan AM 747) listened to the following exchange between Frankfurt ground control and a British Airways 747, call sign 'Speedbird 206'.

Speedbird 206: "Frankfurt, Speedbird 206, Clear of active runway."

Ground: "Speedbird 206, taxi to gate Alpha One-Seven."

The BA 747 pulled onto the main taxiway and slowed to a stop.

Ground: "Speedbird, do you not know where you are going?"

Speedbird 206: "Stand by, Ground, I'm looking up our gate location now."

Ground(with quite arrogant impatience): "Speedbird 206, have you not been to Frankfurt before?"

Speedbird 206 (coolly): Yes, twice in 1944, but it was dark....And I didn't land!"

Submitted by Robert Shroats found in the Plane & Pilot paper he receives. Reprinted with permission of that editor. Thanks Robert for the good laugh....keep them coming!

REUNION UPDATE

The Tinker Airbase visit has been changed from Friday to Thursday due to the Base not being available to us on Friday. The City tour will be conducted on Friday.

In order to get on the base (for anyone over 18), a valid Government ID (driver's license, State ID's, Passports, etc.) must be submitted at time of registration for Security clearance measures. If you have any questions you can call Tom Dennis at 714-296-7557.

New Members

Danna Shirley
daughter of Howard Goines, 562nd Sqd
Christopher Taylor
friend of Ray Peeples, 562nd Sqd
Karen Sue Woodall
cohort to Jack Clemer, 561st Sqd

Thank You For Your Donations

Since the Reunion is just around the corner donations are more than likely being included in the registration. So there is nothing to report this issue.

*If I missed anyone that made a donation
I apologize.*

Honor Flights

I was in the driveway of my place in San Diego and met a WWII Army vet who had an amazing experience on an "Honor Flight". Look at the web site <http://www.honorflight.org>. If your hero is ambulatory, this is a great opportunity. First Cabin all the way.

Honor Flight Network is a non-profit organization created solely to honor America's veterans for all their sacrifices. They transport our heroes to Washington, D.C. to visit and reflect at their memorials. Top priority is given to the senior veterans – World War II survivors, along with those other veterans who may be terminally ill.

Of all of the wars in recent memory, it was World War II that truly threatened our very existence as a nation—and as a culturally diverse, free society. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, an estimated 640 WWII veterans die each day. Our time to express our thanks to these brave men and women is running out.

Ben Forrest Jr.



388th PX



HATS
\$15.00 each



POLO SHIRTS
\$25.00



**KOOZIE AND
LANYARD**
\$2.00 each



RHINESTONE PIN
\$12.50

Each of the above items is plus shipping costs.

All items above are available for order from Christy Wammack. I encourage all of you to send Christy an email (xxxxclw@yahoo.com) or call her (928-581-1010) and let her know what other items you would like to see in our PX or to place an order. Also many of you saw Col. Long's wife, Staci, with a 388th pin. It is now available as shown.



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.

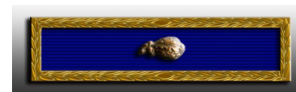
Make checks out to: 388th Bomb Group Assn
Mail to:
Greg Staples
4715 W. Larchwood Court, Spokane, WA 99208
All profits go to our Memorial in Knettishall.

DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATION

By Dick Henggeler, Historian



The 388th Bomb Group has the honor of being awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation twice.



The Distinguished Unit Citation was established by Executive Order No. 9075, on 26 February 26th 1942. This order made it possible for the Secretary of War to issue citations in the name of the President of the United States to units of US Armed Forces and their Allies for heroism in action against an armed enemy from December 7th 1941 onwards. The unit must display such gallantry, determination, and esprit de corps in accomplishing its mission under extremely difficult and hazardous conditions as to set it apart and above other units participating in the same campaign. This act should be equal to that of an individual who could obtain the Distinguished Service Cross for it.

The first citation was received for the Regensburg mission on August 1, 1943.

The second citation was received for the efforts of three separate missions:

- Hanover, Germany mission on July 26, 1943;
- Brux, Czechoslovakia mission on May 12, 1944;
- Ruhrland, Germany (Poltava, Russia) mission on June 21, 1944.

The service ribbon is a solid blue background with a gold braid border. While individual achievement medals are worn over the left breast pocket, this one is worn on the right. Because the 388th earned the medal twice, it has an oak leaf cluster. Individuals active with the 388th at the time of the mission, were awarded the medal. They were allowed to continue to wear the medal even after leaving the unit. Later 388th members were allowed to wear the ribbon while active with the 388th.



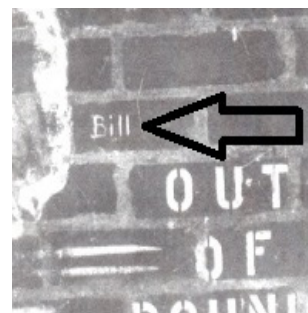
UPDATE



In our last issue, we printed this picture (left) submitted by August Bolino that he acquired from the book, "ONE LAST LOOK" A Sentimental Journey about the 8th Air Force bomber bases in England.

We had two responses regarding the picture. Neither was able to determine the artists name but several more pictures were submitted. When I enlarged the picture of LOUISE (right) the name 'Bill' shows up next to the drawing.

Another picture was sent to us of a girl named Eileen (below, left). According to one source Louise and Eileen are facing each other on the same Ablutions (place to shower or bathe) Wall of the 563rd Squadron site.



T/Sgt Louis Pennow Weatherman
3rd Air Division 388th



The building (above, right) is believed to have had the two pictures (below) on its walls and may be still be standing, but we were unable to confirm at the time of this writing. Many of the buildings have been bulldozed to make room for homes.



*Special thanks to Percy Prentiss and Jackie Newmark for sharing their pictures and information.

LUCKY TWICE

By David Phillips



It was New Year's Eve. But there was no party for us, because we were elements of the 560th Bombardment Squadron, it was the last day of 1944, and we were in formation 25,000 feet over Hamburg, Germany, just starting our bomb run.

We'd fought our way

through a cloud of FW's and 109's to get there, and now the fighters had peeled off as flak began darkening the sky. With no more targets for my waist .50, I was taking pictures of the bombs pounding the ground below. Suddenly, and before I heard the sound of the explosion, four pieces of very hot German steel tore through the skin of the plane and shattered the bones in my right leg. It hurt like hell, but as copilot Lt Jim Andrews stopped the bleeding and immobilized my leg for our return trip, all I could think of was how lucky I was to even be there that day.

I was a Staff Sergeant on a different B-17 crew of 10 as we boarded our aircraft for a night training flight at the base in Rapid City, SD. It was June 13 – one week after D-Day – and we were to be deployed soon. We were anxious to get into the fight in Europe, So every training mission took on a sense of importance. I normally flew as tail gunner on this ship, but was assigned to a waist gunner position for this flight, and so CPL Dan Conway took my place in the tail.

The sun was setting as we climbed out of Rapid City and turned south, on a loop over Greely, Colorado that was scheduled to return us to Rapid City around midnight. Because we were flying over mostly remote mountain terrain in the dark, there wasn't much to see outside (and certainly nothing to shoot at!) so fellow gunners CPL's LeRoy Faigin Lester Place and I joined CPL Max Welner in his radio room, the

warmest spot on the plane. At some point, flight engineer SSGT Don Jacobs came into the radio room and asked Max to try to get a fix on our position because we seemed to be off course. Place took some maps forward to the pilot, LT Drury Holt and copilot, FO Doyle Hall. Someone remarked that it looked like a ground-based light beacon was flashing above us. Then, what the pilots had initially thought was a cloud bank suddenly became the north face of Crown Point, 10840 feet high – just a few dozen feet below us and closing fast. The pilots poured full power to all four engines and put us into a steep climb.

If you've ever been inside a metal barrel that's being pounded by a hundred baseball bats, you have an idea what a B-17 under power sounds like as it plows over, into and through mountain pine trees. In their final act on earth, Holt and Hall saved the day by getting the nose pointed uphill, so we hit belly-first. If we had augured in, no one would have survived.

The first thing I remember is scrambling out the top hatch with bombardier Lt Harold Eisele, Place, Jacobs, Weiner and Faigin. The front of the aircraft was already on inferno, trapping both pilots and navigator FO Timothy Hurst. In the process of jumping about 15 feet to the rocky ground, I severely injured my leg, but with oxygen bottles starting to cook off in the fire, nothing kept us from getting as far as possible from the wreckage.

We regrouped and scrounged together a small fire, because no matter what month it is, it's really cold at nearly 11,000 feet. As the fire in the plane began to die, we heard moaning from the rear of the twisted wreck. It was Dan Conway trapped in the tail gunner's position – my position, before tonight. Faigin and Jacob s found Conway suffering from a horrible head wound and broken legs. They were able to free him after an hour or so. But our first aid kit vanished in the crash, and we couldn't get him across all the flattened trees to where we had gathered, so we built a fire next to him to keep him warm where he was.



At first light, we evaluated our situation. Place, Eissle and I were unable to walk unassisted – especially down the side of an unknown mountain! Conway was barely alive and completely immovable. We decided Jacobs and Faigin would strike-out for help, while Weiner stayed behind to watch over the wounded and light a signal fire in case a search plane flew overhead. We melted snow for drinking water and talked quietly to keep our spirits up. And waited.

About 14 hours after they left the crash site, Faigin and Jacobs encountered two fishermen plying the cold mountain waters. I've always wondered what went through the fishermen's minds, seeing a yelling, ragged, bloody pair of aviators stumbling from the woods. I do have an idea of how relieved Faigin and Jacobs must have been to see anglers!

At the crash site, however, all we knew was it was getting dark again. We made Conway and ourselves as comfortable as we could, facing another cold night of uncertainty. Sometime that evening, Dan Conway, one of the nicest guys ever, succumbed to his injuries.

Dawn the next day brought much better news. An AT-11 fighter trainer flew overhead and wagged his wings at Weiner's smoky signal fire. A little while later, a transport dropped a container with food and medical supplies, followed shortly by a lone parachute carrying an Army surgeon. His name was LT Amos Little, but seeing him swaying beneath that canopy was the biggest relief any of us could imagine. After he dropped from the tree-softened landing, he proved to be kind and efficient as he patched us up, made us comfortable and got us ready for the trip down the mountain the next day.

I was released from the hospital after a few days. I went to California for leave, and to make a decision. I had enlisted because I felt strongly that there was a job that needed to be done, and I wanted to be a part of it. I could have spent the remainder of my military commitment in a number of ways. But I was born in Liverpool and felt a strong connection

with what was happening in Europe. Plus, I knew I had been given a second chance. So I asked to be reassigned to a B-17 crew in England, and got my wish at the beginning of December 1944.

My new crewmates were great, but lousy weather kept us cooling our heels on base for three weeks. This was especially frustrating, because there was this little late-inning scuffle called the Battle of the Bulge going on across the Channel, and we were itching to get in the game to support our cold and tired ground troops.

Finally, the weather cleared—and I saw my first action. It was everything I thought it would be, but more so. High-speed and slow-motion all at once; mass confusion and total concentration; noise, terror and anger; and immense satisfaction at a job well done.

January 31—New Year's Day---was my fourth mission. It took us over Hamburg, and it provided me with my souvenir shrapnel. It also ended my military flying career—I was in the hospital for nine months. By the time I got out, Germany and Japan had surrendered—a wonderful end to a horrible time in history. Like everyone in the free world, I was overjoyed that the war was over; that I could go home to New York and get on with my life. But our experiences on that mountainside have colored aspects of my life to this day.

On the fiftieth anniversary of the Colorado crash, LeRoy Faigin, Lester Place and I were joined by Drury Holt's two sisters at the public dedication of a plaque along the trail leading to the wreckage, which is still visible and is protected as part of the Roosevelt National Forest. It was a somber occasion for us, remembering our crewmates who didn't make it off the mountain. But as the 21-Gun salute echoed across the landscape and I finally turned the page on this chapter of my life, I got the same feeling of pride I had the first time I put on my uniform. I was no hero. I was just one of 16 million other guys, who were proud to do the job that needed to be done. I was just luckier than a lot of them—and I got

Lucky Twice.





Oklahoma City Land Run

388th BG

64th Autumn Reunion

October 2-6, 2013

HOTEL INFORMATION

Wyndham Garden Oklahoma City Airport
2101 South Meridian Avenue
Oklahoma City, OK 73108
Telephone 405-685-4000 (you may call collect)

Cut-off date for reservations:

September 1, 2013

After 9/1/13 Wyndham will continue to accept reservations from 388th's attendees: at the prevailing room rate and subject to availability.

- *\$99 using the 388th Group Rate!
- *Breakfast is provided everyday, every person!
- *Complimentary Shuttle:
To & From Airport
To & From Surrounding Areas (1 mile)
- *Complimentary Wifi throughout the hotel!
- *Complimentary Parking!

Pet Friendly!

FRIDAY, October 4, 2013:

"Let's See OKC" Tour



THURSDAY, October 3, 2013:

Military Tour



OKC

OKC

388th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

Registration Form **64th Annual Reunion** **Oklahoma City, Oklahoma** **October 2 – October 6, 2013**

CUT-OFF DATE FOR REGISTRATION IS SEPTEMBER 1ST

To cancel contact: Jennifer Wammack 928-210-1392, jlwammack@hotmail.com

Cancellations received after **September 1st** will forfeit all payments.

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: _____

Gov't Issued ID No.: _____ This is required only for individualst over 18 & attending military tour.

ATTENDEE #2 FULL NAME: _____ MEMBER: LIFE / ASSOC. / NOT

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

Gov't Issued ID No.: _____ This is required only for attendees that over 18 & attending military tour.

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

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

Gov't Issued ID No.: _____ This is required only for attendees that over 18 & attending military tour.

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

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

Gov't Issued ID No.: _____ This is required only for attendees that over 18 & attending military tour.

*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.

Registration Fee	Required for all attendees	\$40.00	X _____	= _____
Military Tour				
Thursday (3 October) 9:30am – 3:00pm	Tinker AFB / Lunch at The Tinker Club / 45 th Infantry Museum *Gov't Issued ID is required for attendance. Please provide the number for each attending member 18 or older.	\$46.00	X _____	= _____
Let's See OKC! Tour				
Friday (4 October) 9:00am – 4:00pm	Lunch at Persimmon Hill located in the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum.	\$59.00	X _____	= _____
Saturday (5 October) 6:00pm – 10:00pm	Banquet at Wyndham Garden	Filet of Chicken Breast	\$30.00	X _____ = _____
		London Broil	\$30.00	X _____ = _____
Memory Book	Enjoy reminiscing about	Book	\$16.00	X _____ = _____
	OKC!	CD	\$5.00	X _____ = _____
Donation				= _____

Write check payable to 388th Bomb Group Association, Inc

Mail check **and** registration form to:

Jennifer Wammack, 10131 E. 35th Pl, Yuma AZ, 85365

TOTAL = _____

* Please fill out the questionnaire on the back of this form, and return it with the registration.

388th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

Questionnaire for Future Reunions

Your opinions are important to the Association.

*It helps us plan the most **exciting** and **entertaining** annual reunions possible.*

Please help us by answering the following questions.

What time frame would you like reunions to be planned? _____ Anytime Between August & October

_____ Early to Mid August

_____ Early to Mid September

_____ Early to Mid October

_____ Mid to Late August

_____ Mid to Late September

_____ Mid to Late October

_____ Near Labor Day Weekend

Do you have suggested locations for a reunion?

Eastern United States (2015): _____

Central United States (2016): _____

Western United States (2017): _____

Do you have suggestions or comments for future reunions? _____

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...): _____

TAPS



RAYMOND R. BOGGS

Raymond Russell Boggs passed away June 28, 2011. The long-time Lexington, KY resident was 86. Having entered the Army Air Corps immediately after high school graduation, he served as tail and waist gunner on the Charles Beatty crew in the 562nd Sqd., and flew 15 missions between November 1944 and March 1945. Awards included the Air and EAME medals.

After the war Mr. Boggs married his high school sweetheart Betty Ann Haney and started a radio and TV repair business in Lexington while attending the University of Kentucky. He later worked for IBM in Lexington, retiring in 1982 to open a home remodeling and repair service.

Interment was held at Blue Grass Memorial Gardens in Lexington.



WAYNE S. ELKIN

Lt. Col. USAF (Ret) Wayne Steele Elkin passed away in Santa Barbara, CA on May 26 at age 89. Born in Hot Springs, AR, he was raised at various army posts until the family settled in Santa Barbara in 1942. He enlisted shortly after high school graduation, and flew as a togglier for 10 missions with the Joseph Ellis' 560th Sqd. crew. The crew was shot down over Nurnberg on January 20, 1945, and then-S/Sgt. Elkins spent the remainder of the war in a POW camp.

He returned to military service at the outbreak of the Korean War and remained on active duty as a Regular officer with the Strategic Air Command throughout the Cold War years. He retired from the Air Force after 26 years of service. He then spent 15 years in the real estate business before retiring in 1988.

Lt. Col. Elkin was predeceased by his wife Martha in 2003; the couple had been married 53 years.

Survivors include daughter Carmen, son Wayne Jr., five grandchildren and one grandchild. A Funeral Mass was held at St. Raphael Church in Santa Barbara.



WARREN H. SIMMLER

Warren Harding Simmler, 91, of Mickleton, NJ, died September 7, 2012.

He was an armorer in the 563rd Sqd. Mr. Simmler was born and raised in Clarksboro, NJ and was a 1939 graduate of Swedesboro High

where he played on the championship basketball team.

He retired as maintenance supervisor with Mobil Oil Co. in 1981. He was a 79-year member of the Evangelical United Methodist Church in Clarksboro and served on the East Greenwich and Kingsway High School Boards of Education.

Mr. Simmler is survived by his wife Janice, sons David and Dan; four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He was interred at Eglington Cemetery in Clarksboro.



GORAN SUNDBLAD

Goran (George) Sundblad unexpectedly passed away Thursday July 25, 2013 at 82 years young. In 2008 George had finally met all the requirements, took the oath, and earned his U.S. citizenship. Something he was extremely proud of.

George was so grateful to the United States, more specifically the 388th Bomb Group, for their service and defense of Europe and freedom during WWII. He felt it was one of the greatest honors and achievements of his life to become a United States citizen.

Though not an original member of the 388th, George's love and respect for those men who served became a big part of his life. George served in many capacities as a member of the 388th Bomb Group Association. In 2007 George was elected 1st Vice President to the Bomb Group Assoc., followed by his Presidency in 2008, and concluded his service as Sr. Director to James Morrow, President in 2009. He was a great supporter of the Bomb Group Assoc. and looked forward to each year and the opportunity to be with all the other members during the annual reunions. As a retiree from SAS Airline, he was able to persuade them to donate two round trip tickets to Sweden which he generously offered as a raffle prize given out at one of the reunion banquets. He will be sorely missed.

Rickard Sundblad, George's son, will carry on the Sundblad tradition and honor his father's memory by continuing to serve on the Board of Directors as long as the members wish to have him. Unfortunately he will miss this year's reunion in OKC. Rickard will be in Sweden taking care of all the necessary arrangements and dealing with his father's estate. As George would tell you, "His Cup Runneth Over"! If he was here to say, I believe he would tell us: "Weep Not For The Lost For Their Soul Will Remain With Us In Our Memories"



388TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION
3013 MOUNT BAKER CIRCLE
OAK HARBOR, WA 98277

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388TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION 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) ☐ Lifetime Membership (\$50.00) ☐ Donation _____

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

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: Linda Soo, Secretary, 388th Bomb Group Assn., Inc., 3013 Mount Baker Circle, Oak Harbor, WA 98277
Email: secretary@388thbg.org or Linda388@fiddlybits.com

