

The Ragged Irregular



322nd SQDN



323rd SQDN



SUPPORTING UNITS



324th SQDN



401st SQDN

Vol. 21, No. 2

91st Bombardment Group (H) Newsletter

April 1988

COL "MANNY" J. KLETTE, RECORD SETTER, DIES



Col. 'Manny' J. Klette, 91st BG(H) 324th Bomb Sq CO (1944 Photo).

DR IMMANUEL J "MANNY" KLETTE, 69, DIED FEB 12, 1988 IN VA.

Members of the 91st BGMA knew him as Colonel "Manny" Klette, the remarkable CO of the 324th Bomb Sq from July 30, 1944 until the end of the European War, and a dedicated Association member.

Lengthy obituaries listing his life-time achievements identified him as a "distinguished scientist and advisor." John L. Frisbee, writing in the May 1986 edition of AIR FORCE Magazine, said Col Klette's wartime record merited more than the 800 odd words in his article. "It deserves a book," Frisbee said.

Available material on Col Klette's wartime record indicates that book would have to be a thick one - and detailed recording of his other achievements would fill other thick volumes.

His WWII combat record earned him a reputation he never sought - "a leader who displayed exceptional valour." He would have preferred the "scientist-advisor" description because he studiously applied his analytic and leadership talents to the air war from his initial co-pilot assignment with the 306th BG till he concluded his war services as CO of the 91st's 324th Bomb Sq.

Though he sustained doctor diagnosed permanent crippling injuries while making a landing during instrument conditions into an English Forest on 23 Sep 1943, Col Klette refused to go home. While recuperating he sought and secured an

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BASSINGBOURN "50th" FESTIVITIES BECKON 91STERS BACK

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SERVICES 1938 Occupation of Basingbourn is being commemorated in various ways this year.

LTC M K Goldschmidt, Commander, has extended a cordial invitation to all former 91sters to participate. The most fitting event for a large number of returnees is Saturday, July 2, 1988. It is listed as "Open Day" and will include aircraft and military displays. A History Booklet, which will include the 91st wartime years at Station 121, is being prepared. Other memorabilia which includes Commemorative Envelopes, is being prepared to celebrate Basingbourn's anniversary as a military base.

LTC Goldschmidt also suggests that 91st BGMA members who plan to attend can contribute to the success of the affair by notifying him as soon as possible of their intent. Those wishing to attend must make their own travel arrangements, as no 91st BGMA tour group is being arranged.

A Cocktail Party and Military Bands "Beat Retreat" is also planned for Friday, June

Continued on Page 3

THE COLONEL'S LETTER

Lieutenant Colonel M K Goldschmidt R. ANGLIAN



01/128

Lt Col Paul Chrysal (Ret)
President
91st Bomb Group(H) Memorial Association Inc
1424 No Adams Street
Pottstown, PA 19664
USA

DEPT. THE QUEEN'S DIVISION
BASSINGBOURN BARRACKS
ROYSTON
HERTS. SG8 5LX
Telephone: 04564 42271
Basingbourn Hq. 01220

2 November 1987

Dear Paul

Thank you for your letter dated 21 October relating to 1988.

You are indeed correct to remember that 1988 is the 50th Anniversary of the Services' Occupation of Basingbourn. We plan to commemorate that significant milestone in various ways:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| Sunday 27 March | A Church Service of Rededication after 50 years and a day since the arrival of the RAF. |
| Friday 10 June | Cocktail Party, and Military Bands "Beat Retreat". |
| Saturday 2 July | Open Day, including aircraft and military displays. |
| Thursday 13 October | VIP visit to attend recruits' Passing Out Parade and open new Accommodation Buildings. |

The most appropriate event for large numbers to attend would be the Open Day. The 27 March Church Service is likely to be constrained by the seating capacity of the Church (212). The 10 June Party will be by specific invitation: if any of your people would like an invitation, please let me know.

I am also having produced a History Booklet describing the 50 years which, inter alia, draws on the "unofficial history" you sent me with your recent letter. There will be other memorabilia, including Commemorative Envelopes.

We would of course be only too delighted to welcome the "previous tenants of their 'second home'" in Golden Jubilee Year or at any time. Just keep in touch over your plans. On current projection, I shall be here throughout 1988.

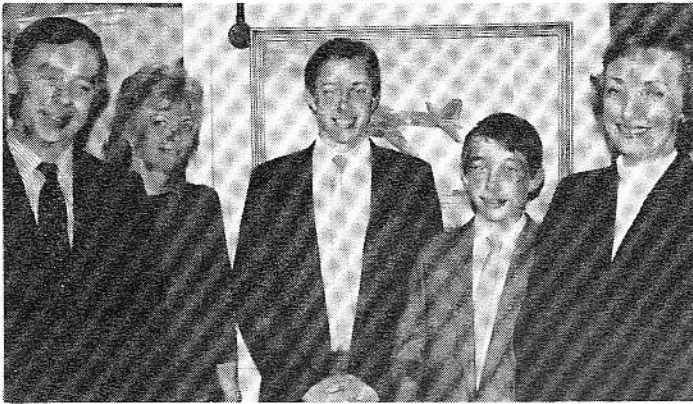
I am copying this to David Crow to keep him in the picture.

Copy to:
David Crow Esq

Yours sincerely
Michael Goldschmidt

POTPOURRI

ENGLAND



Recent pleased visitors at the Basingbourn Control Tower Museum were (L-R) The Honorable and Mrs Edward Kruser, Consulor for Consular Affairs, US Embassy, London, and Mrs Gwen Burfield (far right) who was accompanied by her two sons (center).

THE CONTINUING DEVOTION AND ENTHUSIASTIC dedication of the 91st BGMA's English friends is heartening. Long ago, in 1963, General Stanley T Wray dedicated the cornerstone of the Royston Memorial Fountain. Fourteen people attended that small beginning of English contributions to the preservation of the 91st BG's proud past. It was possible then to identify each one and record the progress of their projects and activities.

Today we are dismayed that there is so much news from our English friends, along with other submissions that it all cannot be immediately printed in the R/I's eight page format. It is hoped the following will partially atone for our seemingly neglect of English activities:

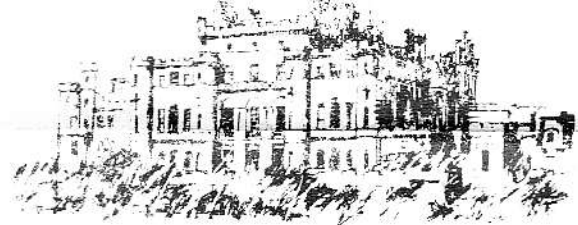
VINCE HEMMINGS, WHO HEADS THE EAST ANGLIA Aviation Society, can correctly be compared to the Memphis Belle's defender, Frank Donofrio. Hemmings' efforts saved and converted the Basingbourn Control Tower into a 91st BG Museum. He holds a responsible position in the British Aerospace Program from which it is difficult to absent himself during the week. Weekends, however, find him and his committee friends unselfishly devoting hundreds of hour to fund raising activities to support the "Tower Museum." The contribution of one 91st BGMA member of more than 500 duplicated prints pertaining to the 91st history has helped raise funds for Hemmings' group. Enlargements of the photos are sold at local air shows.

Hemmings' group keeps busy winters on 91st research projects, lecturing, giving film shows and planning for the even more hectic times warm weather brings. Though all Tower Museum visitors are treated as VIPs, the museum's memorabilia attracts many from officialdom. Among the recent ones were Counselor for Consular Affairs Edward Kreuser and his wife from the US Embassy, London.

Confirmation of Hemmings' group's dedication to maintaining and operating Tower Museum would be redundant. Nevertheless, the pertinency of an R/I pigeon-holed 10 Sep 87 letter from former TSgt Andrew Suppo of the 322nd Bomb Sq and Danville NJ clamors for inclusion. Suppo wrote that he and his wife, while touring England in June 1987, contacted Hemmings for a Tower Museum tour. Since the Suppo's were leaving the area early the next day, Suppo notes, Hemmings and three of his associates on very short notice opened the museum at 7pm. "They were especially nice to us considering the short notice we gave them," says Suppo.

Suppo, who completed his tour on Capt Frederick Ellis' crew, recommends that Hemmings be given adequate prior notice of intentions to visit the museum so that a more leisurely study and appreciation can be made of the memorabilia displayed.

Donations by 91st BGMA members to the Tower Museum have been "very generous," Hemmings says. But, he suggests donations be sent in "dollars" because English bank charges are "enormous." Hemmings lives with his wife in Letchworth.



Culzean Castle, A Scot Historical site, seeks 91st BG (H) "nose Art" photos for display.

JOHN FLEMING, OF SCOTLAND, WRITES THAT "The people of the 'West' of Scotland" gave General Eisenhower three rooms in the Culzean Maybole Ayrshire Castle in gratitude for what US Service men did for the "Scots" in WWII. Recently Fleming added to the exhibits in the "General Eisenhower Rooms" by presenting the historic museum with an 18 x 24 inch photo of the 91st's B-17 GENERAL "IKE." Michael L Telbutt, administrator of Culzean Castle, a Scotch historical site whose patron is Her Majesty The Queen Mother.

The Queen Mother, promises display of the GENERAL "IKE" photo as well as "any nose art photos of the 91st BG you (Fleming) can secure." Those able to assist in this worthy project should write: Mr John Fleming, 40 Munro Ave, Kilmarnok, Ayrshire, Scotland KAI:2NT.

DAVID CROW, WHO HEADS THE FRIENDS OF THE 91ST, was instrumental in securing permission to construct the Prop Memorial located just inside the Basingbourn Barracks Main Gate. He has now turned his efforts toward the maintenance of this

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REQUIRED 1988 CONVENTION BUSINESS PROCEDURES

THE ELECTION OF 91ST BGMA OFFICERS WILL be held at the Aug 31-Sep 5 1988 National Reunion in Chicago. Members wishing to be candidates or wishing to nominate others for any office will facilitate the Business Meeting by complying with the following:

1. To qualify for any 91st BGMA office the candidate must be a Current (1988) Dues Paid Regular or Life Member (Associate Members are not eligible for office), and

2. Candidate names must be sent to the Chairman of the Nominations/Elections Committee who will verify the Nominee's qualifications for the office sought and willingness to accept the position if elected by sending him a 91st BGMA "Nomination for Association Office" form (elsewhere in this issue) for completion and verification. Nominations, including current officers who intend to run for office again, should reach the Nominations/Elections Chairman (Les Walshaw by 25 May 1988.

It is imperative that the Nominations/-Elections Committee Chairman be notified of all nominations, proposed changes to the By-Laws, or any other business requiring a membership vote by 25 May 1988 so that ~~ABSENTEE BALLOTS~~, containing the names of all candidates and other business requiring a membership vote can be published with the July 1988 issue of the Ragged Irregular.

These ~~ABSENTEE BALLOTS~~ may be mailed in by qualified members who will not be present at the Chicago Reunion. ~~ABSENTEE BALLOTS~~ must be received by the Election Committee Chairman Les Walshaw, address - 8245 Waldenwoods Way, Loomis CA 95650, no later than 10 August 1988.

POTPOURRI

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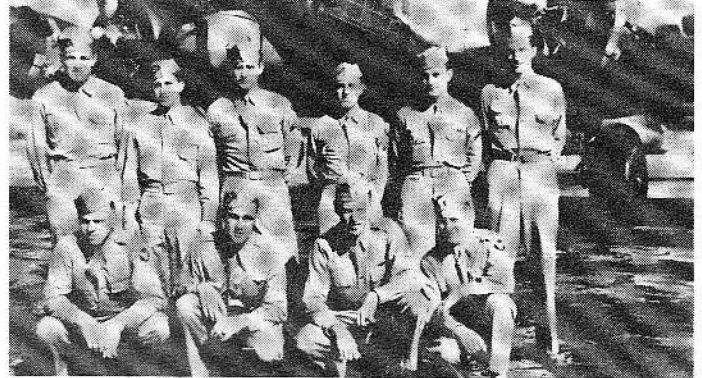
memorial to all who served with the 91st.

He is one of the Administrators of the Prop Memorial Maintenance Fund which he originated with the support of Sir Alexander Reid, and has continued with each Basingbourn Barracks Commander. The Fund is active and held in Lloyds' Bank, Baldock Branch and is used to maintain the memorial and carefully tended shrubbery, garden and grass plot surrounding it. The care of the Prop Memorial requires the diligent dedication which Crow unselfishly gives. Members of the 91st BGMA are urged to support the Fund and Crow's efforts to keep the memory of their wartime stay at Basingbourn alive.

Crow is also the contact for the 355 FG Assn. formerly active in Steeple Morden, where he and his wife Valerie live.

CORRECTION

IN LISTING THE SEVEN CREW MEMBERS WHO lost their lives in the fall of MAN-O-WAR and MISS SLIPSTREAM in the Jan 88 issue the R/I inadvertently recorded only five. The other two were Frank W Holman, Radio Gunner, and William K Oxby, Ball Turret Gunner of the MAN-O-WAR.



FIVE MONTHS BEFORE THEIR FALL DALE BRANT AND HIS CREW POSED FOR THIS JULY 44 Photo while training at Alexandria Air Field, LA. MISS SLIPSTREAM, their 322 Sq plane, was downed during the 2 November 1944 Merseberg raid. ILts Brant and Warren Gustafson were killed in action.

Reading L-R standing are: TSgt John H Ludwig (Top Turret), TSgt John W Pleuse (Radio Operator), SSgt James Willey (Waist Gunner), SSgt Charles R Hitchcock (Ball Turret), SSgt George Grashoff (Tail Gunner), and SSgt Jim Ballantine (Waist Gunner).

Kneeling, L-R: 1Lt Dale Brant (Pilot), 2Lt Charles R Hackstock (Co-Pilot), 2nd Lt John Bunch Jr (Bombardier), and 1Lt Warren Gustafson (Navigator).

A SSgt Smith, flying his 78th mission, substituted for the temporarily reassigned Grashoff on the fateful day. Ballantine was reassigned in the States when crew complements were reduced to nine men. Accounts of MISS SLIPSTREAM's fall appeared in the Jan 88 R/I.

BASSINGBOURN BECKONS

Continued from Page 1

10, 1988. Association members can be accommodated at this event, but LTC Goldschmidt cautions that participation is by specific invitation only. The invitations are necessary for proper planning. To obtain an invitation Contact LTC Goldschmidt at the address listed below.

Seating restrictions and the nature of March 27 and October 13, 1988 events unfortunately will not permit encouraging attendance beyond that already determined possible.

However, a big warm welcome from friends of the 91st BGMA awaits those who attend either the 10 June 88, Cocktail Party activities, or the 2 July 88, "Open Day" activities.

If you plan to attend either one or both of the above listed activities, please write and notify: LTC M K Goldschmidt, Depot, The Queen's Division, Basingbourn Barracks, Royston, Herts. SG8 5LX, England. Tel: Royston 42271, Basingbourn Military Extension 230 or 430.

PRESERVE OUR PROUD PAST

BOOK REVIEWS

"THE MEMPHIS BELLE" BOOK PRESERVES 91ST HISTORY

THE MEMPHIS BELLE. MENNO DUERKSEN, Castle Books Inc. PO BOX 17262, Memphis, TN 38187. Hardcover - \$15.95, Softcover \$9.95, plus \$1 handling/postage charge required on all orders.

HERE'S THE BOOK we've been waiting for. It's a must for those interested in 91st BG (H) history. "THE MEMPHIS BELLE," written by Menno Duerksen and published by The Memphis Belle Association, became available in February, 1988.

Duerksen's book details the exciting story of the 324th Bomb Sq's world famous plane, those who flew her, those

who serviced her and many, many others associated with her during the early days of 91st history.

The 364 pages of bright, easy to read print contain vivid accounts never before recorded. (The author interviewed all the surviving original MEMPHIS BELLE crew members as well as others who flew her between Nov 42, and May 43. Some 10 pages of historical photos increase the book's appeal.)

The 364 pages of bright, easy to read print contain vivid accounts never before recorded. (The author interviewed all the surviving original MEMPHIS BELLE crew members as well as others who flew her between Nov 42 and May 43. Some 10 pages of historical photos increase the book's appeal.) The Memphis Belle Memorial Association has arranged special rates for 91st BGMA purchasers of the book. To obtain them, identify yourself as a member of the 91st BGMA when ordering. The hard cover book is \$15.95; the soft cover version is \$9.95. Add one dollar (\$1) for either book ordered to cover postage and handling costs. Proceeds from all sales will be used to maintain THE MEMPHIS BELLE and her new museum home on Mud Island on the Mississippi River at Memphis, TN.

Orders for books should be sent to: THE MEMPHIS BELLE MEMORIAL ASSN., ATTN: Frank Donofrio, PO BOX 1942, Memphis, TN 338101. Allow three weeks for delivery.



"HOME AT LAST"

ARTISTIC PHOTOS MARK NEW WARBIRD BOOK

GHOSTS: VINTAGE AIRCRAFT OF WORLD WAR II. Compiled by JEFFREY ETHELL; Photos by PHILIP MAKANANA. Hardbound - 12 x 10 1/4", 120 pages, 73 color and 23 B/W photos - \$36. Order from: Thomason-Grant, One Morton Drive, Suite 500, Charlottesville, Va 22901.

FROM 1939 TO 1945, THE MAJOR COMBATANTS OF WORLD WAR II produced nearly 750,000 of what we today call Warbirds. Sadly only a few of these planes still fly.

While aviation in general holds great fascination for the public, what definitely grabs their attention are the Warbirds. These rare aircraft come alive each year due to the heavy investments owners make in time, effort and money to keep their mounts in excellent flying shape.

These fire-breathing machines have beauty and grace, with a roaring brute power that make memories and imaginations soar. They bring to mind a time when the United States was unquestionably the richest, most powerful nation in the world.

These historic airplanes grow more popular every year, and are high on the list of requirements by every airshow committee chairman across the country, indeed, the world. Warbirds are a sure draw. And as their popularity increases, so does the available literature on them.

Several years ago, it would have been difficult to find any publications on aircraft. Now most book stores carry a cross-section of current aviation titles. New to the scene are the artistic picture books that display the aircraft in their natural element, the air. The best of these is GHOSTS: VINTAGE AIRCRAFT OF WORLD WAR II.

Since 1976 Philip Makanana has been working his way up in the very competitive world of Warbird photography to the point where he has gained the respect of his peers. As a Warbird photographer myself, I can attest to the quality and skill of his work. He has aptly demonstrated those abilities here.

His beautiful full color photographs of restored bombers, fighters, and trainers are contrasted by black-and-white wartime archival photos, often of the same aircraft type, only viewed across 40 years. Makanana's images are refreshing, and the aircraft are photographed from angles that show their lines to good effect, with an attempt to match color schemes and landscapes. I tend to get annoyed by books full of uninspired photographs taken from the same tired angle, page after page of head-on views. This, of course, also tends to hide the markings and artwork on these magnificent airplanes, many meticulously researched for accuracy.

As a writer who is also a pilot, Jeffrey

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BOOK REVIEWS

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Ethell brings a knowledgeable insight to his articles on aviation. He regularly flies current military aircraft like the F-15, F-16, and F/A-18. Also qualified in Warbirds, Ethell flies the P-51, F4U, B-17, and B-25, among others. With vast contacts through his work as a historian and writer, he has given the book a special flavor by providing recollections and anecdotes by some of the war's participants.

The foreword is written by Chuck Yeager. The famed test pilot recalls some interesting things about his experiences during the Second World War, where he became an Ace. He was later to become the first man to fly faster than the speed of sound.

Further information on each aircraft can be found in the reference section at the back of the book. It contains brief descriptions, flight specification, and there-view drawings. Complaints? One would have to look hard to find any. However, it would have been nice to identify the pilots in each photo. After all, they are the ones who truly make this book possible.

That aside, this is the best book of its type on the market. So make sure there is room for this marvelous book on your coffee table. It is delightful.

-ROBERT S DeGROAT

323RD'S BIRDSONG'S BOOK, "DELTA REBEL," DUE SOON

ASSOCIATION MEMBER GEORGE P BIRDSONG, COL USAF (Ret), former pilot of the DELTA REBEL, and author of numerous newspaper and magazine military articles, is presently revising portions of his book. Encompassing the 1942-43 period, his book begins with the formation of the DELTA REBEL's crew. Among those supplying personal data and anecdotes are Gene Rimmell, Harry (Kulchesky) Kool, Ernie Miller, Steve Perri, B Z Byrd, and the widows of former crew members Maggie Abb and Lois Petersen.

Space permitting, the R/I plans to publish the sample chapter Col Birdsong has released for perusal by 91st BGMA members. For now, a few paragraphs of that chapter dealing with an early Bremen mission follow:

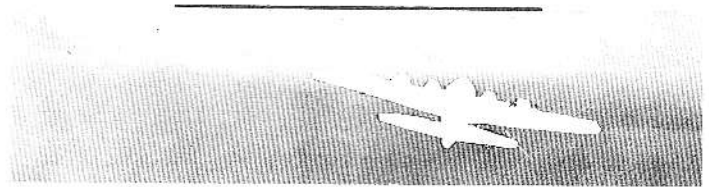
"The paint jobs on the 190's and 109's were becoming quite artistic, as the mottled green-grey camouflage that had been standard before, was being replaced with pure pastel blues and greens with varied colored trim. One of the Jerry fighters was snow white, with brilliant red trim on the wing tips and tail. Others wore a silver-metallic, blue coat which could be seen from a great distance when the angle with the sun was right. The enemy

interceptors always reminded me of tropical fish in a clear aquarium, nosing upward when surface fed."

"I glanced to the low squadron to see if they had also dropped, but was horrified by seeing all six B-17s going down, like crippled geese! Several batteries must have had them zeroed in, and the entire squadron (401st) was shot out of the sky! Sixty airmen! All in a matter of seconds!"

Like the recently released book, "The MEMPHIS BELLE," Birdsong's book will be a must for all who remember, wish to refresh or seek to know the 91st's "Proud Past."

Between final revisions of this book and publisher negotiations, Birdsong has completed several chapters of another book on his experiences while flying fighter/-bombers during the Vietnam conflict.



TO A FALLEN FRIEND

The Lord looked down and saw you fall.
No longer will you answer the flight line call,
Nor hear the Flying Fortress engines roar,
Or see the blood and hate of war.

You ventured forth on a noble quest
To challenge the Luftwaffe's far-famed best.

The sky was filled with bursting flak
Followed by a Messerschmitt attack.

They came spurting fire out of the sun,
You were their target, your life was done.

War with its glory, war with its shame,
Wrote you last chapter in smoke and flame.

You flew the mission without regret,
A mission most mortal men will soon forget.

But rest in peace, you will get your due,
In eternal skies that are always blue.

Yes, await the call from God, again to fly
With an Angel Squadron in the Heavenly Sky.

1LT RICHARD T PRESSEY, PILOT
401st SQUADRON, 91st BG(H)
BASSINGBOURN, ENGLAND
MAY 1944

The above poem was written by former 401st pilot Richard T Pressey of Lake Oswego, OR who recently salvaged it from "fragmented" war records. Subsequent correspondence with the R/I revealed his "Fallen Friend" was Thornton Tilton, also of the 401st. Some six months after writing his poem Pressey heard Tilton, who died a few years ago, had survived the battle and was taken prisoner. Pressey believes Tilton was lost on a 27 Apr 44 Cherbourg raid. Later, Pressey, while flying a spare plane on 27 May 44 to Ludwigshaven, received the attention of the Luftwaffe. "We lost our two port engines," he says, "and were lucky to make a forced landing just over the Swiss border." Pressey's regular plane was ROUND TRIP TOPSY.

COL KLETTE

Continued from Page 1

assignment to Operations Section at the USSTAF where he obtained more information on enemy capabilities, tactics, and equipment. As soon as he regained full use of his legs he requested and was reinstated to flying status after the invasion of France. The 8th AF High Command would not permit him to expose himself to possible capture sooner because he knew too much about the invasion plans.

In July 44, Col Henry Terry, 91st Commander, welcomed Klette to his Basingbourn based command. Klette, with 28 missions behind him and "probably the most knowledgeable combat pilot in the whole 8th AF," resumed his combat career as CO of the 324th Bomb Sq.

As the 324th CO, he flew every mission he could, particularly those targets where the potential dangers were great. His continuing determination to do the job with minimum losses was apparent. Members of the 91st noted he studied intelligence reports and briefing data longer and more thoroughly than any other pilot on the base. He varied routes to avoid suspected flak traps. He developed a procedure for evading radar-controlled barrages by counting seven seconds after bomb release and then turning slowly left or right into a very steep bank. Those and other tactics produced one of the 10 Klette "records" most pleasing to him - the least losses in his group while leading a group, division, task force, or the entire 8th AF. (During 37 leads only two aircraft were lost in his group.)

For Group Commander Col Terry, however, Klette posed a problem. Terry felt that Klette flew so much that he (Klette) wasn't paying enough attention to administration or staff meetings. In an article from an unidentified source, Terry is quoted as saying, "I asked him to stay on the ground more but he still continued to go. I got my dander up and ordered him only to go when his turn to lead came up. He still went. What the hell are you going to do with a man like that? He'd give me that ready smile and all I could do was chew him

out and let him go.

At the end of the war, Klette, with a record total of 91 combat missions, was the last 91st pilot to leave Basingbourn. He commanded the air echelon until it was disbanded at Drew Field. At that time he is remembered as a "serious, cheerful 27 year-old" who "it was hard to believe was someone extraordinary." He displayed no bravado nor had he sought to set records - but his intangible desire to help get the job done had precluded delegating personally perceived obligations to others.

His academic background included a degree in economics and an honorary Doctor-of-Laws degree from Gettysburg College and a Doctorate in International Relations from Georgetown University. He also graduated from the Air War College with the 1958 class and the National War College 1962 class.

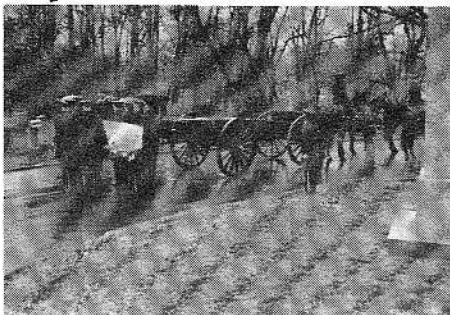
Space does not permit the listing of the varied important posts he filled in later years. A few, however, are: Director of Plans for the US Military Command, Latin America in 1964; Chief of Policy for the NATO activity in Southern Europe in 1954; NATO Advisor to the Turkey General Staff and an economist responsible for the reestablishment of war ravaged industries in Europe and Asia.

Klette's positions required extensive travels and lecturing to 85 countries. He authored numerous articles and the book "From Atlantic to Pacific: A New Inter-oceanic Canal."

In 1985 his war record made news again. The 50th Anniversary of the first flight of the B-17 Flying Fortress was celebrated by the Boeing Aircraft Company. Included in the 150,000 people in attendance were 12,000 WWII combat aircrew and support personnel. Col Klette was singled out by Boeing officials from that vast audience for having flown more bombing missions as a B-17 pilot than any one else. A planned, new Boeing Museum will display for posterity a plaque commemorating the ten WWII Combat Records set by Klette.

Such records deserve permanent recording. It is hoped, however, his selfless devotion

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A cold rain added to the solemnity of Col "Manny" J Klette's full military burial service at the Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington VA on 19 Feb 88. In the left photo USAF personnel prepare to carry the casket to the grave site. (Plastic protects the flag from the rain.) The center photo shows the USAF Honor Guard which honored Col Klette. A portion of the 91st B5NAers

attending the ceremonies assembled for the photo on the right. L-R (foreground) are: Pres Paul Chryst, Frank Donofrio, of the Memphis Belle Memorial Assn, and Joe Caselleri. In the rear are: Sec Whit Hill, Elmer Perry, and John "Long John" Parsons.

COL KLETTE

Continued from Page 6

to supporting the 91st BGMA will also survive. Those who attended the 1986 Tampa, FL Reunion will forever remember his impassioned plea for unity.

Also the existence of numerous articles in the R/I files pertaining to him are indisputable testimony to his humility. He never pressed for their publication - preferring they be held and used whenever "space permitted."

Indicative of the fullness of his life was his reply to a question presented by Hiliary "Bud" Evers, Association VP and Historian, during a telephone conversation a few days before Klette died, as to whether he needed anything. "I have everything - more than I need," "Manny" replied.

Col Klette's survivors include two sons, John C, and Charles E Klette; two step-children Rosa L Richards and Jesse B Unger; a brother, Vernon Klette and five grandchildren.

He was buried with full military honors in the Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington VA on 19 Feb 1988.

COL KLETTE'S RECORDS

1. Most heavy bombardment missions by a pilot in the European Theatre Of Operations (ETO) - 91.
2. Most heavy bombardment missions worldwide by a pilot of a B-17 - 91.
3. Most heavy bombardment missions by a pilot flying as formation leader in the ETO - 73.
4. Most heavy bombardment combat hours by a pilot in the ETO - 689 hours and 25 minutes.
5. Most heavy bombardment combat hours by a pilot flying as formation leader in the ETO - 572 hours and 25 minutes.
6. First heavy bombardment pilot in the ETO to fly more than 25 missions.
7. First heavy bombardment pilot in the ETO to return from a combat mission and land on one engine (three were feathered) and one tire (one tire was flat).
8. First B-17 pilot in the ETO to pull out of a spin over enemy territory and return safely to home base.
9. First heavy bombardment pilot in the ETO to crash land a B-17 on instruments at night in a forest and the entire nine-man crew survived.
10. Least losses in his group while leading a group, division, tasks force, or the entire 8th AF - 37 leads, two aircraft lost in his group.

Folded Wings

• BEANBLOSSOM, KEITH, 323rd, formerly of Jeffersonville, IN; May 1976. Reported by his wife, Rosemary, who writes he completed a 30 mission tour with Bill Reynolds and Fred Parkins of MERRY WIDOW's crew. He flew two additional missions to allow his original crew to finish together.

• BOSSERT, HARLYN L, 401st, 4646 S 76th St #206 Greenfield WI 53220. Reported by the U S Postal Service.

• BRINEGAR, JESS L, 324th, 628 S Magnolia, Brea, CA 92621; Jan 31, 1988. Reported by his wife, Gene, and friend Bruce Bowles, 323rd NINE-O-NINE pilot.

• CORNELL, DONALD, 322nd, Cambridge MN; July 19, 1987. Reported by his son John, who writes that because of his father's short stature he volunteered to fly Ball Turret position during his tour with ACK TACK ANNIE's crew during the summer of 1944.

• DONOVAN, MICHAEL F, 401st, 8743 Binney Dr, Warren, MI 48093-1620; Sep 1986. Reported by his daughter, Mary Ellen McCaffrey.

• DORN, PHILLIP R, 401st, 1600 Mountain Gap Circle, Birmingham, AL 35226; Mar 12, 1987. Reported by Association member Mathias G Pettera.

• DRELLA, URBAN M, 322nd, Rt 1, Box 108, Seymour, WI 54165; Jan 1, 1988. Reported by his wife, Marcella, and Life Member Charles T Bell, who recalls Urban as a MSGT Crew chief who serviced his B-17 SUPERSTITIOUS ALOYSIOUS.

• GIBBON, SAMUEL Y, 324th, 641 Roundtree Dr, Longboat Key, FL 33548; June 8, 1987. Reported by his wife through a friend, Penny Stith.

• KLETTE, IMMANUEL J, Col USAF (Ret), 324th, Rt 2, Box 302, Lovettsville, VA 22080; Feb 12, 1988. Reported by family friend Mr Garry Hooper.

• RUSSELL, JOHN, 323rd, 5 Oak Knoll Rd, Red Oak, IA 51566; Feb 1, 1988. Reported by his wife Helen.

REUNION - AIRSHOW

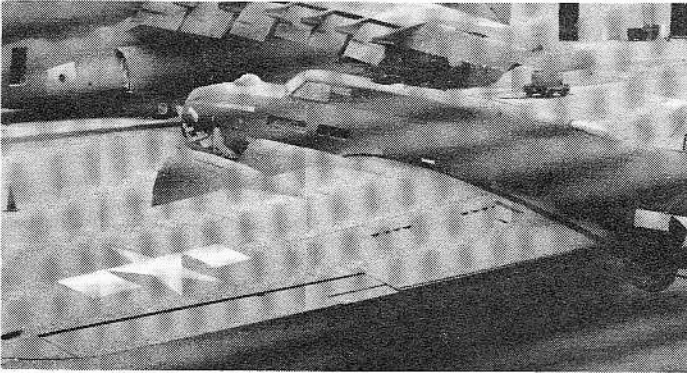
Continued from Page 8

Trainer Association, etc will participate in a trainer Fly-in and competition.

The week of 15 August will have flying and static displays as well as a "Fly Market." Over 70 World War II vintage aircraft will be featured, including a gathering of all available flying B-17s, and possibly the only flying Lancaster Bomber outside of England.

For further information write the National Warplane Museum, PO Box 159, Geneso, NY 14454, or call 716 243-0690.

MCDUFFEE'S "SHOO SHOO BABY" NEARS FLIGHT TESTING



LOOKIN' GOOD!! The result of dedicated and professional restoration work is readily discernible in this latest photo of another famous 91st B-17 - SHOO SHOO BABY.

It is reported that the plane draws 10,000 visitors annually to the Dover AFB, DE. In the background is one of today's cargo aircraft, a C-141.

AIR RESERVE TECHNICIANS AT THE DOVER AFB report exciting progress regarding the ten year restoration of another famous 91st plane, the 401st's SHOO SHOO BABY.

She has been moved out of her hanger and positioned for installation of her plexiglass nose, engines and props. After assembly completion, flight-line testing will precede flight tests. The tentative goal is to have her participate in an August 1988 Glen Miller Celebration at Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton Ohio. Eventual plans call for her being housed in the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson.

In November 1987 the Delaware VA Medical and Regional Office sponsored a tour and luncheon at the Dover AFB for "forgotten veterans" - women who served in the Armed forces during WWII. Among the 60 attending were former Womens Air Force Service Pilots Scotty Gouth and Ethel Finley, both of Delaware. It is certain they were impressed by the appearance of that other "lady veteran" - SHOO SHOO BABY.

NEWEST LIFE MEMBERS

RICHARD W ANDERSON, Arcadia, CA
WILLIAM J AUTH, LTC USAF (Ret) Citrus Hts, CA
KERMIT M BURMAN, MAJ USAF (Ret) Ojai, CA
CHARLES C CARTER, Ft Worth, TX
VIOLET M DAVIS, Austin, TX
VINCENT A FONKE COL USAF (Ret), Fayetteville, NC
RICHARD H HAMILTON, W Brattleboro, VT
RALPH HANCOCK, Hucknall, Nottingham, Eng
ARNOLD C HUGHES, Coon Rapids, MN
LEO L "POP" LYONS, Trenton, NJ
CHARLES R PECK, Austin, TX
LESTER B SNOOK, Tewksbury, MA
JOE C TRAYLOR JR, Houston, TX
FRANK I VARVA, Myrtle Beach, SC
EMILE VINCENT, Lafayette, LA

KEARNEY AAF BASE REUNION: GENESO, NY AIRSHOW SET

ATTENTION!!! A REUNION WILL BE HELD ON JUNE 3, 4 and 5, 1988 for everyone who was stationed at or processed through the KEARNEY, NEBRASKA ARMY AIR BASE during or just after WWII. Interested? Contact Kearney Airbase Reunion, 2022 Ave A, Kearney, NB 68847. Tel: 308 236-5803.

THE NATIONAL WARPLANE MUSEUM IS PLANNING for the annual "1941 Airshow" during the weekend of 12, 13, and 14 August 1988. Aircraft from the Stearman Association, Ryan Club, Fairchild Club, North American

Continued on Page 7

ATTENTION!

1988 CONVENTION
FOUR PAGE INSERT
INSIDE!

THE RAGGED IRREGULAR

These newsletters are published quarterly. October, January, April and July are the scheduled publication months. The R/I's purpose is to keep alive the spirit of the 91st Bombardment Group (H) and to maintain the fellowship of all those who fought together in World War II from AF Station 121 in Basingbourn, England from 1942 to 1945.

Material for publication should be sent to the Editor, Rudy Malkin, 1643 Thetford Rd., Balto., Md. 21204. "Time-Value" items must be received three weeks before the first day of the month of publication to permit necessary priority consideration for inclusion in that issue. Every effort will be made to utilize other submitted material in the scheduled or later R/I issues.

91st BG Memorial Assn.
Charles Hackstock
14224 SE 288th ST.
Kent, WA 98042

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