

THE RAGGED IRREGULAR



322nd Bomb Sq.



323rd Bomb Sq.



Supporting Units



324th Bomb Sq.



401st Bomb Sq.

Vol. 37 No. 3

91st Bombardment Group (H)

July 2004

It's been a long time coming -- some 59 years after the war -- but visitors wandering about the National Mall in Washington, D.C., will see the new Memorial dedicated to the nation's World War II Veterans. It is a 7.4-acre site between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial and it was ready for the Memorial Day Dedication.

Two 43-foot arches welcome visitors to a bronze-and-granite memorial plaza. The arches serve as north and south entries to the plaza, and within each arch are four bronze eagles that hold a suspended victory laurel. A 17-foot granite pillar, adorned with bronze oak and wheat wreaths, represents each state and territory from that period. "The 56 pillars celebrate unprecedented national unity,"

In the center of the pillars, stands a rainbow reflecting pool with fountains and a wall with 4,000 sculpted, gold-plated stars. The stars commemorate the 400,000 American soldiers who died in the war and the 16 million who served and supported the war effort from home.

"YOU MUST SEE IT"

World War II Memorial, Washington DC



The Presidents Corner:

As I write, we are barely three months from Reunion 2004 – another chance to renew old friendships and make new ones. Steve and Nancy Perri did a fine recon mission and report that all is ready for us. We are still trying to eliminate some glitches in the registration information at the Sheraton, but, as you will see in the blurb about “Hotel Reservations,” Page 3, in the R.I., we are getting help from Ms Azza Folk, Sales Manager. The only date on which you are unlikely to be able to get our group rate of \$89 is Wednesday – as long as you get your reservation in by 31, August.

A visit to Andrews AFB may not be the most exciting base visit we have ever made, but it does have a very special significance for former B-17 crews. An article in the February 2002 Air Force Magazine details the career of Lt. Gen. Frank Andrews, whose picture hangs in the lobby of the Andrews AFB Club where we will have lunch. General Andrews was almost side-tracked in the pre WW II in-fighting for his staunch support of the strategic bombing concept and the B-17 in particular. In 1938, Andrews convinced Gen. George Marshall whose opinion “went a long way toward saving the controversial aircraft, which Army officers derided as “Andrew’s Folly”.

In our quarterly Conference Call on 22 May, you BGMA officers reviewed contacts with the Tower Museum and the 91st Space Wing at Minot, ND. I just completed an e-mail to Col. Mark Owens (soon to be General) encouraging further development of our contact. Jim Bard, of the 91st Strategic Recon Wing Memorial Association, will be visiting with us at our Reunion and perhaps someone from the 91st Space Wing.

Great contributions have been made to your BGMA’s prestige and honor by the efforts of Vince Hemmings at Cambridge and Jake Howland in contact with the folks at Opijnen, Holland. Joe & Jenny Harlick went over to Wincanton, England to participate in honors to our crew of “**Old Faithful**” who gave their lives to save a city.

There is so much good news for this issue, it seems like a good time to keep the “Corner”

just that, instead of a page. Please enter your vote for our officer candidates and/or a write-in whose concurrence you have obtained to be dominated. See you in Washington!

President, Ed Gates

91st BGMA Officers

President Ed Gates

12211 16th Ave. Ct. S
Tacoma WA 98444
Tel: (253) 535-4246

1st Vice President

Marvin M. Goldberg

437 Narragansett St. NE
Palm Bay FL 32907-1332
Tel: (321) 953-3694

2nd Vice President

Phil Mack

17521 155th Ave. SE
Renton WA 98058-9087
(mackovco@aol.com)

Secretary/Treasurer

Asay B. Johnson

590 Aloha Drive
Lake Havasu City AZ
86406-4559
Tel: (928) 463-3114
FAX (928) 453-6370
(ace91bgma@mindspring.com)

Historian, Earl Pate, Jr.

104 Skyview Dr.
Hendersonville TN 37075
Tel: (615) 824-7909
(ep91bg@mindspring.com)

Editor, Steve Perri

12750 Kelly Greens Blvd.
Ft. Myers FL 33908
Tel: (239) 454-5838
(deltareb@aol.com)

Please send all Obituaries to:
ACE JOHNSON
with photo if possible

Any articles for the RI
should be sent to:
STEVE PERRI - EDITOR

DON'T MISS IT**91st Bomb Group Reunion
Washington DC****September 30 – October 3, 2004**

**Sheraton, Crystal City Hotel
1800 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington VA 22202**

**For Reservations call Hotel at:
703-486-1111 or 1-800-862-7666**

Room Rate \$89 plus tax (except for Wed.)

Be sure to Mention 91st BGMA

If you call-in for reservations for Wednesday, you will find the quoted price is \$225 or so. As an alternative, you can make your booking at the Sheraton and then send your confirmation number to Azza Folk, Sales Manager, (afolk@scchotel.com) indicating the nights on which you have been charged more than \$89+tax and she will reduce the rate to \$150 for Wednesday – all other nights appear to be available at \$89. Cut-off date, 31 August. We are trying to do our best – we all want to make it another enjoyable Reunion. We can obtain a few rooms at another hotel two blocks away at \$89 – email me for further information (gainmutual@yahoo.com).

REFUND PROCEDURES:

As stated at the end of the enclosed "Reservation Form": "If unforeseen circumstances force you to cancel – after the August 25th cut-off date, you can get a refund on all items except the cruise reservations if – your request is received in writing to **NATIONAL PLANNERS** prior to 27 Sept. 2004.

However, our contract with National Planners permits you to sell your tickets (on which you cannot get a refund), to any other 91st BGMA member. Ace Johnson has agreed to assist you in this, if you will not be able to attend the Reunion.

For any tickets (tour, banquet or cruise) on which you cannot get a refund – send a copy of your notification that you made in writing to National Planners to Secretary/Treasurer Johnson. He will do his best to re-sell them for you (no guarantees.) If you change your mind on a tour after arrival at the Reunion, you can try to sell your unused tickets.

TOUR EVENTS: One consideration in selecting the Sheraton Crystal City Hotel, was its very easy access to the Metro. If you wish to go on your own and meet us at the WWII Memorial, for example, it is fairly easy to do so. The same applies to many of the other attractions.

Registration Fee \$25 p.p.

(includes \$10 Gift Certificate good at PX)

REUNION EVENTS

(See Flyer for details of Events)

THURSDAY, Sept. 30th

Event A: \$19 p.p.

New Air & Space Museum
(1:00PM – 5:00PM)

Evening Not so Gala Reception

(5:30PM Hospitality Room)

(Tips for drinks only)

FRIDAY – Oct. 1st

Event B: \$25 p.p.

Andrews Air Force Base tour
(9:00AM – 1:00PM)

Lunch at Event B & C will be on your own at the Dining Hall.

Event C: \$44 p.p.

Same as Event B above only including National Archives of College Park
(9:00AM – 4:30PM)

Event D:

Dinner Cruise aboard: \$69 p.p.
"Spirit of Washington"
(5:30 – 10:30PM)

SATURDAY, Oct. 2nd**91st Bomb Group Business Meeting**

(9AM – 12PM) at Sheraton - or

Event E: \$29 p.p.

Hillwood Mansion & Gardens Tour
(9AM – 12PM)

Group Luncheon Buffet (own expense)

Sheraton (12PM – 1:30PM)

Event F: \$29 p.p.

VIP Veteran's Tour
(2PM – 5PM)
(Group photo taken at 2:30)

SUNDAY, Oct. 3rd

Event G: \$59 p.p.

Aboard the "Dandy"
(10AM – 3PM) - or

Event H: \$29 p.p.

Mount Vernon Tour
(10AM – 3PM)

Event I: \$30 p.p.

Gala Banquet Dinner
(7PM)

(See Choices on Registration Form)

Letters to the Editor and More:

Gentlemen:

James Schoenecker, retired as the Superintendent of the American Military Cemetery at Madingley after 14 years in the post. For James, this is his second retirement, having retired from the US Army some years ago. He and his wife are retiring to Pennsylvania. I have always found James so helpful, particularly when I took either 91ster's or relations of 91ster's to the Cemetery. Nothing was too much trouble. He has been a great friend to me and will be sorely missed by many throughout the country.

I do not know who his replacement will be. I have always found his Deputy, Frank Kaufmann a very capable person, so perhaps he will follow James as the Superintendent.

Kind regards to you all.

Vince Hemmings

Gentlemen:

I am a life member of the 91st and feel like I'm getting a free ride, so to speak. Therefore, please accept the enclosed check to help out with our current financial needs.

This donation was prompted by the action of John Zajac, reported in your most recent excellent publication. John was the Ball Turret Gunner of the "Lewd Angel", and I was the Radio Operator. Many years ago, I started to try to locate my crew. I knew John came from Chicago and called Bell Telephone Information, only to be told that Chicago had three thick books of subscribers. I asked if Zajac was an uncommon name and with her affirmative reply, asked her to have a go at it. She was back in less than a minute with his number. There are four photos of nose art on the wall of the Bassingbourn control tower, "Lewd Angel" being one of them. I was surprised to see it during my visit there a few months after 9/11.

Perhaps there are other life members that feel as I feel about helping out. There could be a chain reaction. , Good Luck **James D. Cummins**

Steve and I met a woman at the WWII Reunion, Penny Sue Hopkins LeGrand, who told us of a website called American WWII Orphans Network www.awon.org that is devoted to people who lost their Dad's during WWII. She would like to hear from you.

Nancy Perri

NEW BOOK:

My new book, "OFF WE GO, A PILOT'S JOURNAL", Has been published and made available in May, 2004. It is a continuation of my book, "STORMY WEATHER". Atlas books, a subsidiary of Book Masters, Inc., is handling the sales. The computer internet featuring a brief summary of the book, as well as the price and shipping details can be viewed on <http://www.atlasbooks.com/marktpl/> and is also available toll free 1 (800) 247-6553 is available for transactions. Trust you are all healthy and in good spirits and hope the book gives you interesting reading and satisfaction.

Sincerely,

George Birdsong, Jr., Colonel, USA (Ret)

Jenny and I will be headed for Seattle, June 13th and catching a plane for London. We are going to participate in the ceremonies at Wincanton, England, where "Old Faithful" crashed when the wing collapsed from engine fire damage when her pilot tried to turn to avoid the town. We've been offered VIP treatment.

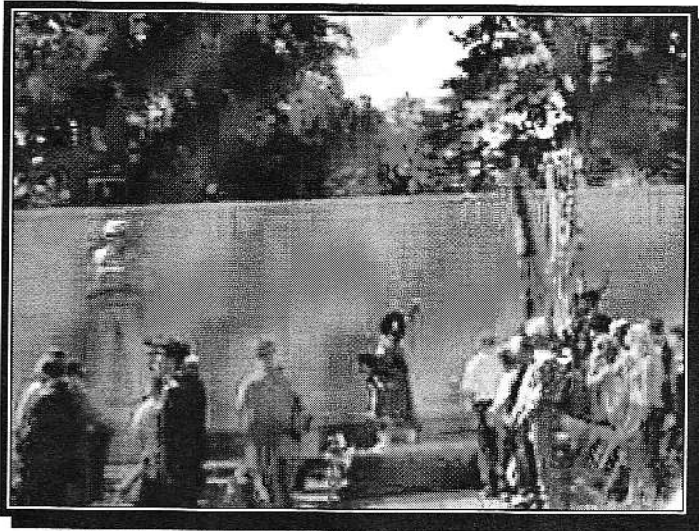
I photographed the crash 60 years ago I never knew the number or name of the plane until now. I will write up the whole story when we get back. Cheers - Joe and Jenny Harlick

What about a story about the Sheet Metal Crews? I recommend the B-17 airplane named "Gen. Ike", which suffered severe damage when a JU-88 struck number three engine and the propeller continued its flight into the right side of the fuselage, cutting a six foot swath between the navigator and copilot's position. It severed all communications, plus oxygen, hydraulic, etc. The plane had been assigned to fly at 12,500 feet while attacking the Loire River Bridges preparatory to D-Day landings on Normandy Beaches. It was MIA for more than 24 hours and finally was located by an RAF crew passing by who reported the location and the need for engine replacement and sheet metal repairs. Several crewmembers were injured, but they were well attended by other crewmembers. Bassingbourn Operations was informed that both "Gen. Ike" and all crewmembers would be flying again in the near future.

Sent in by Bert Humphries

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE POND

Memorial Day at Madingley Cemetary,
May 2004



BAGPIPER AT MADINGLEY CEMETARY

As reported by Vince Hemmings

We had one of those spring days, that is seldom seen in this country on the last Monday in May; very warm sunshine with large fluffy clouds. The extensive crowd was dotted with Panama hats.

Major Kelvin Garner, was the Memorial Services' Master of Ceremonies, a new name to me as was Mr. Hugh Duberly, CBE Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire. He spoke very well in his address. Mr. David T. Johnson, Charge d' Affaires A1, U.S. Embassy in London, in his address read out part of the speech your President, George Bush, had made at the dedication service of the World War II Memorial the previous Saturday. During that section of his address, Mr. Johnson became emotional. Whether he had lost a close relation in that war, I do not know, but it was sad for the man to have to go through that. Major General Michael W. Wooley, USAF, Third Air Force Commander and Brigadier General Mark T. Mathews, USAF 48th Fighter Wing, RAF Lakenheath was among those attending.

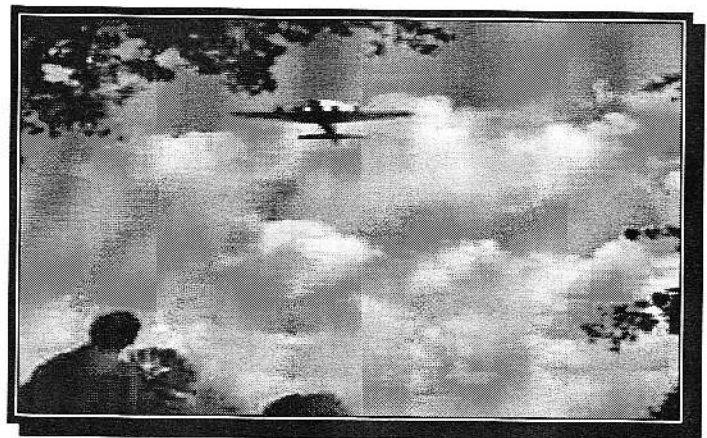
The Royal Air Force representative was Air Vice Marshall R. C. Moore MBE, BSc.

Lieutenant Colonel N. J. Richardson, from the Army Training Regiment at Basingbourn Barracks, laid a wreath on behalf of the barracks. It was pleasing to see Mr. Frank Kaufmann representing the American Battle Monument Commission. Frank was Deputy to recently retired Superintendent, Mr. James Schoenecker at the Cemetery.

The service always recognizes Veterans that attend the Service. We were blessed with more than in recent years. We had Veterans and their families from the 92ndBG (H), 401stBG (H) and the 82ndAirborne Division. When the wreath carriers brought the wreaths from behind the Chapel, I thought they were never going to stop. This year was a new record with 130 floral tributes plus, of course, those laid by individuals. I look forward to the time when the "Wall of the Missing" is full; it's nearly there. The wreath carriers are all American Air Force NCO's. The "Missing Man" formation was carried out by F-15E Strike Eagles from the 494th Fighter Squadron, USAF from RAF Lakenheath.

The B- 17, "Sally B", from Duxford, was escorted this year by a Spitfire and a Hurricane. That may have happened before, but I cannot remember it appreciative round of applause. So another Memorial Day has past. I feel honoured that your Association has given me the privilege again this year to lay your wreath.

Thank you Gentlemen.



THE "SALLY B" FLYOVER.

KUDOS TO THE GROUND CREW

By Whitmal W. Hill Jr. -Sheet Metal Crew Chief

WHIT HILL joined the 91st BG, May 1942 after graduating Sheet-metal School at Chanute Field IL. And was sent to Mac Dill Field, Tampa Florida. As sheet metal men on base, there was no work, as the base had their own maintenance hangers, shops and manpower. With no work, I was assigned to many details such as guard duty and cleaning up the area. I, of course, pulled a lot of Guard duty watching the hangers and the other buildings on the "line" using a baseball bat for a weapon, as the Squadron did not have any weapons (which was probably a good thing as we never had any weapon training.) This lasted until the 91st loaded us on a troop train and we were off to Walla Walla, Washington where we arrived in June and there the Squadrons became more defined and separated.

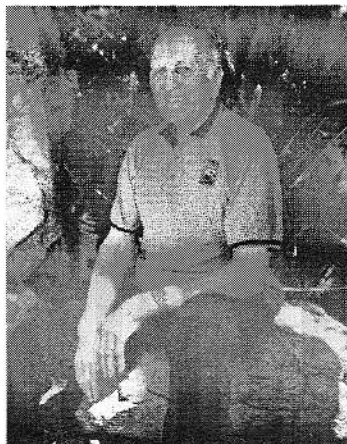
We began to recognize our pilots and the combat flight crews. Training flights were made night and day. I don't know what happened to the B-17s used for training but we departed Walla Walla Via Troop Train and went to Ft. Dix, NJ. After about a week on the railroad, we arrived in early September at Fort Dix, NJ. After some marching and rifle practice we again boarded a troop train to New York City and there we boarded the Queen Mary. In the late afternoon, as the sun was lowering, we sailed out - without a convoy. Twenty-four airmen were assigned to a stateroom that had twelve bunk beds. Twelve had bunks for 24 hours then it was swap with the 12 who slept on deck. After about a week in England, our B-17's began to arrive with combat crews. Training flights were planned. However, the Kimbolton runways could not handle the weight of our airplanes and there was very little flying until after Lt. Col. Wray managed to get the 91st BG moved into Bassingbourn. That's when our B-17's really started to arrive and with nine B-17's per Squadron; combat training for the crews began in earnest. The ground school mechanics were made up of teams and assigned to each craft; nine crews, in each of the Squadrons and only one Sheet Metal Crew

for each Squadron. Somehow, the brilliant idea came up for making portable sheet metal shops that would enable them to move from one battle damaged B-17 to another. Using surplus bomb loading trailers as a base, the portable Sheet Metal shops were made by the Squadrons Sheet Metal Crews. Though different from each other (some were open, some covered from the weather, they were basically equipped with an electric generator for lights, electric drills, and an air compressor to operate the air rivet guns; a workbench with vise, space to store aluminum sheet metal supplies of various thicknesses required to repair battle damages in different locations, a place to transport a crew of seven, their tool boxes; and a jeep to get quickly from one damaged B-17 to another. The policy was to repair your own damaged Squadron B-17s first, and then help the other Squadrons with their repairs. The B-17 with the least repairs was finished first to have them ready for sure the next day. The others followed. To keep us up to date, there were technical advisors from Boeing Aircraft Co., who visited Bassingbourn to discuss changes and repairs with the maintenance crews. The bombsight shop developed a bombsight trainer used by the bombardiers to practice identifying targets. The combat crews used down times to attend training classes (air routes, European terrain, escape techniques and routes, target approaches, anti-aircraft gun sites etc.) During periods when most of the aircraft were on a mission, the ground crews attended lectures, and other military training films (saluting etc.). At one time, there was a British lady from London Symphony who came out to the base and gave weekly piano lessons.

The European war ended before there was much progress in our musical education. The last job we did as sheet metal men was to install detector antennas on the tails of a group of P-51s that flew over to Bassingbourn. The antennas were part of new equipment to alert the pilot of any enemy aircraft that may be attacking from the rear of the P-51. They were expecting to go to the Pacific. Many P-51s probably entered into the Korean conflict.

**JACK GAFFNEY, HALLOF FAME
INDUCTEE
HONORED AT CELEBRATION**

On May 18th, Jack Gaffney, former 401st Crew Chief, was inducted in the Riverside County Education Hall of Fame for his years of volunteerism. The



following was written by his son:

"My father retired in 1977. I was a track and basketball coach at Moreno Valley HS at the time. That's when he got hooked. He started his announcing career helping out at track meets and

basketball games. Now, 27 years later, he has announced over 1,000 athletic events and tournaments. When I moved to Canyon Springs HS as the assistant principal, my father followed me and became the "Voice of the Cougars in 1986. Since then, in those 18 years, he has announced every home varsity football game, except one, when he was on a birthday cruise. In addition, he has been asked to announce special events and has been recognized as the best announcer in the Inland Empire. At age 85, this year marks his final season as announcer for the home games as the 29 steps up to the press box became a bit much for him to conquer each week. However, he will continue to announce the home basketball games as long as his health permits.

From Jack Gaffney:

I have a complete set of the 91st Newsletters "The Ragged Irregular". I wish to donate them to the 8th AF Historical Society in Savannah upon my demise. I have 4 folders full and starting on a fifth one. If the BGMA agree, they are to be donated in memory of my name and the 91st BG. I hope this will be all right.

REUNIONS

CHINO Rally Round - 2004

As reported by Jim Sheperd

The 2004 Rally Round at the Chino Planes of Fame Museum and Air Show was great. Friday night we had dinner in a private room and then to the Air Show on Saturday. The Museum put 27 War Birds in the air at one time. 1 B-17, 3 B-25's, 7 P-51 Mustangs, 2 Japanese Zero's, 2 P-40 Warhawks, P-47 Thunderbolt, a Spitfire & Hawker Hurricane and many navy planes. The sound alone was exciting.

Saturday night we had dinner at the Steak House at the Double Tree Hotel. Attending were: Asay Johnson, Robert "Bob" Dickson, Henry "Hank" Hall & son Guy, Paul & Jeanie Limm and Chasten Bowen, Jim & Suzi Shepherd, Jim Jr. & Jon Shepherd, Roberta Radecki (Suzi's Daughter) & her family, Mick Hanou, Rocco Majorca, Chuck Heusser and Tom Koranda; which completed a wonderful day. Both days shirts, pencils and gliders were sold from our booth. The tent provided a comfortable place to watch the Air Show.

The memorial at the Museum is growing with the addition of Ray Darlings 1944 Graduation book from the same Airfield, picture donated by Steve Perri that included Clark Gable and 12 copies of "Stars and Striped" from August 1944 to December 1944, donated by Suzi, from her fathers collection.



WWII Memorial Dedication

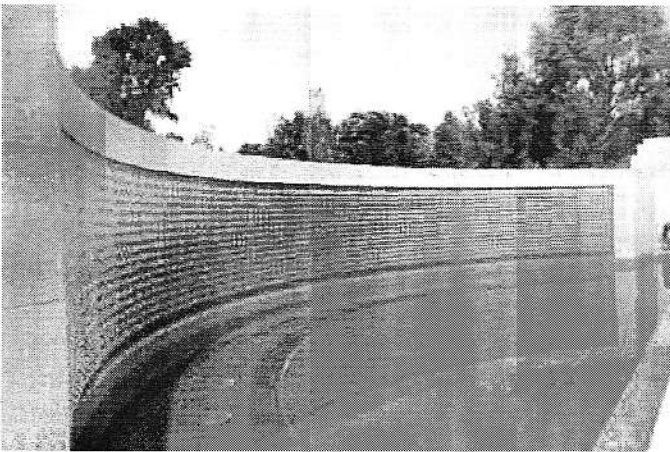
By Nancy and Steve Perri



What a wonderful time we had at the reunion. We arrive on Wednesday and stayed in DC, at the Governor's House Hotel, the first two nights so that we could walk everywhere – and walk we did. The Memorial

was on one side of the Mall and the Tents were near the Capital, but all along the way people were greeting you and shaking hands with the Veterans and asking all kinds of questions. Our hotel offered \$3.50 Martinis and \$1 Coronas which helped immensely at the end of the long days.

The Memorial is beautiful and is a real tribute to all Veterans who were in WWII.



The Wall of Memory Stars seemed to draw everyone to it, its very moving.

We didn't get to see anyone we knew – it was such a vast group of people. The only one from Bassingbourn that we met was Lillian Kiel, (see page 9) a much-decorated nurse who was stationed at Bassingbourn. She and Steve had a nice little chat and we got our 10 seconds of fame on a local TV Channel the next day showing us talking to her.

At the MCI Center, we got to see a very moving show depicting all aspects of the war and ending with some wonderful bands performing.

Friday night we stayed with my son and daughter-in-law and their family, Kali, Kyle and Jake, in Potomac MD; and we were brave enough to take the Metro (subway) into DC,

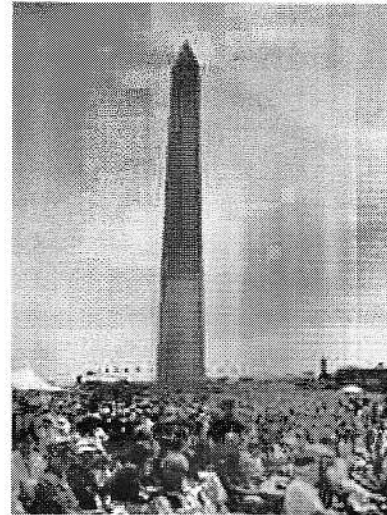
which worked out just fine. Lots of people going to the same place and all in very patient and happy mood.



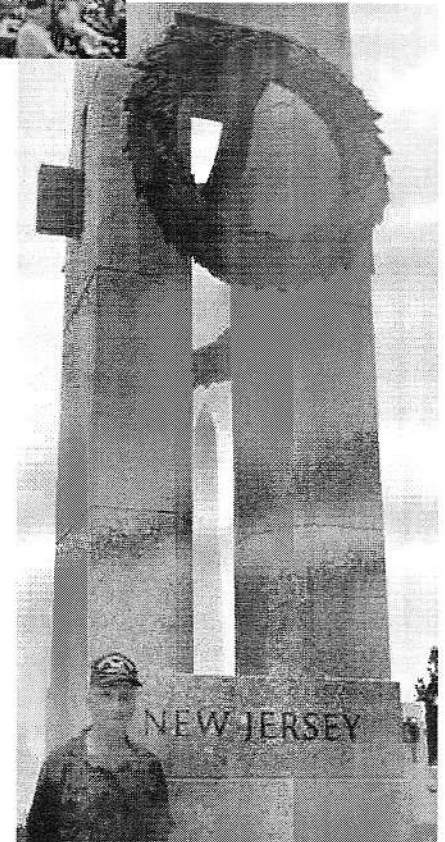
Buses were at the Metro station and they took us close to the Memorial. The weather was quite nice. The service was very moving and impressive. The pre-show had some of the best "jitterbuggers" I have ever seen, and when God

Bless America was sung, we all had flags to wave – and we did. Free water was available everywhere and nobody seemed to get sunstroke as there was a nice breeze.

Later on at the bandstand everyone was dancing to



the name bands and Willard Scott, the NBC weatherman was there to introduce all the bands. Steve even managed to find the "Andrew Sisters" and got a kiss from each of them. We went back to my sons, two very happy, tired people. We are looking forward to going back for the reunion as we didn't have enough time to see everything we wanted to see.



Hope we see YOU there!

WEARING MEDALS and BEARING MEMORIES

Written up in the Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON DC – Sometimes it's her face, little changed after six decades in its primary features, the dark eyes and slightly crooked smile of an adventurer. Sometimes it's the pallet of ribbons and medals on her dress uniform. And every now and then, it's the gold flight-nurse pin, the original one, in Art Deco, that tips people off.

One of the most decorated women in US Military History, the longtime Covina CA resident was among the tens of thousands of WWII Veterans who gathered on the National Mall to dedicate a Memorial of their own.

In the shadow of the Washington Monument, with the Lincoln Memorial shimmering in the distance and cicadas clattering in the breeze, they shared stories of sacrifice and heroism. "We all waited a long time for it," Keil said of the monument. "It's the most beautiful thing."

Keil's story, she's the first to say, was but one among many Saturday; a tale largely of good fortune that includes a long life, in spite of two wars. Her story, as admirers noted, is one worth telling.

The diminutive, black-haired Keil, who is always demure when asked her age, saying, "I'm a lady," flew 250 combat evacuation missions during WWII as and in-flight nurse and, an additional 175 during the Korean War. By rough calculation, the retired Army Air Forces Captain tended to more than 10,000 wounded soldiers, sailors and Marines in the air, often while her plane was being rocked by anti-aircraft fire, punctured by flak. She wears 16 ribbons and medals, marked by 11 different battle stars.

In 1938, Keil was working as a registered nurse when her mother suggested a route to adventure: Take her medical skills to the sky and become a stewardess. Keil had never heard the word "stewardess" or even seen an airplane up close. Within weeks of visiting United Airlines' base in Oakland, however, she became one of the carrier's first "stews". The early days of commercial aviation were pure romance. Keil recalls serving coffee, tea or milk to the likes of Eleanor Roosevelt, Charles Lindbergh and Cary Grant.

In 1943, with WWII raging from Europe to the Pacific, Keil wrote a letter to the War Department and was soon headed to the Army Air Forces' Air Evacuation School at Bowman Field near Louisville, KY. She was going to be a flight nurse. She learned how to survive in the desert, in the cold, how to escape an airplane that had to ditch at sea. One exercise had her swimming through a burning oil slick, another firing Colt .45 pistols and M1 Garand rifles. And then she shipped out to Britain. On D-Day, her crew went into Normandy behind glider planes, clumsy, powerless transports whose pilots, if they made it through the flak, often crashed among the trees and hedgerows of France. Had the planes served only to evacuate casualties, Keil and the other crewmembers might have enjoyed the minor comfort that came with a red cross painted on their tails or fuselages. But these were warplanes too. When they lifted off in Britain, they were loaded with hundreds of jerry-cans of gasoline, 101-millimeter artillery shells, drums of oil to supply Gen. George Patton's forces. When they returned, they were loaded with the wounded and the dead. "Twenty-four men," Keil said; and they seldom returned with less than a full load.

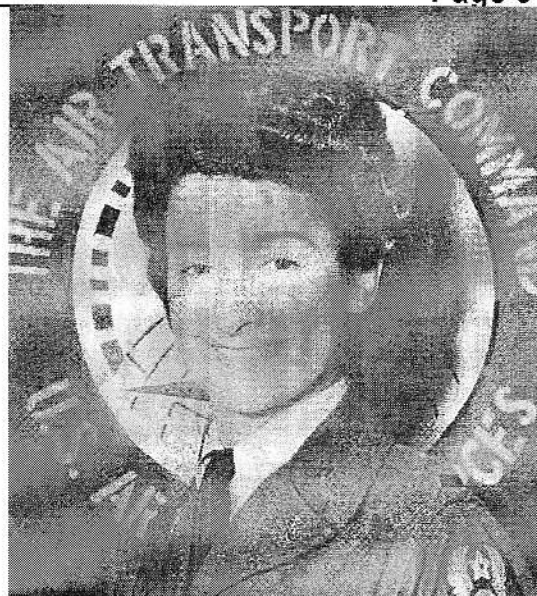
Keil was in London when the first Buzz bombs came in. She was there for D-Day and the Battle of the Bulge. Many pilots were sent home after 50 missions – Keil flew five times that number.

In 1946, a year after the war ended, Keil returned to United Airlines and became a stewardess again. Four years later, the war in Korea broke out and she signed up for more duty, notifying United only afterward.

On Saturday, she walked through the crowds, still tending in a way, to the wounded. "Hello! How are you? I'm Lillian," she said, kneeling beside the wheelchair of yet another stranger, 97 year old Ed White of Rhinebeck, NY who was captured by the Nazis in France in December 1944. After Korea, Keil went home, got married, had two daughters and became a homemaker. In 1953, Republic pictures made a movie based on her life, "Flight Nurse." In 1961, she was the subject of one of the most-watched episodes of "This is Your Life."

That's not why people want to meet her, though, or why a few seem to remember her.

Every now and again, someone who once found himself cold and bleeding inside the belly of an airplane, the morphine perhaps wearing off, looking for a hand to hold, recognizes those dark eyes, that smile.



TO MY FALLEN FRIENDS

by Richard T. Pressey, 91st BG, 401st BS
Submitted by Cliff Schultz RO 324th

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 or feel the hate of war.

You ventured forth on a noble quest
To challenge the Luftwaffe's very best.
The sky was filled with bursting flak
Followed by a whirling, 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 your life's last chapter in smoke and
flame.

You flew your final mission, without regret.
A mission most mortal men will soon
forget.
But rest in peace, you'll receive your due.
For the eternal skies are always blue 'Yes,
await God's call, again to fly;
With the angel Squadron in the heavenly
sky

John H. Brawner, Jr., 324 , Age 80
Sequin TX, May 14, 2004

John was born March 9, 1924, in Sequin. During World War II, he was stationed at Basingbourn and worked as an Armament and Bombsight Mechanic. After the war, he worked as a regional supervisor in Texas for a West Coast Life Insurance Company. He was a member of First United Methodist Church and American Legion Post 245.

He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Anita, daughter Susan Casto (Stan), granddaughter, Amy Seidel (Kurt), great grandsons, Zachary and Caden Seidel, a sister Willie (Billie) Christina (Dickson) Schneider and a niece Sheryl Growl.

Cecil G. McConnell, 323rd, Age 84
North Platte NE, May 15, 2004

He was born August 8, 1919. He graduated from Paxton High School in 1937 and worked



on the family farm until 1941 when he started with the VA Administration in Washington, DC.

He was selected for Aviation Training upon his entering military service during WWII and was the first Pilot, a b-17 Fortress, "Margie" on its first mission 9/13/44. He went on to fly 5 more in her. While on his 27th mission on "Jeanie" (a ship on loan from the 379th), 9/6/45, he was shot down and taken prisoner. After his discharge, he moved to Denver CO and worked for the Federal Government in general accounting and in 1959 moved to North Platte where he was employed at the Social Security Administration until his retirement in 1974. He is survived by his wife of over 60 years, Marjorie; a daughter, Kathleen (Terry) Fletcher; son, Dennis (Evelyn); 12 grandchildren, 20 great grandchildren; three brothers, Vince (Dorothy) Gene (Helen) and Merle (Delores).

DID YOU KNOW

Thomas Jefferson and John Adams both died, July 4th, 1826.

Jefferson had been in a coma and on the evening of July 3rd, he awoke briefly.

His last words were "Is it the fourth?"

He died the next day at 12:20PM.

At almost the exact moment, Adams fell ill and died at 6:00PM.

With their job done extremely well, they left us the same day, 50 years to the day after the Declaration was passed.

Every day that we walk freely, talk freely, practice our faith, we are in their debt.

If you have a computer, go to
www.holidays.net/independence
and read the Declaration

★ **John F. Burchard, 401st, Age 80**

Valley City OH, March 20, 2004

Submitted by his daughter, Donna Foecking



S/Sgt John Burchard was a Waist Gunner on William Bateman's crew on the B-17 "Broadminded". He was the beloved husband of Antonia (deceased) and loving father of Georganne Burchard, John (dec'd), and Donna (Jim) Foecking and the grandfather of

Scott, Jimmy and Kevin Foecking.

★ **Wilbur C. Duemler, 322nd, Age 86**

St. Clair, Missouri, March 2, 2004

Submitted by his wife Lulu

He was proud to have served his country as a Master Sergeant during World War II, entering Sept. 4, 1941 and received an honorable discharge Sept 19, 1945.



He was the Crew Chief on the B-17, Flying Fortress, "Mizpah". He was honored to have received a Bronze Star during his enlistment.

After being discharged, he was employed as a postman

at the St. Clair Post Office, retiring after forty years of service. He was a charter member of the St. Clair VFW Post and as well as the Elks Lodge and the Lions Club and was a lifetime member of the United Methodist Church.

His wife, Lulu and survives him.

Harold Mannon, former member of the 441st Sub Depot, reports that:

Mrs. Ann Kamykowski,

widow of Col. Frank S. Kamykowski who was the Commander of the 441st Sub Depot, Basingbourn, that provided major aircraft repair to the B-17's that were flown by the 91st BG, passed away on Friday, May 14th, 2004 at the age of 94.

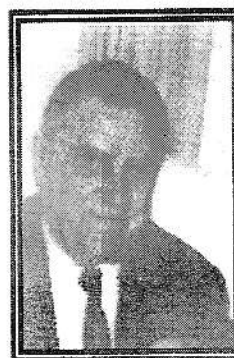
★ **Patrick N. Kennedy, 322nd, Age 84**

Delano MN, April 28, 2004

As reported by his wife Delores

On Dec. 7, 1941, Patrick Kennedy was an airplane mechanic with the Army Air Corps at Hickam Army Air Field, adjacent to Pearl Harbor and was at mass the morning the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. He witnessed the bombing on Battle Ship Row and narrowly escaped being shot by diving planes while taking cover in the wheel covering of an airplane.

After the attack, he became an Officer and B-17 Bombardier at Basingbourn flying 30 missions in various B-17's including four bombing runs over Berlin. The 1/Lt. Earned several medals including the Distinguished Flying Cross and a Purple Heart.



He made clear what was important for him, when looking back on his war service. He told his son, Mike, that he had always been thankful for decent weather on those missions. With good visibility, he could be reasonably assured of dropping his bombs on military targets

and avoiding civilian areas.

He didn't talk much about his experiences until a few years before his death. He told his son, "It's true what they say about Pearl Harbor, I could see the eyes of the low-flying attackers." When he came home, he earned several degrees and began a career as a conservationist for the US Dept. Of Agriculture helping farmers practice soil conservation techniques and eventually working for the Hennepin Soil and Water Conservation District until his retirement in 1990. He co-wrote "Landscapes of Hennepin County."

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Delores, his son, Mike, daughters Constance Olson, Christine Dayton and Colleen Johnson and their families as well as a sister, Dorothy Kregenbrink, 13 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Folded Wings:

Col. Robert Morgan, 324th, Age 85 Asheville TN, May 16, 2004



Reported by his wife, Linda Morgan Col. Robert Morgan, and Asheville native and Commander of the famed B-17 bomber, "The Memphis Belle", died of complications from a fall at the Asheville Regional Airport April 21, after attending an air show and had been hospitalized since. His wife, two daughters were at his side

when he died. Morgan and his crew flew 25 combat missions in daylight over Nazi-occupied France and Germany in the first three months of combat, beginning in November 1942, during the time when 82 percent of the bombers in their bomb group were shot down. Morgan put that into perspective by saying "You have breakfast with 10 guys, then you have dinner with only

Arvid Malvik, 324th, Age 83

New Port Richey FL, May 26, 2004

Reported by George B. Uihlein, Navigator on "Betty Lou's Buggy" I am sad to report the passing of Arvid Malvik, Pilot of "Betty Lou's Buggy". He flew 30 combat



missions over Nazi Europe in early 1944. He was a fine leader, well respected by all his crew. He was the glue that held our crew together - an inspiration to us all; an officer and a gentleman.. After WWII, Arvid and his wife, Betty Lou, lived in Emerson NJ. When he retired from the

construction business, they enjoyed many winters in New Port Richey FL and summers in Harvey Cedars NJ.

He is survived by his wife, Betty Lou, a daughter and three sons, the oldest of which graduated from the Air Force Academy to become a "Top Gun" and a Lt. Col.

He will be missed, but always remembered.

FIRST CLASS MAIL

91ST BG Memorial Assn.
590 Aloha Drive
Lake Havasu City AZ 86406-4559



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

LET US KNOW BEFORE YOU MOVE!

THE RAGGED IRREGULAR

THESE NEWSLETTERS ARE PUBLISHED QUARTERLY, JANUARY, APRIL, JULY AND OCTOBER. THE RI'S PURPOSE IS TO KEEP ALIVE THE SPIRIT OF THE 91ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) AND TO MAINTAIN THE FELLOWSHIP 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: STEVE PERRI 12750 KELLY GREENS BLVD, FT. MYERS FL 33908

two. My crew and I aren't heroes; we didn't do anything any better than any other bomber crew. We were just damned lucky."

On November 24, 1944, he made history when his B-29 named "Dauntless Dotty" was chosen to lead the first B-29 raid on Tokyo.

Morgan co-authored a book about some of his experiences, "The Man Who Flew the Memphis Belle", with Ron Powers.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF
OUR 40th PRESIDENT
of the UNITED STATES

Ronald Wilson Reagan
1911 - 2004