

# The Ragged Irregular



322nd SQDN



323rd SQDN



Supporting Units



324th SQDN



401st SQDN

Vol. 33 No. 3

91st Bombardment Group (H)

July 2000



## Galveston, Queen City of the Gulf

Our Year 2,000 Reunion will be held Nov. 1-4, in Galveston, Texas. Mark the dates and get prepared for a great reunion.

The City of Galveston was chartered in 1839 and served as the principal port and gateway to the Southwest during the 19th Century. The city furnished shipping, goods, money and transportation necessary to settle the Republic of Texas and to nurture its trade and help accomplish its independence.

In 1836, Michael Menard bought "one league and a labor of land" from the Republic of Texas and helped organize the Galveston City Company. From 1840 to 1870 the city was a major immigration port for over a quarter million Europeans. Texas' secession from the Union and the Civil War halted development temporarily. The mid-1870s to the mid-1890s was the apex of Galveston's prosperity. The Strand area became the Wall Street of the Southwest. Fortunes were made in cotton, mercantile houses, banks, publishing and printing, flour and grain mills, railroads, land development and shipping. In 1891, the University of Texas Medical Branch was established.

In 1914 the Ship Channel was deepened which took much of Galveston's trade. From 1924 to 1957, until a crackdown by the state attorney general's office, Galveston was primarily known a wide-open port city where gambling and all sorts of amusements could be found. During World War II, Galveston had an air base where B-17s received their final briefing before leaving for the Pacific.

The City of Galveston today occupies virtually all of the 32 mile long island located two miles off the Texas mainland 50 miles southeast of Houston and boasts the Port of Galveston, the University of Texas Medical Branch and other health institutions, financial institutions, tourism, shrimping and fishing.

In addition to the camaraderie of rejoining your former comrades-in-arms, you will enjoy Galveston, the climate and perhaps the world's finest seafood.

If you haven't sent in your reunion reservation, do it now. If you lost or misplaced your Reunion Bulletin sent out in April, call, write, or e-mail Asay Johnson, Sec'y/Treasurer. His address and contacts are given on page 2 of the Association Officer's block.

Remember! You must make your own hotel reservation as well as your travel plans. Hope to see you in November!

## In Remembrance

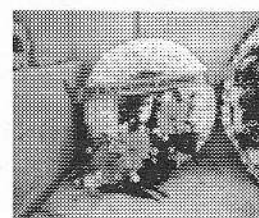
In the month of May, Memorial Day is celebrated in the United States, the United Kingdom, Belgium, the Netherlands and elsewhere. The purpose is to remember and pay homage to our fellow comrades-in-arms who gave their lives in making the supreme sacrifice to bring peace back into the world and cast off the tyranny that sought to envelop and control a free people. The year 2000 is a cardinal occasion to take special note of the services related to those of the 91st Bombardment Group (H) who lie buried in friendly fields or remain missing in action but not in our hearts.

**Madingley, 29 May 2000.** The annual Memorial Service at the Cambridge American Military Cemetery in England was conducted this year under the auspices of the United States Embassy, Third Air Force, and the 48th Fighter Wing in cooperation with various 8th and 9th Army Air Force Memorial Associations, our British friends, and the Cambridge American Cemetery Staff.

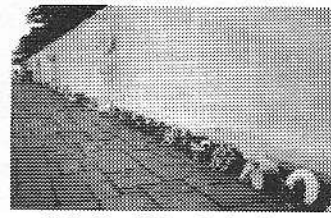
The service this date was organized and directed with pride by members of the 48th Fighter Wing "Team Liberty" at RAF Lakenheath. The 48th is a unit of the USAF comprised of more than 5,000 U.S. military personnel and 2,000 American and British civilian employees assigned to the base. RAF Lakenheath is the largest U.S. Air Force-operated base in England.

In the course of the service, 112 individuals and representatives of various organizations presented floral decorations, including Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire Mr. J. G. P. Crowden, KStJ, JP; Minister Glyn T. Davies, Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy London; Lt. Gen. Charles R. Holland, USAF, Vice Commander, United States Air Forces in Europe;

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91st BGMA Wreath



Wall of the Missing

## The President's Corner

We are told, when we get older, that we ought, in order to keep our minds supple, to practice mental exercise as well as physical. It is recommended that we tackle challenging learning projects, new languages, for example. Now, some people may have the self-discipline to complete projects of this kind, but most, I suspect let them lapse, half done. One of these schemes, however, is very easy to maintain and requires no new investment. You may find it fun, just as I do.

Several years ago, having encountered a word while reading, I decided to look it up. Using a dictionary was hardly an unusual event, but this word, rather than being new and esoteric, was one I had known and used for years. The idea of belatedly using the dictionary for a word already known was to find out if it really meant what I thought it meant and was to be pronounced the way I said it. Now that I was retired, I could afford this extravagant use of time.

Most of one's vocabulary is acquired, not from dictionaries, but from context. This is the natural way to learn language, the way a child learns it. The process of deducing what a word means from the way it is used works very well. Possible ambiguities are generally resolved for common words because hearing them often enables us to narrow down the meanings to the correct ones. With rarely encountered words there is no alternative. One must use a dictionary. Possible meanings can be deduced from context, but one expects never to experience enough exposure to eliminate the wrong choices.

For that vast in-between lexicon of words which are neither in daily use nor rare, we generally opt for the natural method, thus avoiding the extra time investment required by the dictionary as well as the difficulty of deciphering the pronunciation code. It is with this vocabulary that I'm applying my belated remedy, quite regularly, in fact. The activity is easy, edifying and fun and does meet the requirement for mental exercise. What I'm finding usually is that, in most cases, the deductive method has worked just fine for word meaning, correct pronunciation being quite another matter. In a surprising number of cases, I'm finding that what I knew for several decades were not quite as I thought them to be. It does make me wonder how many other things that I have known for fifty years are not quite as I knew them to be.

Bob Friedman

## Editorial

We are pleased to make this issue another 12-page issue and hope you enjoy the additional material. Also with this issue there is the ballot for election of Officers for the term 2001-2003. **Please review the ballot, vote and return it to Paul Limm at your earliest convenience.**

This issue of *The Ragged Irregular*, being the first to come out after Memorial Day, will take note of the many Memorial services and dedications around the world. We are getting more information and photos of these events and it is right that we should express our appreciation to those who represent us. Thank you.

Phil Mack

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## Report from the Secretary/Treasurer

### MEMBERSHIP

Full Members (FM)	602/00 (87 Delinquent)
Associate Members (AM)	73
Life Members (LM)	319
Assoc. Life Members (AL)	87
Public Relations	24

**Total Active Members 1105**

### NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Sidney Barnsley 322nd  
Hooper Mapleston 324th  
Thomas O. Layman DDS

### NEW ASSOCIATE LIFE MEMBERS

Richard Cavanaugh  
Katherine Daley  
Barry Harris  
John Krumm  
Gregory J. Norwood

Congratulations to those of you who have renewed your membership and welcome to those of you who are new. We hope all members will take the opportunity to renew and continue to receive *The Ragged Irregular* reminding us of the history, achievements, and news of fellow members, and especially to commemorate the service to this Nation and to the Free World of the 91st Bomb Group (H) in World War II.

The organization is healthy and interest remains high. Financially we are sound and a complete financial statement will be presented at the business meeting during the Galveston Reunion.

Asay ("Ace") B. Johnson



## In Remembrance

Continued from Page 1

Major Gen. Joseph Wehrle, USAF, Commander Third Air Force, and many other dignitaries.

This year Mr. Vince Hemmings, noted aviation historian, once again presented the 91st BGMA wreath as shown in photos on page 1 taken by Hemmings on the day of the dedication. The 91st Bomb Group Memorial Association expresses its appreciation for this service on our behalf.

The East Anglian Aviation Society also presented a wreath in their own name in honor of the fallen airmen including the 91st BG. We thank them for their remembrance.

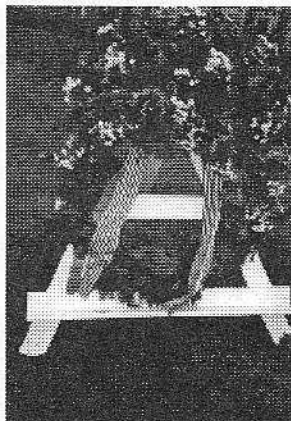
**Netherland American Cemetery Margraten, May 28, 2000.** Ron Putz, represented the 91st BGMA on this occasion for the purpose of laying a wreath in honor of the airmen from this Bomb Group who are interred in this cemetery or are missing in action.

The participants included members of the Royal Netherlands Armed Forces and of the United States Armed Forces stationed in the Netherlands and Germany. The Joint Color Guard is from AFNORTH International High School Junior ROTC.

American escorts, wreath-bearers are from the United States delegation at AFNORTH. Military policemen are from the 254th BSB, AFNORTH and Geilenkirchen AB. Dutch wreath-bearers are from the C-30th Battalion National Reserves Venlo. Dutch Military policemen are from the Royal Marechaussee, N-Brabant/Limburg District. Traffic control provided by Region Police Margraten. Aircraft are from the Royal Netherlands Air Force and the United States Air Force, Europe. Music for the ceremony is provided by the Johan Willem Friso Band, the 33rd US Army Band and the Royal Walram's



Margraten Dignitaries include Ron Putz, 91st BGMA Representative, fifth from the left in dark civilian suit.



91st BGMA Wreath

Society Men's Choir from Valkenburg a/d Geul. The Chaplains and Rabbi are from the US Army and the Royal Netherlands Air Force. A fly over was provided by the USAF and a Dutch fighter.

## 441st Sub-Depot Memorial Laid

**Bassingbourn, May 12, 2000**—On a cool and somewhat cloudy day, not unusual for England at this time of the year, a small contingent including W. W. "Whit" Hill, with the support of Faber Cripps and Harold Mannon, all former members of 441st Sub Depot who served at Bassingbourn in support of the 91st Bomb Group (H) during World War II, unveiled a commemorative bronze and stone memorial plaque by a flowering cherry tree donated by the Friends of the 91st, David Crow, Vince Hemmings (who supplied the photos below), Ray Leach and Col. Peter Worthy (Ret).



Memorial Plaque Honoring the 441st Sub Depot

The 441st served with the 91st from the beginning to the end of hostilities until all the aircraft had departed to return to the Zone of the Interior. Their contribution could only be described as "outstanding."

The work this unit performed showed skill, perseverance, ingenuity and certainly dedication in repairing the battle damage so often incurred on the dangerous missions flown by the Group's fleet of B-17 Flying Fortresses. Returning aircraft were often damaged very badly, wheel-up landings, flak holes, bullet holes, gaping holes from cannon fire, engines shut-down and props feathered. Modification work was performed such as the installation of additional guns in the noses of the older B-17s before the chin turrets appeared on the later "G" models.



L-R Jacques Hill, Dorothy Kamykowski, Sandra Cherry, Nancy Kamykowski, and Whit Hill.

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**441st Sub Depot**

Continued from Page 3

Commanded by then Major Frank S. Kamykowski, the men of the 441st had a deep respect and affection for this man that was apparent at later reunions as they crowded around him to talk, joke, and reminisce.

The memorial is located near the corner of the Bassingbourn Barracks Hangar No. 1, the former Headquarters and Maintenance Shops of the 331st.

In addition to those already mentioned in the group that participated and gathered for the dedication were Lt. Col. Ian Condie, Royal Signals, Commanding Officer Army Training Regiment, Bassingbourn Barracks; The Senior Chaplain Reverend Peter Hills, Bed, DipTh, Bassingbourn Barracks; former member of the 324th Squadron, 91st BG: Mr. and Mrs. Otto Meikus; and numerous members of the 355th Fighter Group formerly stationed at nearby Steeple Morden flying P-47s and later P-51s.

Following the dedication, Hill identified all the specialties of the men who comprised the 441st: Propeller and Engine Mechanics; Parachute Riggers; Nose, Window and Plastic Repairers; Aircraft Woodworkers; Sheet Metal Battle Damage Repairers; Machinists; Power Turret, Gun and Norton Bomb Sight, and instrument Specialists; Light and Heavy Equipment operators; Dope and Fabric Repairers and Administrative Support Personnel.

The Dedication over, everyone repaired to the CWO and Sergeants Mess for morning coffee and refreshments after which they were treated to a Passing Out Parade of the British Army Recruits who had graduated from basic training which is the primary function of Bassingbourn Barracks today.

After the Bassingbourn events were over, the group enjoyed tea at the Royston Town Hall with the Lady Mayor of Royston, Flora Greenwood and the County Council. The tour continued with visits to the American Military at Maddingley and to the American Museum at Duxford.

**Memorial Day in Belgium**

Ardennes American Military Cemetery—Belgium

The Ardennes, May 27, 2000—Eric Dominicus is the official 91st BGMA representative for Belgium. His wife, Inge, personally made the floral piece placed at the American Cemetery in memory of the 114 members of the 91st who are laid to rest along with 5,300 other Americans, who were casualties of the bitter fighting in the Ardennes.

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**Memorial Day in Belgium**

Continued.....

Each grave site is adorned with both the American flag and the flag of Belgium. A service was conducted with Mr. James B. Begg, President of the American Overseas Memorial Day Association, Belgium, serving as Master of Ceremonies. Vocalist was Yeoman First Class Fidel Morin, U.S. Navy. The Invocation was given by Rev. Father Pierre Hannoset, Pastor of Neuville-en-Condroz.

Tributes were paid by:

Mrs. Josée Pagnoul-Demet, Mayor of Neupré

Lieutenant. General David S. Weisman, United States Army, U.S. Military Representative, N.A.T.O. Military Committee.

The Honorable Paul L. Cejas, Ambassador of the United States of America.

A Jewish Prayer was given by:

Mr. Jonathan Kapstein, Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Naval Reserve.

Benediction by:

Chaplain (Lieutenant Colonel) Allen B. Boatright, 80th Area Support Group, U. S. Army.

National Anthem and Raising of the Colors was conducted by the Honor Guards representing the 4th Engineers, Belgian Armed forces and the United States Air Force Europe Elite Guard. Fly-by of F-16 Aircraft, courtesy of the 22nd Ftr Squadron, 52nd Ftr Wing, Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany. Music by the Belgian Air Force Band.

Inge Dominicus holds the wreath she made in memory of the fallen Airmen of the 91st Bombardment Group (H) and which husband Eric Dominicus placed. Inge is pictured below holding the wreath alongside Eric who holds Marie, their young daughter.



Inge Dominicus



Eric Dominicus and Marie

**We are grateful to all those who represented us at Memorial Services at home and in other lands.**



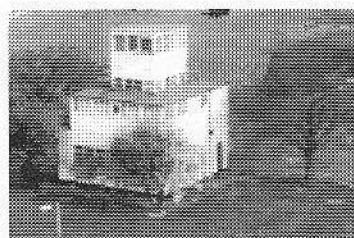
## It's a Go with Turner Publishing!



**Turner Publishing Company** of Paducah, Kentucky, and the 91st Bomb Group (H) Memorial Association have agreed to proceed with the publication of a book about the history of the 91st including autobiographies of our members.

This was first proposed at the 1998 Reunion at Savannah. The subject was discussed at the Staff Meeting and it was agreed to

develop the subject further without commitment on either side. Recently, in an exchange between 91st BGMA President, Bob Friedman, and Turner Publishing's President, Dave Turner, it was agreed that Turner was authorized to make direct contact with our membership and ask that you submit a biography and photos. If enough orders for the book are received by the deadline indicated, the book will be published and serve as a memoir of both our Unit History and your personal part in making that history.



## From the Tower.....

**Bassingbourn, 18 June 2000**

Steve Pena, Curator of the Tower Museum, the maintenance and operation of which is the responsibility of the East Anglian Aviation

Society (EAAS), sends his greetings and advises that his new address is: The Beeches, Hepworth Road, Barmington, Suffolk, England IP31 1BP. Tel/FAX: 01359 221151. (The "0" is not used if dialing from the U.S.A. ) E-Mail is unchanged: [AN6530@aol.com](mailto:AN6530@aol.com).

And if you didn't know it, the Tower has a web site: <http://members.aol.com/an6530/museum.htm>. The prefix of the e mail address, AN6530, is the model number of the USAAF flying goggles.

As noted on page 2, the East Anglian Aviation Society participated in the Memorial Day observances at Maddingley by traditionally laying a wreath at the Wall of the Missing in memory of the USAAF and the RAF airmen who gave their all in World War II.

In addition to other duties, Steve Pena now serves as Editor of a newsletter for the EAAS and kindly sent a copy electronically to this Editor. Peter R. T. Roberts, Chairman of the EAAS, reports with sadness of the death of one of its members, Jim Thain from Aberdeen, "who, with his son, Richard, often travelled down to visit the Tower Museum." Jim was one of the association's most respected members and avid supporters.

**Wall of Remembrance.** In the Tower Museum there is an area designated as the Wall of Remembrance. A photo  
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## From the Tower

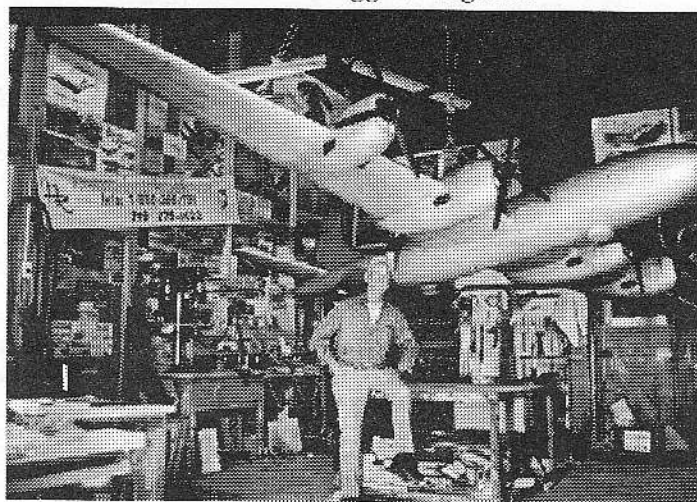
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of Paul Chryst standing by the Wall was printed on page 3 of the January 2000 issue of the *Ragged Irregular*. Pena reports that submissions continue to be received by John Doughton who coordinates this project for EAAS, and there are over 60 plaques in place at this time. But, he adds, "There is room for more."

Anyone wishing to have his name added to the wall, or a relative who would like to place the name of a former member of the 91st or associated unit, may do so by sending a check for \$30.00 payable to the East Anglian Aviation Society and the name, former rank, and unit, to John Doughton at 11 Tannery Close, Royston, Herts, UK.

## Attention B-29 Jockeys and Aficionados

B/Gen Jim McPartlin, former Commander of the 401st Squadron, wears a new hat these days as Vice President of Groups Memorials, Inc., of Canon City, Colorado. "Groups" tells us that a 1/7th scale B-29 in bronze will be dedicated at the United States Air Force Academy's "The Study Hall" sculpture garden. Many 91sters will recall the dedication of a Bronze B-17 22 August 1997 reported in the October 1997 issue of the *Ragged Irregular*.



Sculptor Robert Henderson with 1/7 scale Wooden Replica of B-29 with a Wingspan of 20 Feet and will weigh 2,000 lbs. in Bronze

A press release states: "This historic marker may very well be the final warbird to be placed in the 'Study Hall' at the Academy. For the **dedication September 8, 2000**, special guests will include Gen. Paul Tibbets, pilot of the *Enola Gay*. Andy Rooney, of CBS' '60 Minutes,' recently cited the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima as the single most note worthy event of American History in the 20th Century."

Donations are solicited and may be made to "B-29 Superfortress Historical Association, Inc., a non-profit, tax exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code, at 816 Water St., Canon City, CO 81212, Call 1-800-305-1738 for more information, Phone/FAX (719) 275-1422 e-mail: [raf@ris.net](mailto:raf@ris.net), or log on to: [www.warbirdcentral.com](http://www.warbirdcentral.com).

## Letters to the Editor

**Robert Brubaker**, LM, 324th, Nov. 16, 1999. Bob sent a letter after the October 2000 *Ragged Irregular* included an article about the Marh 4, 1943 mission to Hamm. Steven Lindley, who had been the Bombardier on Major Fishburne's lead aircraft, stated emphatically that the target area was clear, the bombs were released on schedule and the Group dropped on his release. Brubaker responded clarifying that he was not flying on Fishburne's wing but Gaitley's. He took over on the bombing run with his sight and dropped on his own aiming.

Regarding the conflicting comment on the weather conditions at the time of release, Brubaker, who, in the RI article, said it was cloudy over the target, admits he was thinking of a similar mission to Wilhelmshaven, but on account of weather, they were forced to divert to Emden. His aircraft was shot down and he became a POW for the duration.

**Neil Daniels**, LM, 401st, Apr. 27, 2000, tells the following story: "In the January 2000 newsletter, the story about the 55-year reunion in France [James Fore], triggered some thought of what I think is an unusual story.

In March of 1944 we started our bombing of Berlin. A young six-year old boy was standing in the yard holding onto his grandmother's hand and watching the hundreds of bombers flying over, raining their death and destruction on the city. He said, "Grandma, why are so many people dying?"

The war ended, the young man grew up in East Germany. He learned to fly gliders, then open cockpit biplanes. Next the Russian Mig-7, then the Mig-10 and the Mig-15 in 1955.

He had studied power plant engineering and decided working on diesel powered freighters would be a better life. A trip in 1960 brought him up our west coast, with stops in Los Angeles. He liked what he saw, and after returning to Germany by ship, he flew back to L.A. He got a job at a Mercedes auto shop as a mechanic.

One day a senior Captain from Western Air Lines brought his car in and wanted a German mechanic to work on it. Herman got the job. During their conversations he learned that Herm had been a pilot and had flown jets.

The airline Captain helped him get a U.S. pilot's license and a job with Fairchild Aviation Service Flying a B-17 equipped with Magnotron for aerial mapping. (Neil says: "He has more B-17 hours than I have.") In 1966, Western Air Lines hired him and in time he became a Captain.

Delta Airlines bought out Western in 1987. Herm continued flying with them and retired in 1998 as a Lockheed 1011 Captain.

We met at a pilots' conference about 10 years ago. We exchanged our life stories. It was a very emotional experience to meet some one who had been on the receiving end of our bombing. Herman Schmidt lives in Marin County just north of SFO. We get together several times a year.

It's a strange world. Neil A. Daniels. 401st. '43/44. [Neil is a retired United Airlines Captain.]

**Phil Mack**, LM 323rd. Neil's article triggered his memory. For a number of years, he was the 747 Engineering Sales Manager for Boeing and a member of Task Sales teams setup to sell airplanes. One day, on a break between meetings in Manila with Philippine Air Lines, several of the men on the team were relaxing in the sun by the hotel swimming pool. He asked the man on the right, who was a member of

the Boeing Sales organization, and who spoke with a German accent, "How did you happen to become associated with Boeing?" He laughed and said, "When I was an 18-year old, I was shooting an anti-aircraft cannon at the Boeing B-17s flying over Germany. Mack laughed and said, "I was a 19-year-old pilot flying them!" They shook hand and were both happy to have survived.

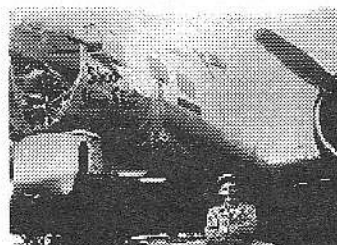
**Vince Hemmings** sent the accompanying photo of Col. Herb Egender, USAF Ret., with the caption "Standing by the Boeing B-17G at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford, May 12, 2000. Egender was shot down on the 17th August 1943 during the mission to Schweinfurt when the 91st BG (H) lost 9 aircraft that day. MACR 275. The aircraft was a mark F serial no. 42-24453, LG-O. One of the Group's original aircraft and was known as "The Bearded Beauty."



Herb Egender, FM, 322nd

**George W. Parks**, LM, 324th, Jan. 3, 2000, sent a number of photos, negatives that he thought the RI could make good use of. He reports, "As for me, I'm doing O.K. for 86 yrs. Young, stay away from the Air Force Hospital at Travis AFB (they don't want us old retirees anyway). I've been going to Kaiser Perm Hospital here in Vallejo as I joined their Sr. Health plan and they have treated me very well. As for reunions, I've been to none since 1986 but who knows, if they ever hold one in Calif. OR or Wash, I just may attend

I look forward to every issue of the R/I. It's interesting. P.S. My crew's bombardier, Lt. Col. Charles Moody, USAF (Ret) once lived in Tacoma. I've often wondered what happened to him. [Ed. Note: We're planning a reunion in Tacoma in 2002. Mark it on your calendar.]



George Parks and Shoo Shoo Baby



Shoo Shoo in Sweden—T Olausson

The photo of "Shoo Shoo Shoo Baby" and George Parks was taken at Bassingbourn. The photo on the right was taken in Sweden after the aircraft was flown there on 29 May 1944 on a mission to bomb a Focke Wulf component aircraft factory in Posen. Due to the reduced size of the photo above, the tail of a B-24 with Swedish markings is barely visible on the left. Also difficult to see is the lower body of another B-24 behind "Shoo Shoo." Torbjorn Olausson from Sveriges Television sent the photo to Parks in March 1984.

**Todd Perry**, is a model builder since age eight and has constructed 1/48 scale models of a number of World War II aircraft. His present project is a B-17 modeled after "Little Patches: B-17G-25-BO, S/N 42-31678. The story of 91st BGMA Past President Hal Jounson's dramatic flight in "Little Patches" is told in the July 1998 issue of the R/I. Anyone with information about this airplane is asked to contact Perry at 4305 5th St. E. Columbus, NE, 68601.

Continued next column.....



## Stark Hunger Scenes in Europe Described

By Joseph C. Wellman\* c.1946

Food arranged in gleaming shelves, in mathematically precise pyramids and stacks. Chocolate food, cereal food, vegetable and liquid food laid out in monotonously long rows of containers. This is any Denver market one year after the war. But Denver is not in Europe.

*Slightly more than 12 months ago I watched 500 captive Russian and Polish soldiers claw and savagely fight for small squares of chocolate. We saw emaciated skeletal structures of men stretch out bony semblances of arms in a plea for scraps. One soldier who caught a bit of food thrown to him by an American prisoner was thrown to the ground by his hunger-crazed comrades and brutally beaten in an effort to tear the bit of food from him.*

Food in Denver is prosaic, common, something that can be bought in any market, restaurant, drug store, or drive-in. Eat what you like and throw away the rest, for there is always more where that came from.

*Twelve months ago I stood with a group of American fliers around a dirty table in a Nuremberg prison and cut cards to see who among us would get the day's food "prize"—a maggoty piece of horse meat and some wormy dehydrated vegetable. This and a piece of black "brot" served for a day's fare, or, if our captors pleased, a week's supply.*

Some days in Denver, particularly Saturdays, the lines in the supermarkets are long and the milling crowds are apt to be irritating because so many people are shopping for several days' supply of food.

*Sixteen months ago in Sagan, Germany, I saw a milling crowd of Slavic men turn into an animal pack, crying, sobbing, and scrambling for a bit of ersatz black moldy cheese. Instead of a crowd of food-laden customers to irritate them, these men had Wehrmacht guards pumping bullets into their midst.*

Rolling into the Denver Union station every day come passenger trains from across the nation. Almost all these trains carry dining cars, well appointed, well stocked cars in which it is possible to relax and enjoy a nourishing meal. During the war, and still on some lines, they served only breakfast and supper, a situation that is lamentable because a person can become very hungry missing a noon-day meal.

*Twelve months ago in a bomb-shattered railway yard in Munich our "cattle" train filled with American and British prisoners was shunted onto a spur track until the line ahead was cleared of the day's allied strafing activities. This railway yard and station in Munich represented the most weird tower of babel ever inhumanly constructed. Over the chaos and debris of the smashed railhead rose the shouts, moans, and curses of the tortured, imprisoned races of Europe. Within a half mile area were more than 300 box cars loaded with shadows of men, women, and children, shrunk, gaunt, some dead and many dying. And crowding around our box cars, shouting to be heard above the unholy babble of starving humanity, were the German civilians wanting to trade their food for our cigarettes. An SS major finally was forced to drive away the civilians at gun point so insistent were they for cigarettes.*

The papers the past months have been quoting UNRRA reports, food commission reports, speeches, and pleas for deliverance from starvation for the starving of the world. Food, of course, is the best deliverance from starvation. During the war, though, there was another method of deliverance to many starving Europeans enslaved in Festung Europa.....It was death.

*Thirteen months ago in Ingolstadt, Germany, we saw long trains of refugee Polish, Czech, French, Jewish, and Italian families locked in their cars, and it was like a scene from another world, a world devoid of decency, responsibility, or cleanliness. Peering from slits in the side of the box cars were children whose eyes, from slow starvation, were dull and listless. Men and women watched as without any show of emotion, too weak, too tired to care about anything any more, even life.*

Our train pulled out of Ingolstadt early in the morning, went about 20 kilometers, and stopped. In the sky to the south we suddenly noticed long contrails, beautiful straight white streaks lazily moving across the sky. And at the head of each of those streaks was an American bomber laden with tons of explosives. The streaks multiplied and grew as squadron after squadron, group after group droned on overhead. Suddenly from the lead bomber a long cascading white marker bomb plummeted to earth, to the heart of Ingolstadt. For over half an hour the groups came over and the roar of bombs reverberated through the countryside. When they had left the familiar black ugly column of smoke was all that remained over the city. Under those tons of roaring bombs had been the long trains of refugees, strategically placed in the center of a military target. At least the passengers on those trains were forever rid of the gnawing, relentless pangs of hunger.

\*Joe Wellman, a bombardier on Charlie Phillips crew in the 401st was shot down over Berlin on 22 March 1944 and became a POW. He wrote this article for a Denver newspaper's food Drive in 1946.

## Letters to the Editor

Continued from page 6

Jenny Harlick, wife of eminent photographer, Joe, LM, 324th, sends an e mail message dated April 20, 2000, saying: "Joe napping after his therapy so thought I would give you an up-date.

Joe was fitted with a stainless steel cap on the upper leg bone and a Teflon cushion on the bottom leg bone. (This meant cutting parts of the bone away.) The incision is 9 inches with 31 staples which the Dr. will remove by snipping the top of the staple and easing it out on Monday.

Right from surgery his leg was on the Continuous Passive Motion System that worked day & night with a 4 minute cycle of straight to 90 degree bend.

What really amazed me was the Hemovac which drained the blood from the incision right back in the IV in the arm to re-cycle!! The surgery was the 13th and I brought him home on day 5 and he is able to walk already. This medical field gaining better methods every year.

Cheers, Jenny."

John Morris, FM, 324th, wrote: "I see George Jacobs reference in the April 2000 edition to B-17G 42-6568, otherwise know as "Skunkface III," and I'm prompted to add something to the lore of this plane.

Garland Spicer's crew (of which I was waist gunner) picked her up in Savannah in October 1944 and flew her from there to Presque Isle, ME. Gander, Newfoundland and Prestwick, Scotland, enjoying all the way this beautiful new plane—so different from the war-weary ones we had trained in. Then we kissed her good-bye and headed for Basingbourn by train. We figured that, as the newest crew in the 324th, we would not be flying such a virginal beauty any time soon—that we would be assigned the oldest war-horse in the squadron.

But just about the time we went operational, "568" (as we had taken to calling her) turned up in the squadron with the big triangle A on the tail. At this point, Garland Spicer performed some miracle: he sweet-talked someone into giving "568" to us for the business of bombing Germany. He must have pleaded the obvious power of the omens and our familiarity with the lady, etc. We flew her for our tour and got relatively few flak and bullet holes in her lovely skin. And no aborts. When we were on flak leave in Scotland, someone saw fit to drape her with nose art and the name "Skunkface III." But we kept calling her "568," thinking the name chosen to be far beneath her.

I knew she went down soon after we finished our tour in March of 1945, indeed, she was the last 91s BG plane lost in WWII. But I've always remembered her fondly for the luck she brought to us (no casualties for our crew); it's sad to know that luck didn't hold afterwards; perhaps we used it all up.

Sincerely, Jack

Peter Kassak sent an e mail message from Slovakia which follows as written. I am Slovak, 21 years old, pretty young for this interest, hm? I am interesting in air war over Slovakia and also in crash sites of US planes (only 15 af) in Slovakia during WWII. I am also interested in Luftwaffe. My web sites are:

[www.fortunecity.com/campusbooks/832/wscwd.htm](http://www.fortunecity.com/campusbooks/832/wscwd.htm)  
[www.volny.cz/pkacha](http://www.volny.cz/pkacha)

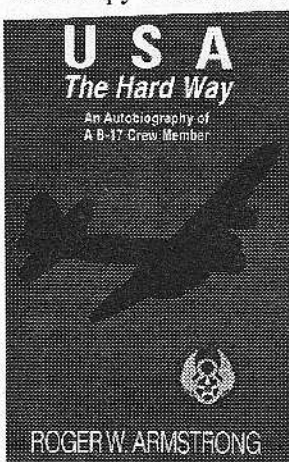
bye for now and take care.

Peter <pkassak@yahoo.com>

## Letters to the Editor

Continued.....

**Everett Montgomery**, FM, 324th, from Kenesaw, Nebraska, sent in a letter earlier this year telling us about a book written by Roger Armstrong, entitled, "U.S.A. The Hard Way. The request came in too late to hit the January edition and space did not permit a review in April. We apologize to both Everett and Roger Armstrong for not having reviewed this excellent book earlier. This Editor has had a copy of the book since November 1995. So here it is.



U.S.A. the Hard Way—An Autobiography

As Everett Montgomery wrote, "Roger W. Armstrong a Radio Operator on a B-17 named 'Jub Jub Bird,' in the 401st Bomb Squadron, starting on Sept. 8, 1944 until November 8, 1944.

In the book he has several pictures, five pictures of the 91st base including one of Group Headquarters and the 401st Squadron Barracks, briefing room and five inside the aircraft, one with Clark Gable at a .50 cal. machine gun.

The book is the entire story of his life in the Army Air Corps beginning with his enlistment at old Camp Cook, south of Omaha, Nebraska, including his capture by some German farmers and his interrogation by Luftwaffe officers, imprisonment and release. It has pictures of Stalag Luft I where he was imprisoned and his arrival in the United States and his reunion at home in Sioux Falls, SD where he grew up.

Raymond F. Toliver, "America's Leading Historian and Author on the German Luftwaffe, wrote: "I found the story very interesting. Having heard many first hand accounts such as this, each one is different since it was seen through different eyes. This account, though, is warmer and much more fascinating." Roger A. Freeman, Britain's Leading Historian, said, "I thoroughly enjoyed reading this manuscript. It is a fascinating history."

The book is The History Channel Selection, Air Force Magazine Book Selection, and the Air Force Academy Library Selection.

**J. W. "Jake" Howland**, LM, 324th, sent this story in some time ago. It is published below.

### The Fastidious Mickey Operator

Late in March 1944, flight crews assigned to the Pathfinder Force were first assembled at Chelveston, home of the 305th Group. Our ball turret gunner was replaced by the H2X radar dome and our bombardier was required to stay at our old base, in our case the 381st Bomb Group at Ridgewell. However, we did pick up one new crew member. He was the H2X radar operator commonly called the "Mickey Operator." On May 1, 1944, the Pathfinder Force was moved to Bassingbourn. Although the assignments weren't fixed, our crew normally flew with one Mickey Operator named John Spierling, or another known only as Flanagan. They were both good men and were a great help to me, the DR Navigator for the crew. On one occasion, Spierling got the tip of a finger shot off by flak as we cleared the coast of Holland. However, he soon recovered and flew with us on our D Day raid to Gold Beach in Normandy.

Flanagan was a quiet fellow. He handled the H2X radar in a highly professional manner, but one thing set him apart from the

Continued top of next column.....

other crew members. When Flanagan showed up on the flight line he looked like he was going to a reception at Buckingham Palace. He wore his Class A uniform and was in stark contrast to the rest of us. Most of us wore a jumpsuit over our baby-blue electric long johns. However, I couldn't find a jumpsuit small enough to fit me, so I wore the electric suit right over my wool ODs topped off with my A-2 jacket, parachute harness and Mae West. On one occasion I got chewed out by an equipment officer after a long mission for being "out of uniform." But I let it go in one ear and out the other, and flew the rest of my missions with my "lucky" flight uniform.

To the best of my knowledge, Flanagan never got shot down. However, if he had wound up as a POW, I am sure he would have won the prize for the "Best Dressed Officer in the 8th Air Force."

**U. S. Air Force Museum** plans to add a display featuring activities of the 8th Air Force Navigators. This regards a diorama adjacent to the B-17G Shoo Shoo Shoo Baby which was a 91st BG aircraft and is on display at the museum.. Navigators of the 91st, your help is needed in order to make this display as accurate as possible. Please contact John Massey, 6810 Rosewood Court, Tampa, FL 33615-3318. Call collect at 813-886-1938 or E mail: <afnoacg@aol.com>

**Jim Shepherd**, (with his wife, Suzy) is keeper of the 91st BGMA web site. On March 18, he reported over 700 visitors to the web page that week! "By the time we go to the reunion, we should have 40,000 to 45,000 visitors to the Web page." If you haven't a computer, buy one or call a friend, and try: "91st Bomb Group" on any search engine.

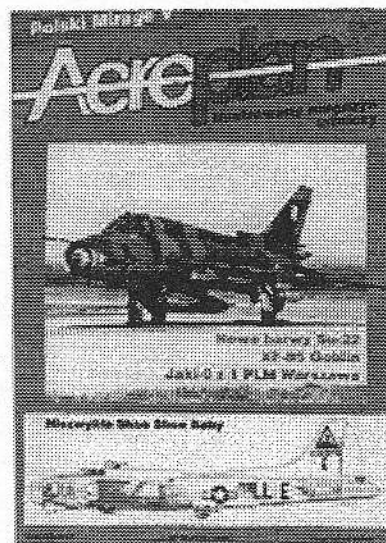
**Marion Hoffman**, LM, 323rd, sent several e mail messages but one should be published. In this one, he quoted, W. W. Hill, "During WWII, the ground crewmen sent to England were there for the duration. For some it was a long time. For example, the ground personnel with the 91st Bomb Group were away from home from September 1942 to June 1945. While ground crewmen's wives may have waited around for their man to return, girl friends were a different story. Thus, as time passed many of the men received 'Dear John' letters informing them the romance was over. In our particular Bassingbourn barracks the top of one wall locker, located in a dark corner, was set apart for the photos of the ladies who had sent 'Dear Johns.'"

The point of Hoffman's message, however, is different. His wife to be "waited for me thru all these hardships of war. We were married on July 6, 1945. She is some outstanding lady. I am proud she is my wife. I am very happy she did not send me a "Dear John" letter. During the war, she made .50 caliber machine guns, and I shot them from the position as Tail Gunner. Then, as now, we make one damn good team."

**Joy Friedman**, wife of 91st BGMA President, Bob Friedman, ran across a Polish aviation magazine with an illustration of Shoo<sup>3</sup> Baby on the cover.

**Jack Adams** is looking for information about his uncle, Monte Bryce Adams, former pilot in the 91st. He was contacted by Cliff Schultz who flew with his uncle and asks anyone who knew to contact him (Adams) at his E mail address:

<jdadams@clarkston.com>





## Letters to the Editor

Continued.....

**James Joyce**, a resident of a resort community at Peach Lake, in North Salem, NY, has announced a "Big Band Event" in Memory of the end of World War II and to honor a local Air Corps pilot, Don J. Gilliland, who was shot down by Japanese anti-aircraft fire and killed-in-action over Kiska on April 15, 1943. The event will take place Sept. 2, 2000, a Saturday from 7 pm to 11 pm at Vail's Pavilion. For further information, contact: Joyce at e-mail [JJOYCE39@aol.com](mailto:JJOYCE39@aol.com) or home phone 914-669-5224, or write to him at 8 Orchard Road, Brewster, NY 10509. Tickets are only \$20 and proceeds go to improving a park in Veterans' honor.

**Mary Turner**, Sent in an E Mail request for information about a former Chaplain in the 91st whose last name is Biggs. Anyone having information about Chaplain Biggs is asked to get in touch with Mary Turner at [maryt@rmi.net](mailto:maryt@rmi.net). If you don't have access to E Mail, send your response to the RI Editor who will forward it.

**Jack Gibson**, FM, 322nd, sent a letter over two years ago that never came to the top of the pile. We apologize but the newsletter is just so long. This is only the second expanded issue in the past four years.

Jack's letter referred to an article in the R/I, "A 1944 Christmas Story," published January 1998. Jack was Ball Turret Gunner on Bob Miller's crew. "I'll never forget waking that Christmas morning to an air base jammed with ice- and snow-covered B-17s." He enclosed a copy of his diary entry for that day.

"Mission Five. Sunday, December 24, 1944. Today we delivered "Xmas presents to a German fighter base at Mersehaussen, 15 miles northeast of Frankfurt. The whole 8th Air Force was up today helping to check the recent Nazi push. We got flak on the lines but due to good evasive action we avoided a lot of it. Bandits were reported in the area and although other groups were hit hard we sighted no enemy fighters. The target was visual and for the first time I got to see the bombs hit—and they really hit.

"Our field was closed in so on return we had to land at the 94th Bomb Group base. We spent Christmas Eve in their briefing room but it was good to be down and safe. Altitude 22,000 ft., Temp: -36C, Mission length, 6½ hrs."

Accompanying the diary was a copy of Colonel Henry Terry's commendation to all personnel who took part in the mission: "I wish to thank each and every one of the members of the air crews, maintenance crews, drivers, and mess personnel who carried out yesterday's mission under very trying and almost impossible conditions, necessitating long and extra hours of duty and little or no rest—displaying the initiative, teamwork and devotion to duty which has made this station and its personnel the best outfit anyone could have the privilege and honor to command." Signed: Henry W. Terry, Colonel, A.C., Commanding

At the top of the memo is penned in, "Christmas 'greeting' from the colonel."

**Bob Striegel** [striegear@osd.pentagon.mil](mailto:striegear@osd.pentagon.mil) Having seen the 91st BG web site, Bob sent an e mail message to site manager Jim Shepherd and copying the R/I: "Great web site! I'm looking for anyone who might have known my father -in-law, Vernon Baird. Vernon flew as top turret gunner on a B-17 out of Bassingbourn. Vernon is retired and doing well. He and his family are living in the Oklahoma City area.." Anyone who would like to respond to Mr. Striegel and who does not have access to e mail can contact this Editor.

Continued next column.....

**Lee Dickerson** is trying to make contact with Robert Neale Roberts or any of his surviving family. Through a death in his wife's family, Lee has come into possession of an A-2 Jacket belonging to Mr. Roberts and he would like to get it to him or his survivors. Anyone knowing Roberts or his survivors should contact Mr. Dickerson at Lee Dickerson Agency, 806 W. Summit Rd., Brooksville, FL 34601, Tel: 352-796-3382, or fax at 352-796-4223.

**Jack & Claudia Adams** writes: "Thanks for your reply. I have been able to locate three members of my uncle's crew and have obtained a great deal of information including a summary of all the missions he flew as either copilot of pilot. This has been a fascinating experience for me. {Ed note: I'm sure this goes to all who assisted.}

**Randa Davis'** father was a crew member on the "SAD SACK," a B-17 in the 323rd Sq. that was shot down Oct. 8, 1943. She has been searching for information about him and the crew and has been in touch with the web site and Jim Shepherd. She wrote: "thank you so much for your reply to my search for members of my father's crew. So many people have been terrific in aiding with my search. I am planning on purchasing the *Ragged Irregular* and continuing my research." Signed: Randa (and the entire family of F. Howard Hitchins.)

Anyone with additional information may contact her by e mail at [momranda@juno.com](mailto:momranda@juno.com).

**Jason Wilson** has contacted the 91st web site for information about "Just Plain Lonesome," a B-17G assigned to the 324th Sq. In addition he has written to say, "my main hobby is building scale plastic models of aircraft (mainly WWII era...." He became fascinated by the name and decided to research the history of the airplane more thoroughly. "What I'm looking for would be just about anything....facts, and figures, stories of the plane, and the men who served on or with her, photographs, anything at all." Wilson can be reached at 534 Lee Dr., Crossville, TN, or by e mail, [jjwilson@tapublishing.com](mailto:jjwilson@tapublishing.com) Wilson also works as a Systems Engineer and Web developer for TAP Publishing in Crossville, better known for its publication, "Trade-A-Plane."

**Vincent A. Hemmings**, well known British aviation historian, read the story: "A Quiet Sunday Morning in London," published in the January 2000 issue of the RI and sent in by Chuck Galian, and wrote that there are some 90 English brides who married 91sters while at Bassingbourn. "I would like to compile a list of them all, if it is not too late. I would be most grateful if members will write/e-mail me with details please." Street address is: 53 Malthouse Way, Barrington, Camb., CB2 5RR, UK, or e mail: [station121@vhemmings.freemove.co.uk](mailto:station121@vhemmings.freemove.co.uk)

**Jean B. Rhinehart**, daughter of Lt. Glenn Brooks, Jr., CoPilot, who with the rest of the crew was shot down over the North Sea in "Liberty Belle", S/N 4229659. This was a 92nd BG crew on temporary assignment with the 324th Sq. All were Missing-in-Action. Mrs. Rhinehart would like to contact anyone who knew her father. She can be reached at 717-697-9608

Other crew members were:

P	Hascall C. McClelln	1/Lt
N	Claude L. Green, Jr.	1/Lt
B	Clarence J. Buchman	1/Lt
TT	Samuel L. Williams	T/Sgt
R	Ed. G. Ansell-Trelawney	T/Sgt.
BT	Felix P. Makela	S/Sgt
W1	Ben C. Billingsley	Sgt
W2	Charles Shapiro	Sgt
T	Wallace M. Roberts	Sgt

## A History of the 91st Group Photo Unit

By Joseph Harlick.....

## ***Folded Wings***

Continued from Page 11



**91st Bomb Group (H) Photo Unit**

(Background: B-17G S/N 338306 "The Biggest Bird")

Top Row: F. Bynum, Ed Caprenter, Don Caldwell, Clyde Rhodes, Ed Schultz, Bill Pulliam, Bill Lyons.

Center Row: Jack Fairjeller, Jack Pallmer, William Calvin, Kenneth Criswell.

Standing: Philip Brown, Charles Bowers, Ted Webb, Captain Ray (Photo Officer), Leonard Cook (Lab Chief), Bill Remsen, Joe Harlick, Irv Brukman.

(Missing: Gerald Massie, on full time assignment at SHAEF Headquarters as full time Photographer for General Ike.)

The original unit consisted of (1) Officer-in-charge, (1) Photo Lab Chief, with (2) members of each of the (4) squadrons, totaling ten members who went to England by ship in 1942. In May 1943 the group was increased to 4 members per squadron and 2 from the service squadron. I was attached to the 324th Squadron in May 1943. Since my specialized training included Camera Repair, maintenance and responsibility for strike cameras, became my primary assignment.

A central building, which housed the Photo Lab, was a masonry building located between hangars B and C. We shared the building with the Armament Unit. They were the ground crew that loaded the bombs. The Photo Lab was upstairs, with a couple of small rooms for beds, including the Lab Chief and the Photo Officer. Most Photo personnel were located in other nearby barracks. The high bay area was formerly an RAF bombsight trainer, the lower part of this area was for Camera storage and repair. Since all of our American lab equipment was powered with 110 volts AC, the British supplied us with a 220 volt transformer (standard power for England) to break it down to 110 volts. Temporary wiring was stretched to all locations in the Photo Lab as necessary.

Our primary mission was for bomb strike photographs, but there were thousands of other pictures made with hand held cameras of the base activities, such a battle damage, after a mission, flight crew group photos, individual flight crew fake passport photos (in civilian clothes), nose art on the planes, visiting dignitaries which included: Royalty, high ranking General, or movie celebrities, and USO performers. Someone was always on standby with a Camera for accidents. Also many record shots of G.I.'s at work, public relations, general humor or novelty incidents. Many times at 1:00 am, we would be given a photograph of the next

Continued lower half of next column.....

● **Earl Riley** (Cont.) Riley is survived by his wife, Sue Canter, his four daughters, Sharon Fellows, Patricia Chartrand, Erin Riley, Carla Riley-Felt, and his five grandchildren, Noah, Kelsey, James, and Alec. His ashes were scattered by his family in the Kona waters he loved so much.

● **Robert F. Sullivan**, FM, 322nd, Pompano Beach, FL, Jan. 10, 2000. Reported by his wife.

● **Willis J. Taylor**, FM, 323rd, San Francisco, CA, Aug. 30, 1999, age 82, and interred in Laketown, UT. Taylor led the 91st on many missions from mid-1944 through the end of the War flying such aircraft as "Ah's Available," "Geraldine," "Tennessee Tess" and others. His last lead was to an airfield at Rheine Salzbergen, the next to last mission flown by the 91st Group. His death was reported by his wife, Judy.

● **Jerome Damron, Jr.**, FM, 401st, Interlachen, FL, June 15, 2000, age 80, massive coronary after several years of failing health. His wife of over 54 years, Bettie Lou, writes: "After all these years his wings may be folded but he was proud to be a member and the pride he holds in his heart for all 91st BG will live on."

● **Gerald R. Engstad**, FM, 324th, West Bend, WI, Mar. 25, 2000, age 74. Born and raised in Onalaska, WI, Engstad served in the 91st BG during WWII, and returned to Onalaska to marry Dorothea Farris. He graduated from La Cross State University in 1950 and taught elementary schools in Onalaska and West Bend for 11 years. He retired in 1987 after having served as Principal at Decorah School in West Bend for 26 years.

He was active in St. John's Lutheran church, and was a member of the Washington County Educators Association.

He is survived by his wife, Dody, two daughters, a son, two brothers, a brother-in-law and five grandchildren.

● **Robert F. Sullivan**, FM, 322nd, Pompano Beach, FL, Jan. 10, 2000, age 78. He was a former Captain in the USAF and earned the DFC, Air Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Distinguished Unit Citation. He was born in New Haven, CT, and was prominent in South Florida where he was active in developing The Cove Shopping Center in Deerfield Beach and the residential community that surrounds it, Venetian Isles in Lighthouse Point and Crystal Lake Country Club.

Sullivan was an active member of the Chamber of Commerce, Knights of Columbus and Corinthian Yacht and Tennis Club. He is survived by his four children and his sister. He was predeceased by his wife Margaretmary and son Robert, Jr.

## ***Hail and Farewell***

Continued from previous column.....

day's target to copy and prints were made for handouts at the briefing.

Miscellaneous events covered were: weddings, base dances, 25th or 35th mission completion events, our second year anniversary, 300 mission open house, and, of course, the most important, VICTORY IN EUROPE day announcements. All of the film processing was in black and white, (except one roll of experimental color film sent to us by Eastman Kodak Co.). With a shortage of 4X5 in. cut film, I designed a film splitter from some rollers and razor blades. We saved the unexposed ends of 9 1/2 in. wide aerial film and split it into 4 inch width and then cut them into 5 inch lengths (in the dark, of course). This also worked great for my personal 120 size roll film camera. I carried my own folding camera everywhere. End of Chapter 1.

Chapter 2 will be continued in the October issue.



## Golded Wings

Continued from Page 12.....

● **Arvin Basnight**, LM, 323<sup>rd</sup>, Palos Verde Estates, CA, January 14, 2000. No details available.

● **Ernest L. Ciarletta**, FM, 322nd, Watertown, MA, Apr. 29, 2000. Reported by his daughter, Beverly DiMascio.

● **Clarence A. Cluck**, FM, 324<sup>th</sup>, St. Petersburg, FL, August 1999. Reported by Jean Holt.

● **Louis J. Deeb**, FM, 401st, Norton, OH, April 8, 2000, Age 79, cancer. As reported by his wife, Eudora, Lou served in the 91st as a waist gunner on B-17 "Tennessee Tess." Deeb was preceded in death by his first wife, Alice, and is survived by wife Eudora, three sons, two daughters, a brother, eight grandchildren, three great grandchildren and he was an uncle of four.

● **Gerald Engstad**, FM, 324th, West Bend, WI. Reported by his wife.

● **Thomas J. Gannon**, FM, 322nd, Madison, CT, Oct. 31, 99. Reported by his wife, Peg.

● **William A. Gottschalk**, FM, 401st, Rocky River, OH, Nov. 29, 1999. Reported by his wife, Eleanor.

● **Charles W. Falkenmayer**, FM, 324th, Colorado, Springs, CO. Reported by his wife, Frances.

● **Paul Katz**, FM, 323rd, Acton, CA, Mar. 12, 2000. His wife, Joan, reports that it was very sudden and unexpected. They were both looking forward to this year's reunion in Galveston and seeing his fellow crewmen and she hopes this year's reunion will be as successful as the one in Savannah.

● **Martin Kearns**, FM, 322<sup>nd</sup>, North Conway, NH, August 1999. Reported by Jack Gibson who with Kearns were on the crew of pilot Bob Miller. Kearns was top turret/engineer.

● **John W. Keckler**, FM 322<sup>nd</sup>, Carmarillo, CA, Sept. 22, 1999, 75, respiratory and heart failure. Reported by his wife, Inez.

● **John Klotz**, FM, 324<sup>th</sup>, West Chester, OH, Apr. 15, 1999. Submitted by Diana Klotz.

● **Otto J. Krause**, FM, 324<sup>th</sup>, formerly of Ocala, FL, May 6, 1999., multiple myeloma. Submitted by Terry of Rochester, MN, his wife of 54 years. He leaves five sons and 10 grandchildren. Otto served as Lead Navigator on several missions.

● **Gordon H. Leach**, FM, 323<sup>rd</sup>, Springfield, OR, Feb. 28, 2000, age 84, heart complications. Submitted by sister, Mary M. Dysinger, of San Dimas, CA.

● **Raymond F. Leavitt**, FM, 322<sup>nd</sup>, N. Chelmsford, MA, April 17, 2000, age 78., cancer. Ray graduated from Lowell High School and attended several colleges, including University of Lowell and Lowell Commercial College. He was a radio operator/gunner with the 8<sup>th</sup> Air force and the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force. He completed a total of 51 missions including the first Berlin mission and the first shuttle mission to the Soviet Union. In civilian life, he was employed by the Watertown Arsenal, the Veterans Administration in Boston, and Hanscom Air Force Base in Bedford as a contracting officer. His wife of almost 53 years says, "Ray's passing has left a great void in our lives."

● **Herbert L. Marshark**, FM 863<sup>rd</sup>, formerly of Delray Beach, FL, July 25, 1998. Born in Great Neck, NY, he moved to Florida from Rockville, MD in 1981. He is survived by his wife of 28 years, Geneva, seven children, ten

Continued top of next page.....

grandchildren and one great grandchild. He died of acute leukemia and was interred in the Veterans National Cemetery in Baltimore, MD. Geneva adds, "Herbert was so proud of his service to our country—his last days he relived those days. He dearly loved receiving the *Ragged Irregular*."

● **William A. McGavern**, LM, 323<sup>rd</sup>, N. Huntingdon, PA, May 22, 2000, age 80. Bill was radio operator/gunner on the crew of Robert M. ("Dusty") Hoffman's crew in "Hi Ho Silver" and completed 31 combat missions. In civilian life, he was owner/operator of the A-1 Sewer Cleaning Specialist Company in McKeesport, PA. In addition to lifelong membership in the 91<sup>st</sup> BGMA, he was also a member of the 8<sup>th</sup> Air force Association, American Air Museum in England, Disabled American Veterans, and a volunteer for "Meals on Wheels". He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Virginia, two sons, and two grandchildren. Virginia ends her note, "I shall miss him terribly. He was my whole life."

● **Alfred C. Miller**, FM, 324th, Woodcliff Lake, NJ, Summer of 1999, heart attack. Miller served as Tail Gunner on Hatfield's crew. Reported by his daughter to Earl Pate.

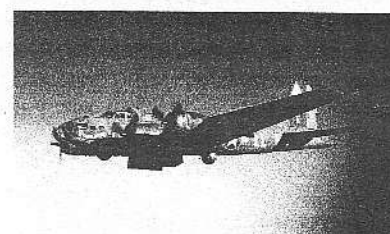
● **Earl Riley**, 401st, San Francisco, CA, Feb. 13, 2000, age 79. Don Sheeler, another early 91ster of that era, sent in a notice of Riley's death published in the LA Times and a Memorial Notice.

Sheeler wrote: "Riley was a life long friend, 60 years next July. We were going to visit him in Kona, HI, on St. Patrick's Day. He was one of the original pilots in the 401<sup>st</sup> Squadron and finished his tour in July or August 1943. At that time he had red hair and was known through Cadet School as "One Eyed (?) Riley."

Riley grew up in Greensboro, Indiana. After attending Hanover college, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps, flying B-17s and B-29s during World War II attaining the rank of Captain. After the War he attended the University of Michigan Law School. Upon graduation he moved to Whittier, California where he practiced Law for 21 years.

He was appointed to the Bench by then Governor Ronald Reagan in 1971, and served as a Superior Court Judge in Los Angeles County until his retirement in 1987. Among the cases he tried in his court were the first asbestos and Dalkon Shield lawsuits; Raquel Welch vs. MGM; Peggy Lee vs. The Waldorf Astoria Hotel and the Joan Collins palimony suit.

The L.A. Times writer, Myrna Oliver, wrote "During his 16 years on the bench, handling divorce, probate, civil and criminal trials, Riley developed a reputation for his practical, thorough legal mind and for his patience and humor. Described affectionately as "Irish as the Blarney Stone" and given to wearing bright plaid sports coats under his austere black robe."



"BombBoogie" Flown by Earl Riley

As a pilot in the 401<sup>st</sup>, Riley's name shows up several times in Ray Bowden's book, "Plane Names and Fancy Tales." It wasn't his regular airplane but Riley flew "Bomb-Boogie" pictured to the left. Other airplanes associated with him were "Eager Beaver," the "Saint," and "Yankee Eagle."

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# Folded Wings

Please send obituary notices to:

**Asay B. Johnson, Sec'y/Treas., 91st BGMA,  
590 Aloha Drive, Lake Havasu City, AZ 86406.**

● **John Askins, LM, 401st, Sunnyvale, CA.** Reported April 26, 2000 by fellow crewman and noted author, Roger W. Armstrong, pilot of the crew, that was shot down on the Merseburg raid, Nov. 2, 1944. Askins flew a total of 17 combat missions during September and October 1944. On the Merseburg mission, he flew deputy lead when the 91st set a record for the highest combat losses during World War II. Roger says, "Our plane was the first to go down still 30 minutes from the target."

Askins was awarded the Silver Star for his action in saving all of our lives on a borrowed 401st B-17, "U.S.A. The Hard Way" [also the title of Roger Armstrong's book].

After the war John returned to the campus and received his Engineering degree at Cal. Poly University at San Luis Obispo. He later was a project engineer in Silicon Valley and designed many of the air to air and ground to air guidance systems. He is survived by his wife Jackie, two sons and a daughter.

● **Gerald Blaisure, LM, 322nd, Montrose, PA., April 19, 2000** of cancer. Reported by his wife, Elsie, who adds, "He was so proud of the American flag and his service to his country." He was a life member of the 91st BGMA, and the VFW Post 385 in Dimock Twp. After four years in the service during WWII, he worked for many years for a lumber company and a feed mill. He is survived by 3 sisters, a brother, and a special brother -in-law and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

● **James C. Cater, AM, 324th, Sun City AZ, March 16, 2000, Age 77.** Cater served in the Air Force for 13 years including WWII and Korea. He was Vice President of Command Airways in New York and moved to Arizona in 1991. He was a member of Escape and Evasion Society, Disabled American Veterans and the 91st BGMA. His last activity was as a Realtor with Prudential Preferred Properties. He is survived by his wife, Frances, son James, two daughters, Sandra and Cynthia, eight grandchildren and a great-grandchild.

● **Harold R. DeBolt, LM, 401st, Foster City, CA, Mar. 12, 2000, Age 85,** of cardiac arrest. DeBolt was a pilot in the 401st and flew 34 missions. In addition to "Shoo Shoo Baby" and Destiny's child, he was also pilot of the "Phantom Fortress" that crash-landed itself (sans crew) in Belgium. The story of the landing was written up in the April 1970 issue of the *Ragged Irregular*. [Ed. Note: Reread this story if you can.]

Upon completing his missions, DeBolt returned to the United States and married Venus Peterson who preceded

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## THE RAGGED IRREGULAR

These Newsletters are published quarterly: January, April, July and October. The R/I's purpose is to keep alive the spirit of the 91st Bombardment Group (H) and to maintain the fellowship of all of those who fought together in World War II from AF Station 121 in Bassingbourn, England from 1942-1945. Material for publication should be sent to the Editor, Phil Mack, 17521 155th Ave. SE, Renton, WA 98058-9087. "Time-value" items must be received on or before the fifteenth day preceding the month of publication to permit necessary priority

● **James E. Black, LM, 322nd, Murfreesboro, TN, May 20, 2000, Age 81.** He is survived by his wife, Viola McLarty Black, daughters Zita Elrod, Charlotte Trainer, both of Nashville, five grandchildren, and a nephew. He was formerly a Real Estate agent and served as a court Officer in Rutherford County court system. He retired from the Air Force after 22 years of service. In the notice, Viola says, "We had been married 58 years and, boy!, it is rough without him."

Continued top of next column.....

him in 1981. Subsequently he married Dorothy Jones in 1991 and they lived together in Santa Rosa until his death. In civilian life, DeBolt returned to his prewar job with the U.S. Postal Service retiring from that service after 35 more years. He is survived by a large and loving family. His fellow pilot, Neil Daniels, and his former flight engineer, Frank S. Ripa, both attended the funeral service and spoke of their wartime experiences flying together in the 91st BG.

**Folded Wings** continued on page 11.....