



# The Ragged Irregular

91st Bombardment Group (H) Newsletter

Vol. 8 No. 4

Nov. 1975

## Pacific States Rally Round Big Hit

A total of 53 members, associates and guests attended the Pacific States Rally Round at the Oakland Hyatt House, Oakland, Ca., September 27. Phil Taylor headed the event.

In addition to a fine dinner and the hospitality of Pene's Pub, the group viewed films of The Memphis Belle, Air Power, Schweinfurt, Fight for the Sky, Mission to Merseburg--a film on the 91st on Nov. 2, 1944, and a 91st film of Flights Over Europe taken in 1943 of the 323rd squadron.

Glenn and Lois Boyce (ex-401st) were presented the "mug" for coming the greatest distance to attend, flying in from Lakewood, Colo. Glenn gave the group a briefing on the upcoming 1976 National Reunion to be held in Colorado Springs. Boyce heads the Reunion committee.

Mr. Joseph McCabe of the Crocker National Bank in San Francisco was guest speaker at the dinner.

Col. Bud Peaslee USAF (Ret), strike commander of the Schweinfurt mission, was a guest of host Phil Taylor and William Allen. These men are heading up the association of members in the 8th AF who flew

Attending were: Col. & Mrs. Bud J. Peaslee USAF (Ret), CMsGt. & Mrs. Charles Yaroshak, Mrs. Bobbie Haschaner, Mr. & Mrs. Phillip R. Taylor, LTC & Mrs. John R. McCombs USAF (Ret), Mr. & Mrs. Ray Blaich Jr., Mr. & Mrs. Glenn V. Boyce.

MSgt & Mrs. George W. Parks, USAF (Ret), MSgt Eugene J. Letalien USAF (Ret), Mr. Robert "Bob" Letalien, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Puls, Mr. Louis Malone, Mr. Stu Nesbuet, Mr. & Mrs. Russ Whitcomb, Mr. & Mrs.

(continued on page 2)



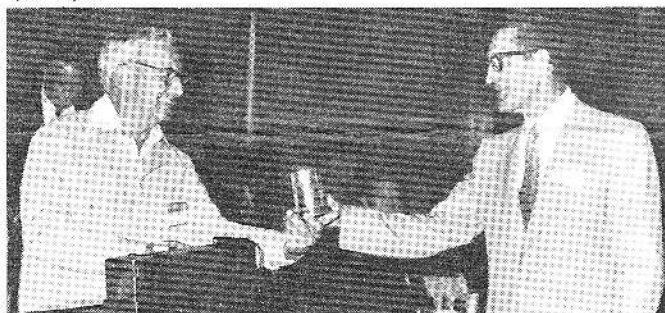
Attending the Pacific States Rally Round in Oakland were: Front row, kneeling: Col. Bud Peaslee, Mack Wray, Phil Taylor, Ammon Powell, Glenn Boyce, Ray Slominski, Aubin Pene, M/Sgt. Gene Letalien, CMSgt Chuck Yaroshak, William D. Allen.

Rear row: Col. Paul Fishburne, Col.

Gardner, Russ Whitcomb, Jack Taylor, Melvin Boyce, Thomas Anderson, T/Sgt. Dave Bosanski, Bob Clapp, Bob Puls, Chris DeGuitaut, Charles Newlin, Virgil Mott, B/Cen. James A. Mangiapane, Fred Mazzie, LTC Henry McFadden, and MSgt. George Parks.

William D. Allen, Col. & Mrs. Gardner, Mr. & Mrs. Robert H. Clapp.

Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Slominski, Mr. Chris DeGuitaut, Mr. Virgil Mott, Mr. Fred Mazzie and guest, B/Gen & Mrs. James A. Mangiapane USAF (Ret), Mr. Thomas R. Anderson, Mr. Charles E. Newlin, Mr. & Mrs. Jack Taylor, Mr. Mack K. Wray, Mr. Ammon H. Powell, Father (Col) William L. Tavers USAF (Ret), Mr. & Mrs. Joseph McCabe, Col. Paul L. Fishburne USAF (Ret), Mr. Melvin R. Boyce and guest, TSgt & Mrs. David J. Boksanski, LTC Henry J. McFadden USAF (Ret).



Western Division Chairman John McCombs presents mug to Glenn Boyce, Lakewood, Co. for coming the greatest distance to attend.



Phillip R. Taylor, Col. Bud Peaslee, and William D. Allen all flew the Schweinfurt mission of October 14, 1943, "Black Thursday."



91st wives attending the Pacific States Rally Round were: Front row, kneeling and sitting: Mrs. Boksanski, Mrs. Clapp, Mrs. Peaslee, Mrs. Mangiapane, Mrs. Puls, guest, Mrs. Yaroshak, Mrs. Blauch, Mrs. Allen.

Rear row: Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. McCombs, Mrs. Boyce, Mrs. Parks, Mrs. Pene, Mrs. Whitcomb, Mrs. Bobbie Haschaner, Mrs. Slominski, Mrs. Gardner, and Mrs. J. Taylor.



Dear Memorial Association Members:

The 91st Bomb Group was the outstanding group in the 8th Air Force because of the dedication, skill, and unmatched esprit de corps of all the members of the organization. We developed a "soul" that made a man proud to be a member of the 91st, that made us envied by less fortunate groups, and that has persisted undiminished since 1942.

Our Memorial Association since its organization in 1957 has shown that those virtues are still with us. We have become widely recognized as a leader among veterans organizations, and in service to the Air Force. Other groups have modeled their organization and operation on our example.

Now, some disagreements or strains have become apparent between divisions; some grousing among our membership. Most of this revolves about the delivery of The Ragged Irregular, the one link to the organization every dues paying member has access to.

From the beginning all the officers of our Association have volunteered their services. It takes a great deal of time, effort, and dedication for these persons to carry on our Association business, arrange reunions and Rally Rounds, and get out our publications. In many cases it even costs these officers money from their own pockets to carry out their duties. So far as I am aware, not one of them gets so much as a good 5 cent cigar out of it.

The chief complaint has been that The Ragged Irregular is not received by both the Eastern and Western division members at the same time.

This is caused by different mailing systems being used by the two divisions.

The Ragged Irregular is put together by Paul Burnett and is printed in Auburn, Al. The membership addresses are computer printed by Bob DeGeorge in Pennsylvania and sent to the respective headquarters, where they are put on envelopes.

The Western Division mails their copies of the R/I by first class mail, with a 10 cent stamp on each envelope. (This is expected to rise to 12-13 cents after Christmas.) The stamped, addressed envelopes are shipped to Burnett in advance of the printing of the R/I. When the newsletter comes off the press the Burnett family stuffs the envelopes and drops them in the Auburn postoffice. Depending upon the vagaries of the U. S. postal system the R/I's take from 3 to 7 days to reach Western Division members. All other division mail, such as directories, rally round notices, etc., is mailed out from Western Division headquarters first class, with address correction requested if the recipient has moved.

The Eastern Division uses a third class non-profit organization mailing permit, which lets them mail items regardless of weight for 1.8 cents per letter. Eastern Division R/I's are shipped from Auburn by UPS to the division secretary. Shipping time usually takes from four to nine days after UPS receives the package. In Lansdale, the R/I's are inserted in the envelopes, together with any other material to be sent out, put into group sections by numerical zip codes, and mailed in groups of at least 200 letters. Directories, reunion notices, etc., can be sent at the same rate, for a considerable saving in mailing costs. The big problem is with delivery time, since third class non-profit organization mail is handled last at every post office.

I get a copy from Paul Burnett mailed directly from Auburn, and a copy from Eastern Division headquarters. The non-profit organization letter arrives on the average of at least one month later than the first class mailing. These delays are not the fault of the Eastern Division committee, but to the system, and they have no control over them.

Since the difference in delivery time has been the focal point of complaints, I would like to survey Eastern Division members to see if the majority are satisfied or dissatisfied with the present mailing system. If each member will send me a post card indicating that he is or is not satisfied with the present system I can use the vote as a basis for a recommendation. Send your cards by February 1, since the non-profit organization permit must be renewed in the early part of the year if the present system is to continue. If you don't send a card I will presume you are satisfied; if you don't vote don't grouse! This organization belongs to the members, not to the officers, so let us know how you feel.

Get on the ball and send your card to Maj. Gen. Stanley T. Wray (USAF Ret.), 14 Country Club Drive, Shalimar, Florida 32579. Don't let inertia spoil your good intentions!

Maj. Gen. Stanley T. Wray (USAF Ret.)  
President, 91st B.G. Memorial Association

# Brief History of the 91st Bomb Group

This brief history of the 91st Bombardment Group was prepared by the USAF Historical division, Research Studies Institute, Maxwell Air Force Base, in 1956. Since most 91st members know only a brief portion of the Group's history we are printing the report to give them an overall view of the outfit. It will be published in installments because of the length .

Fortresses of the 91st Bombardment Group bombed the submarine construction and repair centers at Kiel, Vegasack, Wilhelmshaven, Brest, Emden, Lorient, St. Nazaire, and La Pallice. They attacked railroad communications centers at Hamm, Bremen, Abbeville, and Rouen. At Antwerp the 91st hit the Erla Auto-Works and the former factories of Ford and General Motors; near Paris it bombed the great Renault tank and truck plant, and at Lille it attacked the steel and locomotive plants. At Bremen the Group smashed a Focke-Wulf factory, at Meaulte an aircraft repair base, and at Romilly-sur-Seine an airpark and airdrome. Many of these targets were raided more than once--St. Nazaire was hit by the 91st Group nine times. With the invasion of the continent successful, the 91st not only continued striking strategic targets but used its outstanding precision bombing skill on tactical targets in support of ground troops. As one of the first heavy bombardment organizations located in England in the early days of World War II, it had to learn techniques and tactics through experimentation, and frequently suffered heavy losses until it had mastered such lessons.

The 91st Bombardment Group, Heavy, was activated at Harding Field, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on 15 April 1942. It accomplished first phase training at MacDill Field, Tampa, Florida, under the auspices of the Third Air Force, and completed second and third phase training at Walla Walla Army Air Base, Washington, under the direction of the Second Air Force.

On 24 August the ground echelon entrained for Fort Dix, New Jersey, where it arrived four days later. On 2 September members of the Group's 322d Squadron reported aboard the Queen Mary for instruction in anti-aircraft gunnery so they could assist in manning the guns during the Atlantic crossing. Other members of the 91st Group went aboard on the morning of 5 September, and six days later the Queen Mary docked at Gourock, Scotland. The 91st disembarked the following morning and moved to Kimbolton, near Bedford, England.

The air echelon also departed from Walla Walla on 24 August. It flew to Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho, and turned in the B-17s the Group had used throughout its training. Six crews picked up new B-17s, and the remaining personnel traveled by train to Dow Field, Bangor, Maine, where the air echelon underwent additional flying training and intensive gunnery practice. Aircraft deliveries were slow, and it was after the first of October before the Group's squadrons (the 322d, 323d, 324th, and 401st) were equipped. As each squadron completed the required training, it flew to Kimbolton, via Gander, Newfoundland, and Prestwick, Scotland. The first of the Group's planes arrived at Kimbolton on 1 October, and the last reached the Group on 17 October, after the organization had moved to Bassingbourn.

The 91st Group, an element of the Eighth Air Force, entered combat on 7 November, when it attacked submarine bases at Brest, France. In order to move the huge amounts of men, supplies and equipment from the United Kingdom to North Africa, it was necessary to protect the movement from both submarine and aircraft attack. Accordingly the Eighth Air Force was required, as a matter of first priority, to attack the submarine bases on the west coast of France from which the major portion of the German U-boat fleet operated: Lorient, St. Nazaire, Brest, La Pallice, and Bordeaux. By the end of November the

Group had flown seven more missions, six of which hit the submarine pens. Due to heavy cloud coverage, no bombs were dropped during a mission to Lorient on 22 November. A raid against the submarine pens at St. Nazaire on 23 November was disastrous; the 91st lost squadron commanders of the 322d and 324th, the group navigator, the group bombardier, and the group gunnery officer.

Consistently poor weather so badly hampered air operations throughout December 1942 that the 91st flew but ofur missions. On 20 December the 91st Group participated with the Eighth Air Force in a relatively large-scale mission against the aircraft park and repair depot at Romilly-sur-Seine. Results of the mission--the one effective attack made on the German Air Force during December--were reasonably good. Damage was inflicted on hangars, barracks, aircraft, and the landing ground. Of considerably greater historic significance, however, was the fact tha-, in the course of this deepest penetration yet made by the USAF planes into German-occupied territory, the bombers made contact with almost the entire force of enemy fighters located in northeast France. The ensuing air battle developed epic proportions and provided an important test of the US heavy bombers' ability to carry out unescorted missions deep into enemy territory. The fighter escort for the bombers had barely turned back for England when an estimated 60 enemy fighters launched an attack which continued almost to the target, when they were relieved by 50 to 60 fresh enemy fighters. On the return trip the bomber formation suffered almost continuous attack from the enemy fighters, most of which had apparently taken part in the earlier stages of the engagement and were now making second sorties. The 91st Group lost two aircraft while several more were badly holed by enemy fighter fire. Disaster hit the 91st on 30 December when the commanding officers of the 401st squadron and his crew were reported missing on a mission to the submarine bases at Lorient.

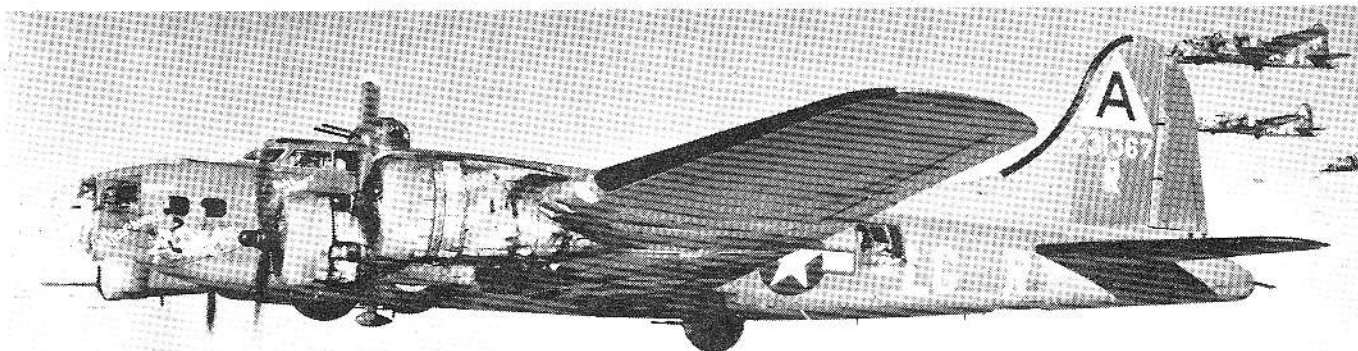
In the early months of 1943 operations were badly hampered by a continuation of bad weather. The 91st was alerted, briefed and standing by, only to have mission after mission canceled prior to take-off time or shortly after the unit became airborne. If the weather cleared at all, practice missions were flown. During January four missions were accomplished, in March nine, while during April, when the weather again worsened, four. The submarine pens and submarine base facilities continued as primary targets, while aircraft factories, locomotive works, and communications were hit from time to time.

The outstanding mission of the period was a strike on the railway station and marshalling yards at Hamm, Germany, on 4 March. These yards were the largest and most important, carrying eastbound traffic from the Ruhr. Yard capacity was 10,000 wagons in 24 hours as compared to a 3,000 wagon capacity of the medium-sized marshalling yards. The Eighth Air Force four-group formation was led by the 91st Group. Heavy overcast and cloud formations forced two of the groups to turn south and bomb Rotterdam, a last resort target. The third group returned to its base with bombloads intact. The 91st flew on alone; weather conditions improved slightly, although haze reduced visibility. Smoke partially obscured the target, but the objective was bombed in accordance with the briefed instructions. Results were excellent: direct hits were scored on station, buildings, locomotive engine sheds, main tracks and platforms, marshalling yards, and industrial buildings grouped in the vicinity. The combat crews thought that it was one of the "prettiest jobs of bombing" accomplished in the 22 missions the Group had flown up to that time. The 91st Bombardment Group was awarded a Presidential Citation for this action.

Eighteen months later, Target Germany, an official publication of the Eighth Air Force, stated that this raid, flown without fighter escort or supporting fire from other bombing formations, had convinced doubting officials in Washington. The prior belief had been that in a theater as strongly defended as the skies over Germany and in a climate where weather conditions provided so many obstacles, high altitude precision daylight was unsound and would lead to a high rate of loss in trained manpower and equipment. But the strike against Hamm was not achieved without loss. Four Flying Fortresses failed to return, and practically all of the other twelve aircraft making the strike suffered major damage.



# 322d 'Chowhound' Latest, Best Model



One of the finest models ever of a B-17G has just been released by Monogram Models, Inc., of Morton Grove, Ill., and it carries 91st markings, the actual nose art, squadron call letters, and serial number of the 322nd plane Chow Hound, piloted by Jerry Newquist.

The 1/48 scale plane is complete in every detail both inside and out. It carries the letters LG R and serial number 42-31367.

The writeup accompanying the kit tells the history of the plane and mentions by name Newquist, Crew Chief Julian Murdock, and navigator "Buckwheat" Bailey. It also tells of Lt. Jack Thompson, whose crew took over the plane when Newquist's crew finished their tour. Thompson and crew went down over Caen, France, on August 8, 1944.

Newquist, of Seattle, Wash., is a 727 captain for United Air Lines. Bailey is a cattle rancher in the middle west.



First crew of "Chowhound" is shown here. Front row: S/Sgt. William J. Carlson, bombardier and chin turret gunner; 1st Lt. Joseph Green, co-pilot; 1st Lt. Jerreld L. Newquist, pilot; 1st Lt. Lamond J. Bailey, navigator.

Back row: T/Sgt. John K. Callaway, waist gunner; S/Sgt. John S. Weddle, ball turret gunner; T/Sgt. Joseph E. Bentel, engineer; S/Sgt. Richard J. Pries, radio operator; S/Sgt. Charles L. Nuse, waist gunner, S/Sgt. Roland R. Michel, tail gunner.

## From the Editor's Desk...

By Paul C. Burnett Box 909 Auburn, Ala. 36830



Getting together for a mini-rally are Maurice Hoveland, Matt Pettera and Arthur Hele.

It doesn't take a big group to make at least a mini-rally round of 91st-ers.

On Saturday, June 21, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Hele, their son and daughter, and Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Hoveland, all of Austin, Minn., brought their trailers to Wauzeka, Wisc., for a two-day visit with Matt Pettera.

It was the first time the three had been together since getting out of the service.

Western Division Secretary-Treasurer George Parks retired July 1 after 18 years service as a Deputy Sheriff of Solano County. This is a second retirement for George, who retired from the Air Force in 1957 after 24 years active duty. As George said, "After working 42 years it's time I started to enjoy life with my good wife Marian, who retired in December, 1973 after 17 years as the Navy Relief Society Visiting Nurse at Mare Island. And also with our two children, Bill, who lives with his wife Nora at Fresno (both teach), and with our daughter, Mrs. Marian L. Hohler, who lives with her husband, David, and son David Jr., at San Diego."

John W. Allen of Bremerton, Wash., had a brief visit with the editor recently. John, who was in Alabama buying timberlands for the Washington timber firm for which he works, detoured by Auburn on his way to a business conference and we had lunch together. Coincidentally, John was looking for

contacts with the forestry school of the university, and it just happened that the man he needed to contact was my next door neighbor. He joined our lunch and we not only had a great get-together of 91st-ers but settled some important business for him.

John was navigator on "Time's A' Wastin'" of the 401st sqdn, on the same crew with Eastern Division chairman Paul Chryst.

We have received the sad news of the passing of a number of former 91st-ers.

From the Eastern Division were Harold Fruits (8-2-74); Mike London (11-11-74) Warren E. Souers (1-17-75); E. Joseph Harvey (3-15-75) and W. Robert Thompson (1-11-73).

From the Western Division were John B. Fuller (8-14-74) and Delbert B. Gibson (5-18-75).

S/Sgt Roy E. Wood has informed the R/I that his father, ex-91st-er M/Sgt. R. R. Wood, Rt. 1, Box 77, Eros, La., died of lung cancer 1 September 1975. S/Sgt Wood is with the Air Force at Barksdale AFB.

Western Division members who are interested in having a pre-reunion Rally Round in February are asked to contact Chairman John McCombs, 2334 Platt Drive, Martinez, Cal., 94553 by January 1.

Lt. Wallace "Sand Bag" Bone of Hamden, Conn., is a 74-year-old WWI Bombing Military Advisor who graduated from Ellington Field, U.S. Air Service in December, 1918.

During the 91st West Haven Rally Round, July, 1971, Wally and his charming wife Georgia entertained the group with his original badges, awards, and quick wit descriptions of early bombing training. They became associate members of the Group.

In a recent letter to the 91st, Lt. Bone advised the Group that his beloved wife had passed away, and that in tribute to her memory and the close ties that we have enjoyed with this "grand old man" he has included a special bequest of \$1500 to be paid to the 91st Bomb Group Memorial Association when he passes on.

We salute you, W. Bruce Bone, and the entire group is very grateful.





In a mini-rally at Auburn, Ala. are members of the Eastern Division committee and the editor. Shown are: Bob Cerstemeier, secretary; Joe Giambrone, treasurer; Paul Burnett, editor; Paul Chryst, co-chairman; Joe Camelleri, co-chairman.

Eastern Division co-chairman Joe Camelleri has a new address. Joe now lives at 724 Walnut Street, Reading, Pa. 19601. His phone number is 215-373-7070.

Members of the 96th Bomb Group who were stationed at Snetterton Heath are attempting to rejuvenate their organization. Any 91st-ers who may know former 96th BG members should have them contact Robert W. Owens, 900 S. Western Ave. 2, Chicago, Ill. 60612.



Ground crew of "Chowhound" were: 1 to r, Cpl. Howard Sisk, M/Sgt. Julian Murdock, Sgt. Herman Moser, Sgt. Robert Compton.



Gen Wray receives the plaque of the Depot from Col Piggins, C.O. at Bassingbourn.



Getting together at Auburn for a mini-rally were, 1 to r, Paul Burnett, editor; M/Sgt. George Parks (Ret), secretary-treasurer Western Division, and 91st-er Frank Bolen, ex-322d sqdn., now of Selma, Ala.

DON'T FORGET THAT 1976 DUES SHOULD BE PAID BY FEBRUARY. WITHOUT YOUR CONTINUED HELP WE CANNOT KEEP THE 91st FLYING!

ONLY DUES PAYING MEMBERS CAN PARTICIPATE IN GROUP ACTIVITIES AND RECEIVE GROUP PUBLICATIONS. SEND YOUR \$5 TO:

EASTERN DIVISION MEMBERS--

Joseph M. Giambrone  
303 Brookdale Ave.  
Glenside, Pa. 19038

WESTERN DIVISION MEMBERS--

MSgt George Parks USAF (Ret)  
109 Wilshire Ave.  
Vallejo, Ca. 94590