

# **388<sup>TH</sup> BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)**

## **ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED**

**8<sup>th</sup> Air Force, 3<sup>rd</sup> Air Division, 45<sup>th</sup> Combat Wing**  
**Station 136, Knettishall England, 1943-1945**

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T/Sgt. Frank M. Farmer, engineer/top turret gunner on the Paul Kelly crew, 560th Sqd.

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## From the President's Desk

Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend the 2008 reunion of the 388th Bomb Group Association. I regret this very much, because I have always tried to meet my responsibilities in all segments of my life.

I don't see that this situation is covered by our current by-laws. As you know, I assumed the presidency upon the death of Bob Davis. Article IV, Section 2C states "The First Vice President will perform the duties of President in the absence or incapacity of the President." But it says nothing about what happens when that person cannot perform the duties of the President.

I suggest the Board consider proposing an amendment to the bylaws. The procedure is detained in Article VII. Any such petition must be presented to the full membership at the next annual meeting of the group, and it requires a two-thirds vote of those present for passage.

I wish the Board and the membership well. I have been a very strong supporter since my retirement in 1990. I certainly hope to be at the 2009 meeting in Florida.



August C. Bolino

## **Welcome New Members**

Jeff Anderson, *388th Fighter Wing*

Jeff Baethke, *son of Ray Baethke, 560th Sqd.*

Mike Baker, *friend of David Calcutt*

Nancy and Doug Berryhill, *daughter and son-in-law of Marvin Peters, 563rd Sqd.*

Glen Daniels, *son of Wayne Daniels, 56rd Sqd.*

Larry Daniels, *son of Wayne Daniels, 563rd Sqd.*

Glenda Selman, *daughter of Andrew Chaffin, Group Operations*

## **Thank You For Your Donations**

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## **Donations In Memory Of ...**

Julian Carr, from his wife Mary

Robert Haworth, from his wife Jean

Robert Simmon, from Lois Geiger

Percy J. Prentice has accepted the role of the 388th BG Assn. representative at the annual Memorial Day services held at the Cambridge American Military Cemetery and Memorial.



The aftermath of the fiery explosion that destroyed *Lady Courageous* and killed two 560th Squadron ground crew members

## Disaster on the Ground

*Excerpted from an article by Trevor Jermy*

Throughout the history of aerial warfare, the gallant contributions of the ground crews has generally been overshadowed by the drama in the skies. But on one Saturday afternoon in the summer of 1944, drama indeed visited the ground crews of the 560th Squadron, resulting in a tragedy no one could have foreseen.

It was July 29, 1944—the second consecutive day that the 1st and 3rd Air Division forces had been sent to bomb the Farben-industrie synthetic oil plant at Lara/Merseburg, Germany, on orders from the 8th Air Force HQ to continue the systematic bombardment of enemy oil plants.

Intelligence reports were showing that Germany's air superiority over occupied Europe had been considerably reduced because of fuel and oil shortages. If they could continue to destroy the fuel and oil plants, the Allies would effectively win the war.

The 388th BG of the 45th Combat Wing was to fly as high Group on this mission, being split into two groups, A and B.

Group A consisted of 20 B-17 Flying Fortresses. Group Leader was Capt. Marvin Hilton; his deputy leader was Lt. Frank Prendergast; lead pilot was Lt. Charles Cooke, lead navigator was Lt. Hugh Miller; and lead bombardier was Lt. Edmund Bonnet. All B-17s of the A Group were airborne between 0535 and 0554 hours.

All B-17s of Group B were airborne between 0520 and 0532 hours. Group B consisted of 19 B-17s. Group Leader was Capt. Joe Gunn; deputy leader was Lt. James Fitzpatrick; lead pilot was Lt. Robert Hancock; lead navigator was Lt. Elliott Cohn; and lead bombardier was Lt. McLaughlin.

Forming up was uneventful with both groups flying a southerly course to the rally point. During the transit they were joined by "little friends"—the P-51 Mustangs of the 338th, 352nd, 357th, and 479th Fighter Groups—for escort all the way

into Germany and back.

The force continued south easterly across Germany. Fighter resistance and flak to the target had been non-existent; but with the formation now at 26,000 feet at the IP where a turn was made to begin the estimated three-minute bomb run, the flak was now so heavy you could get out and walk on it. The run-in over the target being in an east-west direction; the B group made its own sighting of the target and did not bomb with the rest of the Wing.

The escort fighters above at 28,500 feet had the same view as the main formation half a mile below. Cloud cover partly obscured the target area, but all aircraft from the A group were able to bomb the target at 1006 hrs. The B group had had two aborts due to mechanical problems, but the rest of its formation also bombed successfully.

Black smoke from a huge oil fire five miles below indicated that some direct hits had been made on the target. According to German records, three direct hits were made on synthetic oil storage tanks, almost the last supplies of synthetic oil available to the German war machine (the only other supplies being at Trier).

While in the vicinity of the rally point for the navigational fix for the flight home to Knettishall, German aircraft attacked the A Group in large numbers. Between 30 and 50 ME-109Gs and eight to 12 FW-190s made a single pass through the formation before escort fighters intercepted them. Lt. Russell Boyce's a/c no. 42-39866 was hit by three ME-109Gs from the rear, setting the two inboard engines on fire. Lt. Boyce was forced to break formation and dive in an attempt to put out the engine fires.

His B-17 was seen to disappear into the clouds at an estimated 14,000 feet; they were not seen by the formation again. Only co-pilot 1st Lt. Darrell Hornesby (on his 28th mission) and

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)



# Disaster,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

navigator Emmett Lawless (on his fifth mission) were able to bail out. They were taken prisoner shortly after landing in a barley field.

The bodies of the rest of the crew were found still in the aircraft by Germans from a nearby air base after it had crashed and burned. Killed with Lt. Boyce (on his 30th mission) were S/Sgt. Alfred Japhet, top turret gunner (29th mission); S/Sgt. Kevin Ernster, ball turret gunner (31st mission); T/Sgt. Calvin Leitz, waist gunner (30th mission); and S/Sgt. Norman Hubbert, tail gunner (30th mission).

By 1354 hours, the remaining 36 aircraft had returned to Knettishall. The 388th BG had two ME-109G kills to their credit—both shot down in that single pass by the enemy in the space of just five minutes.

The 388th BG had a total of 21 aircraft damaged that day—only two seriously. Lt. James Paulson in a/c no. 42-97873 arrived at Knettishall with nine 20mm holes in his aircraft. Lt. James Fitzpatrick had also brought in his crippled a/c no. 44-6096 *Lady Courageous* safely.

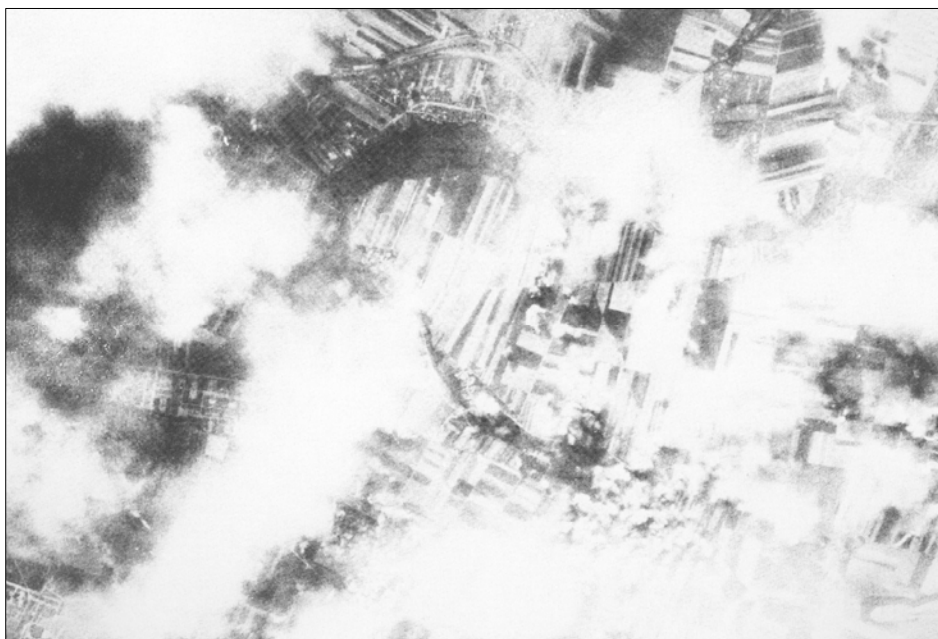
With the planes returned to their revetments, 560th Sqd. Crew Chief Clove "Orsen" Wells and mechanic Joe Haine began working on repairs to *Lady Courageous*. A fuel truck stood close by, waiting to replenish her tanks. From one of the 560th ground crew tents pitched across the perimeter track about 100 yards away, Cpl. C. Ellison "Becky" Beck glanced briefly at the two men before returning to what he was doing.

Fewer than seven miles northeast, another B-17 was leaving the runway at Fersfield, home to the top secret Operation Aphrodite. It was carrying Major Henry J. "Jim" Rand to Uxbridge, outside London, to retrieve some desperately needed electrical components.

Operation Aphrodite—the turning of war-weary B-17s into guided missiles, had been Jim Rand's brainchild. A brilliant electronics researcher/developer from the Rand Development Company, he had already created the Azon (AZimuth ONLY) guided bomb.

In principle, the Aphrodite concept was to develop a remote control system that would allow a "mother ship" to direct an explosives-laden drone or "baby ship" to target—specifically, German V Rocket sites. Aircraft no longer fit for combat would be gutted and filled with Torpex and other high explosives. A pilot and radio operator would take the "baby" to a safe point just before the English Coast and would bail out, leaving the "mother," accompanied by fighter escort and observation planes, to guide the "baby" to target.

Once approved, the project had been given to the Eighth AF's Third Division to carry out. The 388th BG, tasked with implementation, had temporarily reassigned most of its 560th Squadron, under Major Roy Forrest's leadership, to Fersfield. War-weary B-17s, including the 560th Squadron's *Gremlin*



July 29, 1944—Merseburg from 26,000 feet

*Gus*, had also been sent to the secret base to be fitted. Pilot training had begun on July 1, and the first mission was scheduled for August 4.

But as of July 29 Rand was still struggling with his Double Azon radio-frequency remote control system, and was under intense pressure. The hasty flight to Uxbridge had been prompted by yet another equipment failure.

Within moments of becoming airborne, Rand's B-17 began to experience serious problems that would require a quick set-down. The pilot was ordered to not return to Fersfield—in part because an emergency landing would disrupt the U.S. Navy aircraft flying in from Dunkeswell. Even more critical was that Fersfield's bomb dump was filled to capacity—so much as an errant spark could trigger an explosion that would destroy the entire base.

Knettishall was the nearest landing field on the flight path.

Under the watchful eye of Crew Chief Wells, now leaning against the fuel truck, Joe Haine was busily working under one of *Lady Courageous*' engine cowlings when the Fersfield plane made its emergency landing. Now completely out of control, the B-17 careened off the runway and across the field. It slammed into the fuel truck, killing Wells and the plane's two pilots instantly. The force of impact also rammed the truck into *Lady Courageous*, and exploded, trapping Haine. The horrified Cpl. Beck fled to safer ground.

Within minutes the station's fire trucks arrived, and while foam was being sprayed onto the flames, men in special fire retardant suits plunged into the massive fireball to retrieve Haine. He died of his burns two days later.

Miraculously, Jim Rand not only survived the crash but was also able to help another of the plane's crew to safety. The nerve-shattering incident, however, contributed to a subsequent nervous breakdown, and Rand was hospitalized for a number of weeks. After his recovery he joined the OSS and aided operations in France.

And so the 388th BG suffered ten casualties on this day—eight in the air, two on the ground.

# Knettishall Tales

By Manuel Head

## Events and Observations

One day while standing down from mission duty, four of our crews were assembled for a North Sea search and rescue. A B-17 from the 452nd BG had ditched in the North Sea off the coast of Denmark. We started a text book search pattern with four B-17s abreast at about 500 feet, and made our turns toward the coast. We followed that course for about eight hours. We were just about ready to retire when we all sighted a single yellow raft.

Obviously only one of the plane's two rafts had released, and the crew had had to squeeze into it. We all buzzed the raft repeatedly until the RAF plane came on scene. The RAF had a sea worthy vessel attached to their fuselage that they dropped by parachutes. We watched the crew transfer and then left the rescue to the RAF. Later we met that rescued crew in Poltava, Russia on the shuttle mission, after the German air raid.

Another flight, when standing down from a mission, occurred one summer day when I was called to report to Operations. From there I was directed to a revetment to fly with the Group CO. I pedaled my bicycle out, and found Col. David giving a young lady a tour of the B-17. He told me I was to assist him on take-off and landing. He planned a brief flight around East Anglia. The young lady was trim, well-dressed in slacks and an Eisenhower jacket, blond, bobbed hair; overall: cool, neat ... perhaps akin to Carole Lombard. The Colonel took off and then had his guest move into the co-pilot's seat. I moved down to the nose, and tracked his flight around our neighboring sights. He wandered around East Anglia for about an hour and then called me back for the landing. Thereafter I responded to all public address calls promptly and with good demeanor.

The Frantic mission to the Ruhland oil refinery and then on in a shuttle to Poltava, Russia is well reported in the books, *The Poltava Affair* by Glenn B. Infield, *The Mighty Eighth*

by Roger A. Freeman, and *The 388th At War* by Edward J. Huntzinger.

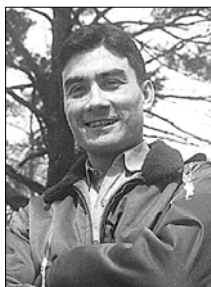
The mission was well-executed. It couldn't be otherwise; the mission was over loaded with command pilots and squadron COs. However, the Luftwaffe counter attack was also well-executed in destroying 11 of our 28 planes in the nighttime raid. Our plane, a/c no. 42-102953, was reported repairable in three weeks (cables and wiring out, riddled with bullets and bomb fragments—3,000 holes that whistled in flight until pasted over with aileron material).

We flew out, according to my Form 5, on 2 July 1944 for Teheran on the first leg of a flight across North Africa enroute to Knettishall. One night in Teheran and then to Cairo with a very careful, procedural flight over the Suez Canal. The FBI met us in Cairo and restricted us to the airfield. Two officers contracted dysentery and were hospitalized for five days in Cairo. We visited the pyramids at Giza, and took a bevy of nurses dancing at the open air night club in Cairo.

Air Corps life outside the Mighty 8th was beginning to be attractive! Benghazi, Algiers, Casablanca, Marrakech followed in quick succession. Casablanca had no space or maintenance facilities to provide. Marrakech found significant fuel tank leakage and put us off day by day. We toured the old city, borrowed a sedan from the motor pool and drove west to the Atlantic for a day at the beach.

Marrakech began to bore, and we telexed Knettishall. Knettishall seemed upset at losing contact with us, and directed us to leave the B-17 and come home post haste. Our orders commanded enough attention to get us on the next transport to England, dressed in summer khakis, pith helmets, and sporting great sun tans.

Editor: Our next contributor will be James Zographos, 561st Sqd.



Head

## The 388th PX

**Navy Blue Polo:** Cotton with white embroidery. Lettering reads: B-17 Flying Fortress WWII, 388 Bomb Group. Sizes S-M-L.

**Price: \$35**

**Royal Blue Polo:** Polyester/Nylon with white and gold embroidery. Lettering reads: 388th Bomb Group. Sizes S-M-L.

**Price: \$30**

**B-17 Cap:** Navy blue, multi-colored embroidery. Lettering reads: B-17 Flying Fortress-WWII.

**Price: \$15**

**8th AF Cap:** Navy blue, multi-colored embroidery. Front lettering reads: 8th Air Force, WWII. Back lettering reads: 388 Bomb Group

**Price: \$15**

**Ceramic Mug:** 5.75" tall; holds 12 fl. oz. Available in White or Midnight Blue. Lettering reads: B-17 Flying Fortress-WWII, 388th Bomb Group.

**Price: \$11**

**Chef's Apron:** Sturdy white cotton, with images of a B-17 and Rosie the Riveter screen-printed in full color. Lettering includes: 388th Bomb Group.

**Price: \$18**

**B-17 Litho:** John J. "Pat" Ryan's original limited-edition full-color lithograph of a silver B-17G in flight is 12" x 21" with a 2" border.

**Price: \$45**

**"H" DVD:** A tribute by Craig Ruiz to his grandfather Victor Ruiz and the Bill Brunk crew, this 45-minute film combines interviews with crew members and National Archives footage to tell the "everyman" experience of 388th BG fliers.

**Price: \$30**

**The 388th at War:** The nuts and bolts of our group's history, this 272-page book by Edward J. Huntzinger features reports of all missions and is packed with photos and graphics.

**Price: \$45**

### Order Form

ITEM	SIZE	QTY	SUB
Polo, Navy	_____	_____	_____
Polo, Royal	_____	_____	_____
B-17Cap	_____	_____	_____
8th AF Cap	_____	_____	_____
Mug	_____	_____	_____
Chef's Apron	_____	_____	_____
Ryan Litho	_____	_____	_____
"H" DVD	_____	_____	_____
388th at War	_____	_____	_____
<b>TOTAL</b>	_____	_____	_____

Send order form with check or money order payable to **388th BG Assn.** to: Bit Snead, 2449 SW 328th St., Federal Way, WA 98023-2565. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

# Little Willie Returns

Excerpted from *Flying Fortress*  
by Edward Jablonski

The pretty German girl pedaled her bicycle to the side of the street. She heard the roar of a speeding truck approaching from behind; it was probably a military vehicle and the wiser course was to get well out of its way.

Safely at the curb she stopped, turned to watch and froze in horror. Just a few feet above the street she saw not a truck but an enormous four-engined aircraft bearing down on her. Black, deadly snouts of machine guns projected from various positions in the plane's massive body, its upper part a mottled brown and its underside an indeterminate light blue. Near one wingtip she could see a white, five-pointed star—the insignia of the American air forces. As fascinated as she was frightened the fraulein recognized it as an American bomber.

The enemy plane overtook her in seconds, and as it passed by, she saw the men in the side gun positions waiving at her. Although the two gun barrels in the round turret underneath the belly of the plane pointed directly at her, there was no gunfire as the plane thundered over. And though she could not hear them, other members of the crew whistled at her.

She watched, shaken and at the same time curious, as the big plane reached the square where the two churches stood, their twin spires jutting above the light path of the bomber. With its engines trailing a black wisp of smoke, the wounded craft merely banked gracefully, one wing almost scraping the cobbled street, and flew between the two steeples. As suddenly



*Little Willie*, a/c no. 42-37839, 561st Squadron

as it had appeared from once distance, the great aircraft hurtled into another, leaving behind a perplexed, shocked girl bicyclist. “Little Willie” was taking the Autobahn route home to England.

“Little Willie” was a Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress, piloted by Bernard M. Dopko of Old Forge, Pennsylvania; their destination: Station 146, Knettishall Airdrome, England, home base of the 388 Bombardment Group (H). Struck by flak over Berlin, with the supercharger on one engine out of commission, and a runaway propeller on another, “Little Willie” plunged out of the group formation. German fighters swept in for the kill. As tail gunner Robert M. Haydon, Jr. drove them off, Dopko pointed the plane toward the earth to shake off the fighters. When bombardier William Kelly shouted, “Look out Dop, you’re going to run into the curb!” Dopko leveled out and they were now fifty feet above the ground on the outskirts of Berlin.

As far as the Group was concerned, “Little Willie” was officially “missing in action.” The runaway engine was threatening to wrench off the wing, the other engine was useless, the tail was badly damaged and the radio was out completely. Feathering the windmilling propeller, Dopko was able to remain airborne, but barely, and pointed toward England. With only two engines it was impossible to gain altitude, but that was protection from fighter attack. Across Germany and Holland the B-17 never exceeded a hundred feet in altitude, over the English Channel they were down to ten. At this level one of the dead engines came back to life and “Little Willie” climbed to 5000 feet and easily made Knettishall. The Flying Fortress had brought its crew home again.

*Editor: Renowned author Edward Jablonski used the chronicle of Little Willie to open his preface of “Flying Fortress—The Illustrated Biography Of The B-17s And The Men Who Flew Them,” published in 1965 by Doubleday & Company, Inc.*

*First flown by the Richard Obenschain crew (561st Sqd.), “Little Willie” was inherited by the Dopko crew. The mission described in Jablonski’s preface is the March 6, 1944 raid on Berlin. The B-17 underwent rapid repairs and flew again to Berlin on March 9, only to be shot down. Dopko and his crew spent the remainder of the war as POWs.*



The Dopko Crew

5-3

HEADQUARTERS  
388th BOMB GROUP (H)  
APO 634

November 16, 1943

SUBJECT: Malfunctions of Equipment, Mission of Nov 16th.

TO : Engineering Officer, 388th Bombardment Group (H).  
APO 634.

1. The following malfunctions of equipment were noted during the above mission, and are hereby submitted for your information.

<u>SHIP NO.</u>	<u>PILOT</u>	<u>MALFUNCTION</u>
084	Mouat	Both waist gunners suits and, gloves shorted out.
595	Olin	✓ Right waist gunner burnt out gloves.
866	Bernard	Guns froze, RW gun malfunction, and also left. Solenoid trouble both turrets.
555	Ingebritsen	✓ BT gunners gloves burn't out.
149	Wisehart	No heaters.
773	Joho	✓ WG electric boots out, and Bomb electric suit.
900	Swift	✓ RW gunners gloves burn't out.
661	Moore	✓ RW gunners electric gloves and boots out.
176	Obenschain	Equipment men forgot to short out circuit and suit didn't heat.
851	Penton	✓ BT gloves burn't out.
844	Todd	✓ RW gunners gloves burn't out.
285	Gunn	✓ BT shoes and gloves burn't out.

WALTER V. A. HARRISON  
Major, Air Corps,  
Intelligence Officer.

cy to S-3  
cy to Gp Equip O



## Look Familiar?

Hal Bigelow, a former pilot in the 560th Sqd., has sent in a wonderful batch of photos with this note:

"At the end of the war, I had 47 missions. Thus I did not come home with the Group. After they flew home, we had

the base to ourselves. We roamed the base and I looted the photo shop.

Please use these pictures the best way you can. Some have IDs, several do not. You may like to run them in a 'do you know this person's name' sort of thing in future issues."

The photos and Hal's note got us to thinking about the great number of

unidentified photos we actually have. So, starting with some of the photos from Hal's contribution, we're going to publish unidentified photos on a regular basis in hopes that someone will recognize them.

If you do recognize anyone, please drop a note or send a quick email to Jan Pack, newsletter editor. Any IDs we receive will be published in the following newsletter.



**A** upper left

**D** upper right



**E** center



**C** lower right



**B** lower left



# Mail Call



**Just received my summer**, '08 edition of the 388th newsletter.

W-O-W... the time and effort that Dick Henggeler and his daughter Dorothy put into the edits and corrections of Huntzinger's book is another case of their dedication to both this cause called the 388th, as well as a tribute to Dick's dad (and her grandfather) Frances J. "Hank" Henggeler and those that flew with him so many years ago. A true labor of love.

I again find myself thanking the Henggeler family from the Lakows, Margolins and the Stones, representing all sides of 1st Lt. Herb Lakow's family, for helping to keep Herb's spirit alive after all of these years.

But pleasant news sometimes is followed by that which is sad. In this case it was the passing of Lt. Col. Robert Simmon, who will also live in our hearts forever. If not for Bob's care and attention to detail, not to mention the heart of a lion, our family would have never been able to put the puzzle pieces together in finding out the true history of Herb Lakow's heroism, and as with so many, his untimely death.

I will be forever grateful to "Col. Bob" who led me to "the man" that provided our family with long-sought closure. That man was Col. Hank Henggeler who told me the actual story of that final mission on that "Black Thursday" and became part of the story printed in the Spring, 2001 edition of the newsletter.

Bob and I remained friends, writing and talking often, just "the kid from the big apple" to a true hero out in Cabot, AR. It's my fondest hope that he forever, "rests in peace."

Ron Stone

**Today is June 6**, and 64 years ago it was D-Day. June 5 had been our crew's last mission, so time goes ... but the memories stay. And the 388th newsletter came, all in a day, this time with the amended pages of *The 388th at War* – which brought up, for me, a whole raft of thoughts—mainly about my book *The Silver Lady*.

As you know, all the air scenes of the book had been based on the Moreland crew's combat record and memories; in fine, they are, so far as I could make them, recreate them, true—including the final raid in the book on Madgeburg, on the 28th of May 1944, our 25th mission.

That run had been most memorable in that we had been shot out of formation by flak over the target, plunged 500 feet, and then, catching, righted—and flew back to base on our two starboard engines, the two port engines having been blown out by the flak.

But there is not a shred of mention of this in *The 388th at War*; no evidence in the records of that long flight back on only two engines, and nothing on our having been shot out of formation over target (check page 117). The only evidence I have of its reality is a line by Arthur Moreland, the "Skipper," in a letter, that I had "caught the characters and events accurately," as he recalled them. The only other living member of the crew is Hayward Chapman who, if he remembers, can verify the authenticity of that event.

I wonder how Huntzinger had missed Moreland on the story of the Magdeburg run and, especially, our returning on two engines. For us, it had been most memorable.

Jim Facos

*Editor: Ball turret gunner on the Arthur Moreland crew in the 562nd Sqd., James Facos is a published author, playwright and poet living in Montpelier, VT. His novel "The Silver Lady," published in 1995, is now out of print.*

**On behalf of my father**, Robert Gill, I recently joined the 388th BG Association. I wish my interest now were as keen as when my father was alive, but that is another story we all can add chapters to.

Per requests in recent issues of the Newsletter I pass along items that may be of interest to the Group.

Attached is a photo of the Gill crew. The crew member names and positions were noted on the back of the image. In going over the Missing Air Crew Report I recently obtained I see that some crew members may have changed positions and that one member (Fisher) noted on the photograph was not among the crew that was shot down (replaced maybe by G. Sand?).

As an aside, it was fascinating reading accounts of the downing from both those crew members who evaded capture and of the Germans who captured crew members.

Lastly, I include something entitled "The Parable of the Birdmen" found among papers in my father's collection of items from throughout his military career. There is no authorship assigned to it, but it is an original typed document. I remember my father mentioning that since he had attended business college prior to joining the AAC and thus could type, he ended up having some auxiliary position in the squadron or group office. Unless someone else can claim authorship, I have to assume it was my father's doing, but, regardless, it seems like something worth sharing in the Newsletter.

Bob Gill

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12)



The Robert Gill Crew. Kneeling, l-r: Robert Gill, pilot; Hubert Bishop, co-pilot; Melvin Hanson, navigator; George Oliver, bombardier. Standing, l-r: John West, engineer/top turret gunner; John Thorpe, right waist gunner; Donald McKinney, radio operator; Theodore Poage, left waist gunner; Leon Stawasz, ball turret gunner; Donald Fisher, tail gunner.

## Parable of the Birdmen

**At one time** there dwelleth in the land of the Saxons, a group of strange men, who flitteth here and there in the sky, and madeth like the birds for such was their business: to bring succor and protection to their brethren, who lumbereth about on more unwieldy wings—and they were called birdmen. And one morning as the sun first shineth on the hut of the sleeping birdmen, the C.Q. entereth therein and he sayeth, “Arise for the time of briefing is at hand.” And he hastily departed for he was wise in the ways of the birdmen. And with much cursing and mumbling they arise and appeaseth their tender bellies on fish heads and rice, such was the way of their quartermaster who walketh about on paddled feet.

**Wherefore**, the birdmen wendeth their way to the briefing hut, wherein they beheld strange markings on the wall. Many and numerous were the Red Spots on the plan of the enemy’s stronghold, and their gaze felleth to the hands writing on the wall—for such it was—and they sayeth one unto the other, “No! This cannot be.” And there was much weeping and gnashing of teeth. And the sound of murmuring suddenly ceaseth as the Great Gray Owl entereth the room and he spake unto them saying, “Yea, verily Wing upon Wing of our big friends must go forth this day and assualteth the enemy, and let us not laggeth behind for he who stayeth is lost.” And there was one among them who was called S2 who claimeth to know the ways of the enemy. But, he speaketh to them in riddles and they believeth him not, but they sayeth one unto the other “Wherefore he speaketh thus, for he knoweth not the odds by which we all reapeth it in the end.” And yet still another spaketh to them of the winds and the clouds, but he confuseth them and they heedeth him not.

**As they leaveth** the briefing hut some enter the little house in great haste, and still others enter the big house in greater haste, thus they departeth to their winged steeds, wherein they entangled themselves in many hooks and straps after a confusing manner—and each of them was known unto the other by various color and numbers that they may knowth their places. And in this manner each after the other breaketh the bonds of earth—and one of them runneth fast but lifteth not for his R.P.M. runneth out. And the others wondereth at his good fortune. And still another returneth for his temperature riseth but he waxeth cold.

**And as they cometh** onto the appointed place their big friends are gone before them and the birdmen are troubled for lo! Their fuel dribbleth fast. And as they draw nigh onto target they beheld many and numerous flashes among them—And they weaveth and a swoopeth to escape the Flak for such it was called – And Red 1 calleth to the Gray Owl saying “Whither shall we turn—cans’t thou not lead us out?” “Oh, ye of little faith, who dost thou mummer against me?”

**And at this time** great multitudes of the enemy birdmen descendeth on the big friends. And the Forts were clobbered, for such was the custom in those days. And they calleth to the birdmen to come forth and give them succor, and they all came forth, save one, who came fifth for he speaketh of having a Folk-Wolfe on his tail whereupon each of the birdmen turneth this way and that way, and were lost one unto the other and great confusion reigneth. And Red 1 calleth to Red 2 saying “Wherefore are thou?” And Red 2 answereth saying “Lo and behold, I spinneth out and am lost to thee.” Then they said one unto the other, Hitteth the Silk”, and the white parasols fluttereth earthward.

**Finis**

*Copied verbatim by R. E. Gill, Jr. from an original undated and unsigned type script in the personal possessions of Col. Robert E. Gill, then 1st Lt., pilot, 562nd Sqd., 388th BG, 7 May–8 July 1944.*

# Mail Call, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

I just received the summer 2008 newsletter in the mail over here in Korea. It's a great read, and the updates to the 388th at War are an innovative addition.

Regarding the photograph on the cover, a little feedback. It is a Bell P-63 Kingcobra in French Air Force service pictured there, not a British fighter. Note the distinctive airscoop behind the cockpit and the antenna after that, as well as the heavily framed cockpit area and the tricycle landing gear (not a tail dragger). The markings are a French roundel with the bars similar to USAAF insignia.

Deliveries of production P-63As began in October 1943. Most of the 3,305 Kingcobras built were Lend Lease birds that served with the Russians (more than 70%—2,397 in number). About 300 served with the French Air Force, including 114 P-63Cs that arrived to late to serve in WWII. French Kingcobras were initially used in the Mediterranean and later for ground attack missions in the final offensives to liberate the channel ports from their die-hard German defenders.

Insofar as dating this picture, I am not sure when US aircraft went to the natural metal/aluminum finish, sometime in 1944 ... right? Presume aircraft delivered to the French changed at about the same time frame, whenever that was.

Anyway, just a little feedback on this pic, hope readers can identify the other folks there.

Terry Popravak

## Dear 388th Friends,

Whom I have admired from all the way across our nation for the amazing time, effort and love you have given all these years. Thank you so much!

If only my late husband Julian could have known you—but then, there were a lot of “if onlys” in our 57-year marriage.

August Bolino sent me a lot of information about the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah, GA. I was truly amazed to see that General Ira C. Eaker was known as the father of the Mighty Eighth. He graduated from the same small high school that I attended. He graduated in the early '20s. General

James Earl Rudder graduated there in 1927; I graduated in the class of 1937. General Rudder commanded the Rangers on D-Day—he and my brother, Col. Marian L. Farrar, were good friends.

Enclosed is a check in Julian's memory. God bless each and every one of you.

Mary Carr

(Editor: Mary is the widow of Julian “Tex” Carr, co-pilot on the Daniel Houghton crew in the 562nd Sqd.)



The Bell P-63 Kingcobra

## The Joy of Giving

By Henry and Betty Curvat

In previous articles we have been sharing, what we hope to be, many of the great enjoyments of Ogden, UT and this year's reunion. Now seems like an appropriate time to let the membership know just what it means to be an active part of the Association.

Yes, there is quite a bit of work involved in planning the reunions. But as time goes on, we learn ways to be more efficient and generate templates which will be used every year. But most of all it has been FUN!

The opportunity to create excitement and enjoyment for so many is the epitome of that age old saying, “It's better to give than to receive.” It is also our way of contributing to the preservation of history not to be forgotten. But we also view it on a more personal level, because we have a special connection to the original 388th BG members in a more intimate way, as a result of the opportunity to interact with so many.

We believe each of us feel the same way, regardless of our membership tie—family, friend, etc. After all, is this not the reason we all attend and maintain our membership in the Association? Is it not the greatness, unselfish sacrifice, and patriotism seen in these men that went to fight for our freedom that we are here to honor, and selfishly, have the opportunity to share a piece of their life with?

This has been, and continues to be, a great experience. In many ways there couldn't have been a more exciting year to assume the duties of reunion planners. Go to the Hill AF Base website and you will see that the lineage of the 388th Fighter Wing is traced back to the 388th Bombardment Group. It is a great thing to be a member of the 388th BG Association, but when one realizes that this was the beginning of a long-term group, there is much more to be celebrated. The 388th Bomb Group Association is the beginning of a great, great tradition.

So, we are here to “Honor, Respect, and Remember” the men who fought in WWII in the 388th Bombardment Group. Like the first president of the United States of America, they will never be forgotten. That is the reason we love to participate in the Association. We are honored to have the opportunity to carry on the message and share with others the greatness of these veterans. If not for their sacrifice it is not likely these words could have ever been written. Thank you for the freedom we know and share today!



Julian and Mary Carr



# Mail Call, CONTD. FROM PAGE 12

I am sending the obituary of my radio operator Jack Holt, which I received from his daughter Becky Weedman several months after his death in 2007.

I am also sending a crew picture taken at Hunter Field, Savannah, GA as we embarked for the 560th Bomb Sqd., 388th Bomb Group in January, 1944. I have marked those who have departed with a "d." I would like this to be placed in the next 388th newsletter if you don't mind.

Billy K. Faurot

As I recall, a number of my crew's (Oscar Hines, 561st) missions were flown through the so-called "flak corridor." I have always wondered what the "flak corridor" actually was. Was it in the thick of a forest? Too mountains to get guns there? I'd certainly appreciate an explanation, should someone care to write.

E. Robert Gipple

On reading the latest newsletter I notice that we have new members joining our Association, also many more sending in donations. As you know a few years back I sent out quite a few prints of Knettishall Air



Jack Barrett

Base (Station 136), the Memorial, and one with all the East Anglian air bases through the Second World War, free of charge to anyone writing from the States.

Would you please let people know that

this offer still stands? All I need is a letter with a return address enclosed, and the above-mentioned pages will be sent to the writer within days.

I feel sure there are lots of folk, young men and ladies, who wish to know where their loved ones served during WWII. Well, here's a Limey who can help them! This old lad, now 82 years young, helped build Station 136 (1942-44) before joining the Army.

I saw many aircraft come home with injured and dead on board. Those were exciting—and sad—days. I'm still very proud of all the lads who went off war and proved their worth (524 killed, many injured). Who needs reminding? We don't in East Anglia.

John H.G. Barrett  
3 Fernlands Close  
Chertsey, Surrey KT16 9PU  
United Kingdom



The Billy K. Faurot Crew at Hunter Field, GA. Standing, l-r: Edward Schoch, navigator (d); Byron Bland, bombardier; Billy K. Faurot, pilot; Charles Sullivan, co-pilot (d); kneeling, l-r: Jack Holt, radio operator (d); Roger Koenitzer, waist gunner (d); Steve Podolan, ball turret gunner (d); Robert Slockett, tail gunner (d); Roy Hurshey, engineer/top turret gunner.

## Taps



### Harry Arnold

Harry Q. Arnold passed away Dec. 23, 2007 in Cochocton, OH at age 83. He was ball turret gunner on the Charles Amolsch crew, 561st Sqd., flying in the aircraft *Our Love*.

Mr. Arnold is survived by Betty, his wife of 58 years; daughters Pam and Sheri; son Chris; and four grandchildren.

### Stanley Gifford

Word has been received of the death of Stanley E. Gifford of Crystal, MI. He was a pilot in the 560th Sqd.

### Jack Holt

Jack H. Holt died in Nashville, TN April 9, 2007. He was 82. Mr. Holt was radio operator on the Billy K. Faurot crew in the 560th Sqd.

A lifelong Nasvillian, he was retired from the Sanders Mfg. Co. and was an avid golfer and fisherman.

Survivors include wife Nelle; daughters Janelle Biter and Kathy Weedman; sons Sandy and Mark; and four grandchildren.

### Steve Krasicky, Sr.

Steve Krasicky, 86, died at Moses Cone Memorial Hospital in Greensboro, NC on April 4. He was 86.

Mr. Krasicky enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1943. Assigned to the Duane Adams crew in the 560th Sqd., he completed 35 missions as a waist gunner on the B-17 *Shoot the Works*.

He retired from Ford Motor Company with 27 years of service. In the fall of 2001, He and his wife Virginia visited the 388th Bomb Group Memorial where was interviewed by a local video broadcaster. The footage was included in a documentary about the 388th Bomb Group in Coney Weston.

The couple lived in Warren, MI for 42 years before moving to Greensboro in December 2006. Mr. Krasicky is survived by his wife Virginia, sons Dennis, Gary and and Steve; and four grandchildren.



# 388TH BG MISSIONS FLOWN

Date	Location	Date	Location	Date	Location	Date	Location	Date	Location	Date	Location
1 17-Jul-43	Amsterdam	54 7-Jan-44	Ludwigshafen	107 8-May-44	Berlin	160 12-Jul-44	Munich	213 18-Oct-44	Kassel	266 26-Feb-45	Berlin
2 24-Jul-43	Bergen	55 11-Jan-44	Brunswick	108 8-May-44	La Glacière	161 13-Jul-44	Munich	214 19-Oct-44	Mannheim	267 27-Feb-45	Leipzig
3 25-Jul-43	Wustrow	56 14-Jan-44	Crossbow Target	109 9-May-44	Juvincourt	162 14-Jul-44	Area 4 (France)	215 22-Oct-44	Munster	268 1-Mar-45	Ulm
4 26-Jul-43	Hanover	57 21-Jan-44	Crossbow Target	110 11-May-44	Brussels-Liege	163 16-Jul-44	Munich	216 25-Oct-44	Hamburg	269 2-Mar-45	Dresden
5 28-Jul-43	Oschersleben	58 24-Jan-44	Frankfurt	111 12-May-44	Brux	164 17-Jul-44	Houpeville	217 26-Oct-44	Hanover	270 3-Mar-45	Götersloh
6 29-Jul-43	Wamemunde	59 29-Jan-44	Frankfurt	112 13-May-44	Osnabruck	165 18-Jul-44	Kiel	218 30-Oct-44	Merseburg	271 4-Mar-45	Mission Recalled
7 30-Jul-43	Kassel	60 30-Jan-44	Brunswick	113 19-May-44	Berlin	166 19-Jul-44	Schweinfurt	219 2-Nov-44	Merseburg	272 5-Mar-45	Chemnitz/Plauen
8 12-Aug-43	Bonn	61 3-Feb-44	Wilhelmshaven	114 20-May-44	Brussels	167 20-Jul-44	Wetzlar	220 4-Nov-44	Neunkirchen	273 8-Mar-45	Langendreer/Giessen
9 15-Aug-43	Merville-Lille	62 4-Feb-44	Frankfurt	115 22-May-44	Kiel	168 24-Jul-44	St. Lo Area	221 5-Nov-44	Ludwigshafen	274 9-Mar-45	Frankfurt
10 16-Aug-43	Poix-Abbyville	63 5-Feb-44	Romilly	116 23-May-44	Caen	169 25-Jul-44	St. Lo Area	222 6-Nov-44	Duisburg	275 10-Mar-45	Dortmund
11 17-Aug-43	Regensburg	64 6-Feb-44	Romilly	117 24-May-44	Berlin	170 28-Jul-44	Merseburg	223 9-Nov-44	Saarbrücken	276 11-Mar-45	Hamburg
12 19-Aug-43	Woensdrecht	65 8-Feb-44	Frankfurt	118 25-May-44	Liege	171 29-Jul-44	Merseburg	224 10-Nov-44	Wiesbaden	277 12-Mar-45	Seigen
13 24-Aug-43	Evreux/Merignac	66 10-Feb-44	Brunswick	119 27-May-44	Strausbourg	172 31-Jul-44	Munich	225 11-Nov-44	Oberlahnstein	278 13-Mar-45	Hannover
14 24-Aug-43	Bordeaux	67 13-Feb-44	Crossbow Target	120 27-May-44	St. Valéry	173 1-Aug-44	Area 12 (France)	226 16-Nov-44	Area #2 (Germany)	279 15-Mar-45	Oranienburg
15 27-Aug-43	Watten	68 20-Feb-44	Poznan (Posen)	121 28-May-44	Magdeburg	174 2-Aug-44	Mery-Sur-Oise	227 25-Nov-44	Merseburg	280 17-Mar-45	Ruhland
16 31-Aug-43	Brussels/Evers	69 21-Feb-44	Brunswick	122 29-May-44	Leipzig	175 4-Aug-44	Hamburg	228 26-Nov-44	Hamm	281 18-Mar-45	Berlin
17 2-Sep-43	Brussels/Evers	70 24-Feb-44	Poznan (Posen)	123 30-May-44	Troyes-Reims	176 5-Aug-44	Magdeburg	229 29-Nov-44	Hamm	282 19-Mar-45	Zwickau
18 3-Sep-43	Meulan	71 25-Feb-44	Regensburg	124 31-May-44	Soest	177 6-Aug-44	Berlin	230 30-Nov-44	Lutzkendorf	283 20-Mar-45	Hannover
19 6-Sep-43	Stuttgart	72 29-Feb-44	Brunswick	125 2-Jun-44	Bologne	178 7-Aug-44	Fismes	231 4-Dec-44	Mainz	284 21-Mar-45	Rechtenberg
20 7-Sep-43	Watten	73 2-Mar-44	Chartres	126 2-Jun-44	Paris	179 8-Aug-44	Caen Area	232 5-Dec-44	Berlin	285 22-Mar-45	Frankfurt
21 9-Sep-43	Paris	74 3-Mar-44	Berlin	127 3-Jun-44	Bologne	180 9-Aug-44	Nurnburg	233 10-Dec-44	Koblenz	286 23-Mar-45	Hengstley
22 15-Sep-43	Paris	75 4-Mar-44	Berlin	128 4-Jun-44	Cape Gris Nez	181 11-Aug-44	Mulhouse	234 11-Dec-44	Giessen	287 24-Mar-45	Plantlunne
23 16-Sep-43	Bordeaux	76 6-Mar-44	Berlin	129 4-Jun-44	Paris	182 13-Aug-44	Seine River	235 12-Dec-44	Darmstadt	288 28-Mar-45	Hannover
24 26-Sep-43	Reims	77 8-Mar-44	Berlin	130 5-Jun-44	Cape Gris Nez	183 14-Aug-44	Ludwigshafen	236 15-Dec-44	Hanover	289 30-Mar-45	Hamburg
25 27-Sep-43	Emden	78 9-Mar-44	Berlin	131 6-Jun-44	Invasion Coast	184 16-Aug-44	Zeitz	237 24-Dec-44	Darmstadt	290 31-Mar-45	Zeitz
26 2-Oct-43	Emden	79 15-Mar-44	Brunswick	132 6-Jun-44	Invasion Coast	185 18-Aug-44	Bouron-Marlotte	238 28-Dec-44	Koblenz	291 4-Apr-45	Kiel
27 4-Oct-43	Frankfurt	80 16-Mar-44	Augsburg	133 6-Jun-44	Invasion Coast	186 24-Aug-44	Brux	239 30-Dec-44	Kassel	292 4-Apr-45	Kiel
28 4-Oct-43	Bremen	81 18-Mar-44	Augsburg	134 7-Jun-44	Nantes	187 25-Aug-44	Politz	240 31-Dec-44	Hamburg	293 5-Apr-45	Nurnburg
29 9-Oct-43	Gdynia	82 20-Mar-44	Frankfurt	135 8-Jun-44	Tours	188 26-Aug-44	Brest	241 2-Jan-45	Kaiserautern	294 6-Apr-45	Gera
30 10-Oct-43	Munster	83 22-Mar-44	Berlin	136 10-Jun-44	Berck Sur-Mer	189 27-Aug-44	Berlin	242 5-Jan-45	Hanau	295 7-Apr-45	Kaltenkirchen
31 14-Oct-43	Schweinfurt	84 23-Mar-44	Brunswick	137 11-Jun-44	Pontaubault	190 30-Aug-44	Bremen	243 6-Jan-45	Ludwigshafen	296 8-Apr-45	Grafenwohr
32 18-Oct-43	Duren	85 26-Mar-44	Crossbow Target	138 12-Jun-44	Amiens	191 3-Sep-44	Brest	244 7-Jan-45	Cologne	297 9-Apr-45	Munich-Reims
33 20-Oct-43	Duren	86 27-Mar-44	Bordeaux	139 14-Jun-44	St. Trond	192 5-Sep-44	Stuttgart	245 8-Jan-45	Lunebach	298 10-Apr-45	Zerbst
34 3-Nov-43	Wilhelmshaven	87 29-Mar-44	Chateaudun	140 15-Jun-44	Beauvoir	193 8-Sep-44	Mainz	246 10-Jan-45	Cologne	299 11-Apr-45	Donauworth
35 5-Nov-43	Gelsenkirchen	88 1-Apr-44	Ludwigshafen	141 18-Jun-44	Bremen	194 9-Sep-44	Dusseldorf	247 13-Jan-45	Bischofsheim	300 14-Apr-45	Royan
36 11-Nov-43	Munster	89 8-Apr-44	Achmer	142 19-Jun-44	Cognac	195 10-Sep-44	Nurnburg	248 15-Jan-45	Augsburg	301 15-Apr-45	Royan
37 13-Nov-43	Bremen	90 9-Apr-44	Poznan (Posen)	143 20-Jun-44	Magdeburg	196 12-Sep-44	Magdeburg	249 20-Jan-45	Rheine	307 1-May-45	Netherlands *
38 16-Nov-43	Rjukan	91 10-Apr-44	Courcelles	144 21-Jun-44	Ruhland (Frantic)	197 13-Sep-44	Darmstadt	250 21-Jan-45	Mannheim	308 2-May-45	Netherlands *
39 19-Nov-43	Gelsenkirchen	92 11-Apr-44	Poznan (Posen)	145 21-Jun-44	Berlin	198 17-Sep-44	Arnhem/Deolen	251 28-Jan-45	Hohenbudburg	309 3-May-45	Netherlands *
40 26-Nov-43	Bremen	93 13-Apr-44	Augsburg	146 22-Jun-44	Melun	199 19-Sep-44	Dillenburg	252 29-Jan-45	Bielefeld	310 5-May-45	Netherlands *
41 29-Nov-43	Bremen	94 18-Apr-44	Berlin	147 23-Jun-44	Nanteuil	200 21-Sep-44	Ludwigshafen	253 3-Feb-45	Berlin	311 6-May-45	Netherlands *
42 30-Nov-43	Soilingen	95 19-Apr-44	Lippstadt	148 24-Jun-44	Bremen	201 25-Sep-44	Ludwigshafen	254 6-Feb-45	Chemnitz	312 16-May-45	Europe **
43 5-Dec-43	Bordeaux	96 20-Apr-44	Calais	149 25-Jun-44	Area 5 (France)	202 26-Sep-44	Bremen	255 9-Feb-45	Giessen	313 19-May-45	Europe **
44 11-Dec-43	Emden	97 22-Apr-44	Hamm	150 29-Jun-44	Wittenberg	203 27-Sep-44	Mainz	256 14-Feb-45	Chemnitz	314 20-May-45	Europe **
45 13-Dec-43	Kiel	98 24-Apr-44	Fredrichshaven	151 4-Jul-44	Sully-Sur-Roine	204 28-Sep-44	Merseburg	257 15-Feb-45	Cottbus	315 25-May-45	Europe **
46 16-Dec-43	Bremen	99 25-Apr-44	Dijon	152 26-Jun-44	Drohobycz	205 2-Oct-44	Kassel	258 16-Feb-45	Hamm		
47 20-Dec-43	Bremen	100 26-Apr-44	Brunswick	153 3-Jul-44	Arad	206 3-Oct-44	Nurnburg	259 17-Feb-45	Hanau/Frankfurt		
48 24-Dec-43	Munster	101 27-Apr-44	Calais	154 5-Jul-44	Beziers	207 6-Oct-44	Berlin	260 20-Feb-45	Nurnburg		
49 22-Dec-43	Crossbow Target	102 29-Apr-44	Berlin	155 6-Jul-44	Feury	208 7-Oct-44	Bohlen	261 21-Feb-45	Nurnburg		
50 30-Dec-43	Ludwigshafen	103 30-Apr-44	Clemonot	156 6-Jul-44	Sauticourt	209 9-Oct-44	Mainz	262 22-Feb-45	Ulm		
51 31-Dec-43	Paris	104 1-May-44	Crossbow Target	157 7-Jul-44	Bohlen	210 14-Oct-44	Cologne	263 23-Feb-45	Ansbach		
52 4-Jan-44	Munster	105 1-May-44	Meiz	158 8-Jul-44	Mantes-Gassicourt	211 15-Oct-44	Cologne	264 24-Feb-45	Bremen		
53 5-Jan-44	Bordeaux	106 7-May-44	Berlin	159 11-Jul-44	Munich	212 17-Oct-44	Cologne	265 25-Feb-45	Munich		

\* Chowhound

\*\* Revival



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

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RELATIONSHIP TO YOU \_\_\_\_\_

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PHONE: 253-719-8314

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