

THE RAGGED IRREGULAR



322nd Bomb Sq.



323rd Bomb Sq.



Supporting Units



324th Bomb Sq.



401st Bomb Sq..

Vol. 38 No. 3

91st Bombardment Group (H)

July 2005

CHINO RALLY ROUND MAY 20 - 22, 2005



Back: Mike & Yvonne Banta, Ted Skawienski, son, stepson, & (Hidden)-grandson,
Ace Johnson & Suzi and Jim Shepherd

Middle: Steve & Nancy Perri, Paul Limm, Robert Elroy, (Hidden) Lenny Contreras and Ray Darling
Front: Clyde & Lenelle Garrison, Jeanne Limm, Gloria Elroy and Bob Dickson

Missing from photo: Jody Dickson, Loraine, Randy & Dorothy Darling, Mick Hanou, Chuck
Huesser, Gloria Armstrong, Jack Huhn, Rocco Maiorca & Grandsons' Thomas & Brian &
Photographer Jack Allen

The Presidents Corner: Ed Gates

Your officers had our quarterly Conference Call on 14 May and helped me celebrate nearly three months of exceptional recovery of my wife, Joan, from her auto accident. We deeply appreciate your prayers, calls and letters - some from friends we did not know in England. We are busily "sniffing the roses" that we may have been in danger of missing in doing all those oh-so-important things that seem to consume our lives. Holding hands is still good stuff.

In our Conference Call I reviewed a video of work being done on the "Memphis Belle" last fall by the local Committee that was sent to us by one of our members. Earl Pate is still following the situation to express our concern that "our" airplane is safeguarded for future generations. We also discussed a call received from a reporter in England, Peter Almond, who was writing about the grounding of the B-17 "Sally B" which flew out of Duxford for Memorial Day celebrations in the past, as well as other events; it has been grounded because of very expensive insurance required for private aircraft by a recent European Union ruling. The French owners of a flyable B-17 are ignoring the ruling - but then they subsequently expressed their less than enthusiasm for the EU Constitution and their own beloved President Chirac.

Our finances continue solid even though the "Folded Wings" tells a story of missing participants in the future. We finally received the bill for the lengthy restoration and detail work on the Prop Memorial which will reduce our separate Memorial Maintenance Fund to about \$4000, so if you know anyone who would like to display a lithograph of the "Ruhr Valley Raiders" I still have a couple of the signed ones with the brochures for \$140 or the unsigned ones for \$90 including S&H. We just had our High School Graduations here in Tacoma and one of our schools had 5 recipients of scholarships to military service schools - Air Force Academy, Academy prep School, West Point (USMA), Naval Academy and Coast Guard. Their ROTC program deserves a present of a copy of the lithograph, so I'll "buy" one and we will benefit with the

proceeds going to our Memorial Maintenance Fund. How about you trying for a similar "double duty" gift?

We discussed the proposed By-Laws revisions that address officers' responsibilities as we look to the future of the organization. Joe Harlick, our Nominations and By-Laws chairman, will be encouraging you to maintain your interest and participation in the months ahead. Hope the next generation of the 91st BGMA are thinking of how they will make things even better. Along that line, as if they didn't contribute enough already with the web site, Jim and Suzi Shepherd sponsored another great Rally Round at Chino; I had hoped to attend, but Joan's not quite ready for me to run off for a weekend as she transitions from the wheelchair to a walker. What was your excuse?

We try to always look at the future while honoring the past. Jake Howland brought us up to date on the Memorial Day plans in England and on the Continent and you will see reports elsewhere of the wonderful efforts of our friends abroad on our behalf. Vince Hemmings noted that they had one of the worst rain storms he had seen in England on Memorial Day but that the line waiting to enter the Cemetery was some two miles long in spite of the weather; three cheers for such dedicated friends. Bet you did not read that in the media! As for the future, Ace and I are moving forward on plans for the 2006 reunion in Colorado Springs; there is an Academy football game scheduled for 2 Sep (Labor Day weekend), so we are tentatively planning the Reunion for Wed, 30 Aug through 3 September.

Keep the engines running, Ed

Tentative - 2006 Reunion Date
August 30 through September 3
Colorado Springs, Colorado
Home of the Air Force Academy
ACADEMY HOTEL
\$89 PER NIGHT PLUS TAX
Complimentary hot/cold buffet breakfast

OUR NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Herbert F. Egender, 322nd
Elisabeth M. Fox, AL
Jeffrey S. Gaffney, AL
Paul Jessop 322nd
Bernard P. Kase, 401st
Janet M. Larocco, AL
William H. Ohlsen, 323rd
Pete Pesoli, 322nd

Even at this late stage we are still having individuals sign on as Life Members. Becoming a Life Member relieves you of having to renew your Membership each January, gives the Association some working Capital and allows your spouse the opportunity of continuing to receive the "Ragged Irregular".

The cost of Life Membership is \$100 and it can be sent to Ace Johnson, Sec./Treasurer

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND MORE:**SEND US YOUR STORY TODAY- TOMORROW MAY BE TOO LATE****From Dr. James Scudder**

I enjoyed the article "The Mission on Christmas Eve, 1944" but the article reflects that we are all getting along in age and don't remember the same "pieces" in the same story.

It wasn't exactly Christmas Eve. I was toggolier on "Anxious Angel". Lt. Ondrovic was the Pilot and we "took off" at 11:16 with 18-250 and 2 - 500 Lb. GP's to bomb an airfield near Mersehausen, Germany.

I remember our airfield was fogged in and we had to land at Bury St. Edmonds alright, but I don't remember any other BG landing there, not even any of the 96th? Whose home it was.

Neither do I remember a miserable night, but I do remember that I had 34 missions (with credit for four missions when the tour was raised from 30 to 35) and that we were briefed for 3 missions via Russia, Italy, England - 2 over my 35-mission tour! Merry Christmas!

Then the long!! Wait sitting in the plane, waiting to take off. That truck ride "home" in those 2 1/2 ton trucks from the aborted mission was the best Christmas present ever.

My last mission was 12-31-44 to Bitburg, against another front line target, same bomb load, same Pilot but on "Times A' Waistin".

From David Morton Kobel, AF11009528 Age 81 Born 8-3-23:

A Cadre of 9 men and a Chief Warrant Officer started the 91st BG, Feb. '42 at Baton Rouge LA. We left McDill field Tampa FL on a troop train to Walla Walla WA where we took overseas training. Our CO, a Major, was killed on a training mission July '42. Left on a troop train arriving a Ft. Dix 1 Sept '42. 22,000 boarded the Queen Mary the evening of 3 Sept. 42 and we arrived in Scotland Sept 10, 1942. The 91st boarded a train and we arrived at Kimbolton Castle and were there for 30 days and then went to AF Station 121 an RAF Drome.

I was the first man in the 324th Bomb Squadron. I was an airplane armorer and I was the armorer on the Memphis Belle on all their missions. I was discharged at Fort Devens MA, Aug. 11th '45 and got discharged 27 Sept. 45.

I have never been to a reunion and plan to attend the one in 2006 with my wife. I have lived in Oregon since 1974. I rejoined the USAF Nov. '51 until Oct. '63, a total of 16years, 4 months in the Air Corps and USAF. Please excuse my writing as I had to learn to write again. I've been in the hospital and have had 6 operations in the past 4 years. I was the youngest man (boy). Hoping to see you at the 2006 reunion. David Morton Kobel 541-619-1973

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(with photo if possible)
 Material for publication
 should be sent to

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www.91stbombgroup.com

www.bombsqd323rd.com

MEMORIAL DAY BELGIAN ARDENNES

Reported by Jake Howland



Eric Domincus (photo left) did his usual great job representing the 91st BGMA. I am especially pleased with the photo (above) showing the headstone of my college classmate, Bert Stiles. Although Bert was KIA while flying as a P-51 fighter pilot after he

finished his tour with the 91st BG, he will forever be remembered as Sam Newton's Co-pilot and a member of the 91st BG.

Daily Reports of the 91st BombGroup:

Are being scanned and transcribed by various volunteers and can be found on the 91st Bomb Group Web Site: www.91stbombgroup.com.

322nd Scanned by Don and Mary Freer and being transcribed by Frank Farr.

323rd Scanned & transcribed by Steve and Nancy Perri

324th Looking for volunteers.

401st Being scanned & transcribed by MerleChoffel.



Nancy & Steve Perri introducing Don Freer (& photographer Mary) to the scanner at the "Ft. Myers Library" where Don and Mary spent a good deal of their "Winter" transcribing the 322nd Daily Reports.

Who is Trudy?

This photo was found in a carton of photos from Bill Lyons of the photo lab of the 91st BG.

Does anyone know who she may be?



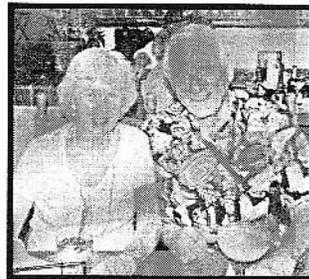
"To the boys of the 91st, Best O Wishes Trudy"

BEFORE YOU KNOW IT
91ST BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL
ASSOCIATION 2006 REUNION
COLORADO SPRINGS
COLORADO
ACADEMY HOTEL
\$89 Per Night Plus Tax
Complimentary hot/cold buffet breakfast
TENTATIVE DATE - AUG. 30 - SEPT. 3

91ST STRATEGIC RECONNAISSANCE
WING ASSOCIATION REUNION
WILL BE
August 23 - 27 2005 at the
HOPE HOTEL, WRIGHT PATTERSON
AF BASE, OHIO
Contact: Jerry Haines
Springfield, Ohio Phone 937-325-9306

CHINO REUNION – Bigger and better than ever:

A wonderful time was had by all who attended the Reunion on May 20-21, 2005. Next year promises to be bigger and better – hopefully, more of us will decide to attend. The museum is continuing to grow and Suzi and Jim are still looking for new additions to it. Nancy tells me that the way we get there next year is via Hawaii !!!! The Veterans were put to work by Suzi autographing photos she was selling to assist in the cost of the Museum (She sold out by the way) – They all seemed to enjoyed the signing and are “considering taking the group on the road”.



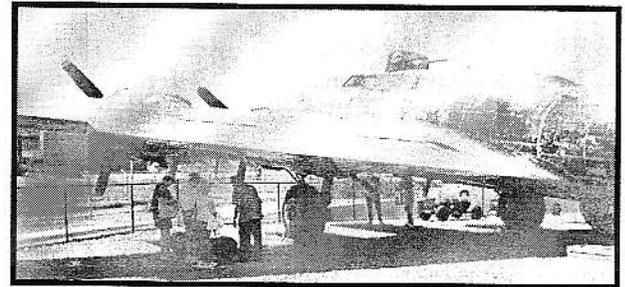
Darling Couple ((Ray & Lorraine) Yvonne & Mike Banta

Jim & Suzi Shepherd

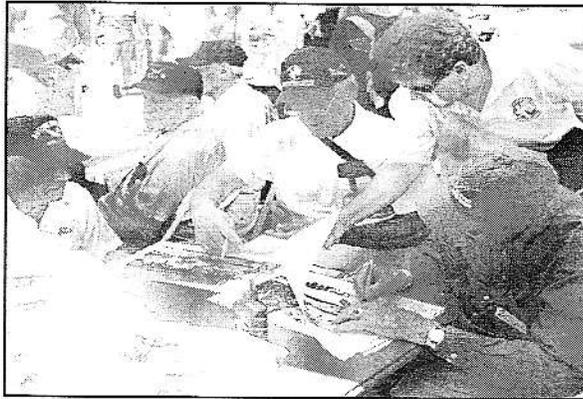
Paul and Jeanne Limm



Veterans attending Reunion Chino Museum



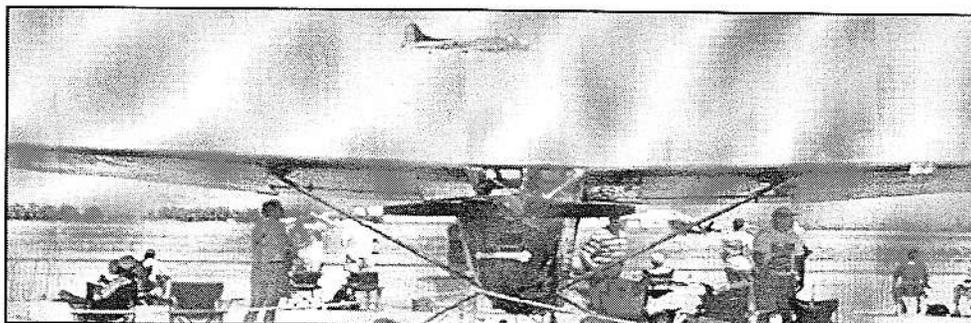
Work to be done – A B-17 waiting to be rebuilt



Signing of photos at Chino Rally Round



More signing of photos at the Chino Booth



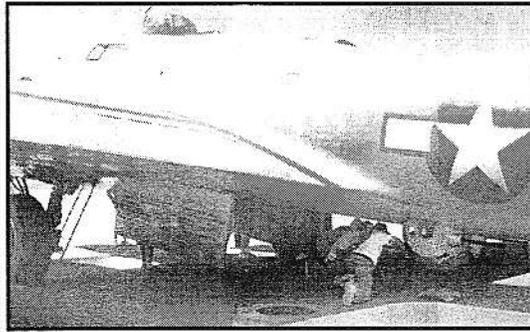
Flyover of B-17 at Chino Air Show

“COME FLY WITH ME”

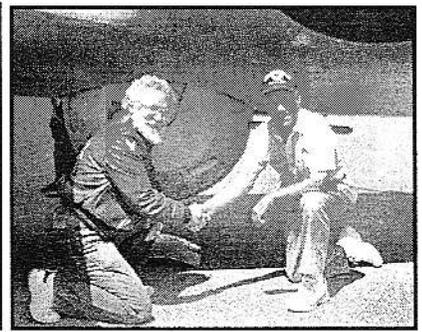
May 18, 2005, prior to the Chino Reunion - your Editor, Steve Perri and his wife Nancy were treated to a trip on the B-17 “Nine O Nine” compliments of their good friend Mick Hanou. Mike and Yvonne Banta dropped us off at Burbank CA and off we went to San Jose CA 2 ¾ hours later. “What a Trip” Thank You Mick!



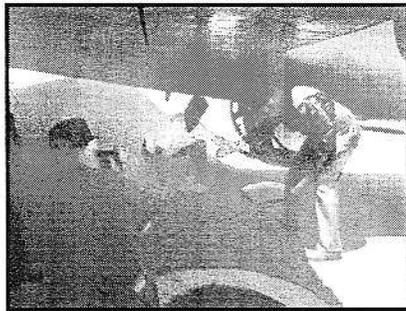
Mike and Yvonne with Mick and Steve



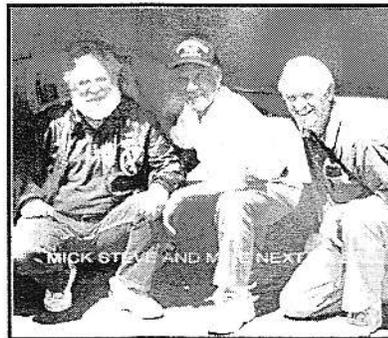
Under “Nine O Nine” (They never get tired of it)



Steve thanking Mick



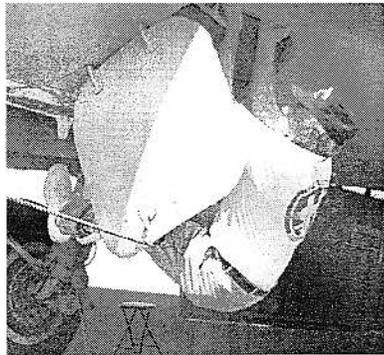
Another B T Gunner Joins in



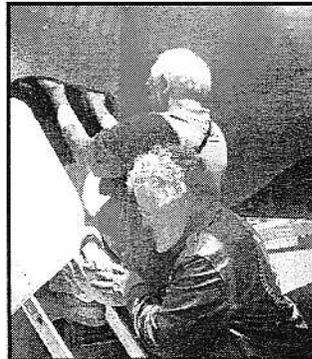
The Three Musketeers Oh No! It's Mick Steve & Mike



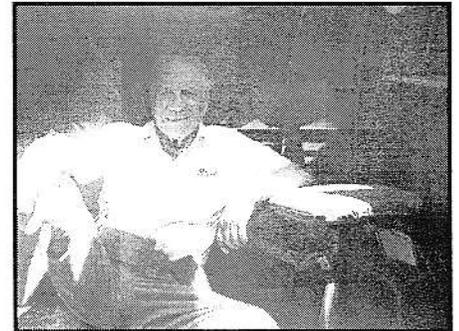
Steve Entering the Plane



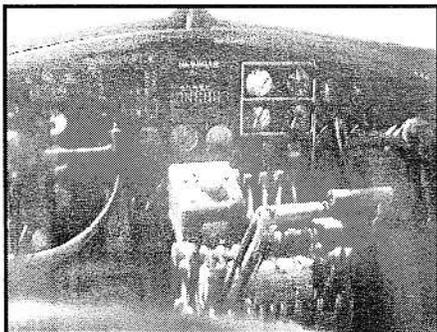
Steve trying to enter (the old way) not happening)



Mike getting an assist from Mick



Steve Preparing for Takoff



Does this look familiar?



Coastline View from the Nose



WHAT A WONDERFUL TIME WE HAD

From Across the Pond by Vince Hemmings

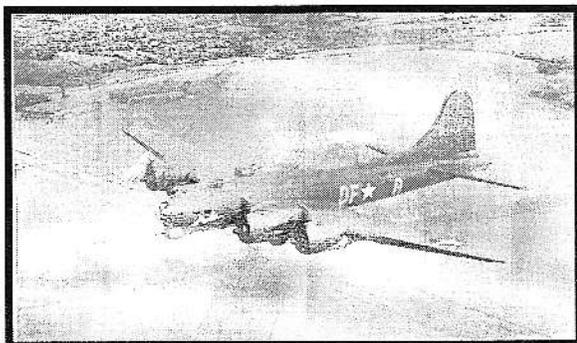
This article has appeared in one of our daily newspapers, the Daily Telegraph, the best selling broadsheet paper in the country. Peter Almond phoned me after he had spoken to Ed Gates and Paul Limm. I am delighted that he has recorded my feeling correctly. It is disgraceful that a bunch of politicians have no respect for those in the 91st Bomb Group (H) and the many other Americans who paid the supreme sacrifice in WWII. To pass a law that has grounded the only B-17 flying in this country is disgraceful. In just over a week's time, I will be gathering, along with several hundred people, at the American Military Cemetery at Madingley. We shall be remembering all those American young men and women who lost their lives in WWII and will be offering our prayers in gratitude. Sadly, the B-17 "**Sally B**" will not be flying over the congregation in salute to those brave young men and women as she has done many times over the past years. May those Members of the European Parliament who passed this ruling, hang their heads in shame.

EU RULE GROUNDS B-17 AT AMERICAN TRIBUTE

By Peter Almond

When American War Veterans and US Air Force members gather at the American Military Cemetery near Cambridge to mark their Memorial Day next weekend, the aircraft type that many of those in the 5,124 graves once flew in, the B-17 bomber, will be conspicuous by its absence.

The last Flying Fortress in Britain will not be making a tribute fly-past because it has been grounded by a new European regulation that puts the B-17 into the weight category of an airliner boosting its insurance premium by



an unaffordable 500 percent.

The owners of "Sally B", the B-17 based at the Imperial War Museum's aviation collection at Duxford, regard the situation as outrageous and ironic. "The idea that the aircraft that flew to liberate Europe, and now flies in honour of the men who gave their lives for that cause, should be put out of action by the very people who owe their freedom to its existence beggars belief," said Ellie Sallingboe, the head of the aircraft's operating company. U. S. Veterans' Organizations, such as the Eighth Air Force's 91st BG agree. "It is tragic that this aeroplane will not be flying because of an EU rule," said Vince Hemmings, who helped to set up a museum at the old US Army Air Corps base at Bassingbourn, Cambs, and plan to lay a wreath for the 91st Bomb Group at the American Cemetery in Madingley. "The men in these graves deserve better than their plane being grounded by some ruling on insurance." Of the approximately 45,000 American airmen who lost their lives over Europe in the Second World War most took off from British bases. Lt. Col. Edward Gates, the President of the 91st Bomb Group Association, said from his home in Tacoma, WA, that the "Sally B" was a "great symbol of unity between Britain and America", which, he was confident, the 1,000 or so surviving veterans would agree had to be saved. At the US Embassy in London, Lt. Col. Benjamin Coffey, US Vice Air Attache, said he hoped that the issues could be resolved. "This 60th Anniversary is the last chance a lot of veterans will have to see the bases from which so many of their colleagues never returned," he said. But, according to senior officials from the Department of Transport, nothing can be done about the rule. It took effect on May 1, with no exceptions allowed and applies across the EU. It is also supposed to affect the only other B-17 flying in Europe – "Pink Lady" – operating in France – although a spokesman for the company said the French government had not enforced the rule and "Pink Lady" was flying as normal. The "Sally B", as a civilian aircraft – owned and operated by a small group, led by the Danish-born Mrs. Sallingboe, appears to be unique in suffering so much from the EU rule, which is designed to increase third-party protection in the event of a catastrophic crash. Britain's only other comparable Second World War plane, a Lancaster bomber, is owned and operated by the RAF's Memorial Flight and falls under government insurance. The RAF also flies Spitfires, Hurricanes and a C-47 Dakota, which are also exempt. A civilian C-47 in Britain is owned by the private Air Atlantique cargo airline, which includes it on its fleet insurance.

STORY'S from the Ring - Mike Banta Ringmaster

Become a member of the ring by e-mailing Mike at B-17banta@aol.com



This story was sent to the ring by Twila Harper who was looking for crew photos of the 324ths "Ritzy Blitz". On 5/27/2004

FORMER POW'S MEET – RECALL FATEFUL MISSION

Written by Janis Lovitt for Newspaper in Kearney Nebraska 1988

The date was January 11, 1944. It was WWII. The fog hung thick over the village of Oschersleben in Germany, only 90 miles west of Berlin. In England, the weather report had been for clear skies over north central Germany. More than 100 American Army Air Force bombers left England for Oschersleben. Their mission was to be the first large scale American raid deep into Germany and their target was a German weapons plant, but heavy fog caused a recall of the mission. Three bomber groups, including the 91st group, did not.

The three bomb groups, helpless without fighter assistance, trudge into German territory along. Within minutes, they were shot down by German fighter planes. The survivors, though few, were taken as prisoners and remained in prison for 16 ½ months until their liberation.

Two of those survivors reunited in Kearney on the 44th anniversary of the attack – for the first time since their liberation in May, 1945.

Bill Potter of Kearney and Wayne Hedglin (formerly of Grand Island) of Ft. Morgan CO were on different planes the day of the attack but they had trained on the same base in Kearney and were in the same squadron in England. They spent more than a year together at the same prison camp, in the same barracks.

They hadn't been in touch with each other until three weeks ago when, on a chance, Potter contacted Hedglin's son Mike in Grand Island. Potter said he knew Hedglin use to live in Grand Island and tried the directory for a listing. Mike's number was unlisted but through a city directory, Potter found his address. "The first thing he asked me was if I knew Wayne Hedglin," Mike said and "then he asked if he was still alive.

Potter, 65, had been on "the same "wild goose chase" since June to find surviving members of the 91st BG. Potter had a freak reunion with the

engineer on his former crew last summer that that spurred a desire to contact others.

Potter and Hedglin reminisced about that date 44 years ago. Hedglin, who was a pilot on "Ritzy Blitz", remembers his bare hands sweating even in the below zero temperatures. It was his sixth and final mission. He remembers ordering his crew out as he spiraled the plane earthward and after struggling to get to the nearest hatch, he parachuted about 500 feet from the ground. Now 75, he said he hit the side of a house as he plummeted to land survived with only a shoulder injury. Four others of Hedglin's 10 man crew survived, five were killed.

Potter also remembers bailing out of a crashing plane, his fourth mission assignment, he had never parachuted before. The crewmembers never had any instructions on working a parachute but somehow, he said, he just knew how. And as Hedglin said, "What a beautiful sound an opening parachute makes."

German soldiers immediately picked them up. Potter said he was shot at by a German soldier but he missed. That same soldier and a "Hitler Youth kid" armed with a dagger and riding a bicycle took him prisoner. The soldier cold-cocked him with his pistol but his adrenalin must have been so high that it didn't faze him. Later, he realized he was cut and bleeding. Six of Potter's fellow crewmembers were killed during action.

Things were rough during that year of imprisonment, Potter said, "but we remember and cherish the funny things. The first "jug" or jail was a makeshift jail in the cellar of a house. "I knew I was in Germany, there were two big barrels of sauerkraut down there". Hedglin and Potter were both shipped to Stalag Luft 1. Because it was an officer camp, neither was allowed to work; most of the time they were bored and hungry. Hedglin said he lost 35 pounds while there. Often, to relive the boredom, the prisoners would dig. They dug more than 50 unsuccessful tunnels. "They were just playing games with the German soldiers," Potter said. The soldiers knew that they were building the tunnels and would never allow them to get farther than the fence. In fact, the Germans put up a sign that signaled the 50th tunnel built.

Both are retired now, Potter, a retired farmer, Hedglin no longer manages a restaurant and lounge in Colorado. They are planning a larger reunion with all the surviving squadron members, but, for now, the simple reunion between the two POW's was enough to satisfy a need to remember, reminisce and reacquaint.

Banta's Note: Lt. Hedglin passed away Feb. 19, '89

Folded Wings Cont'd:

★ **Charles Bell, 322nd, Age 88**
Cantonville, MD, May 24, 2005



As reported by his son, Charles Bell Jr. He moved to Washington DC in 1939 and joined the FBI and received his Law degree in 1942. He was later admitted to the DC bar in 1946. He enlisted in the Army Air Corp in 1943 and served as a B-17 Pilot on "Superstitious Aloysius", completing 30 missions.

His wife of 61 years, Mary Frances, son Charles Jr., daughter Sally, 2 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren survive him.

★ **Burnett L. (B.L.) Deyerle, Jr. 401st**
Roanoke VA, April 12, 2005, Age 86



As reported by his son "B.L." was born in Roanoke, March 1919 and was called to duty in 1942 and soon entered glider training and then moved on to Bombardier Navigator when glider pilot assignments were no longer available. Assigned to the 401st on July 1 1944 and flew his first combat mission. He flew a total

of 35 combat missions over Europe in "Lil' Pathes", "Duffy's Tavern", and "Qualified Quail".

He returned home to his wife Betty and picked up his career again as a Circulation Manager and Display Advertising Sales for Times-World Corp. retiring in 1983 after 45 years of a newspaper career.

He is survived by his wife Betty, son Col. B.L. Deyerle (USAF-Ret.), daughter Jana Underwood and five grandchildren, three of whom are on active duty with the Air Force and one on active duty with the Army.

★ **Richard (Dick) Goldsmith, 401st**
Houston, TX, Nov. 1, 2004, Age 82

As reported by his wife Peggy

It is with regret and much sadness that I send you this message. Richard and I were married 61 wonderful years. It was a wonderful experience to attend the reunion in Memphis and Galveston.

Born in Tulsa OK he served his country in WWII as a B-17 Captain, Group Lead Pilot. He completed 30 missions and was awarded the DFC. He enjoyed a 42-year career with Texaco retiring in 1982.

★ **John D. Powell, 324th, Age 87**
Polo, IL, Feb. 15, 2005

As reported by his wife Doris

He was a B-17 pilot and flew 33 combat missions over Europe receiving the DFC and the Air Medal with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters.

John was a Mechanic, self-employed at a Powell Motors for over 40 years and for many years as a Polo school bus driver.

He is survived by his wife Doris of 62 years, 3 daughters Shirley Niewald, Patricia Knowles, Kristen Kavanaugh and spouses, 10 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren

★ **Bert M. Mullins, 323rd, Age 82**
Bryan Texas, April 26, 2005

As reported by his #3 son.

He was born in Wiergate, Texas on April 28, 1922 and lived most of his life in Bryan, Texas where he and his wife owned and operated a popular restaurant until he retired in 1981. He was inducted into the army in January 1943 and served in the 323rd Squadron as the tail gunner in the original crew of the "Sweet 17", piloted by 1st Lt. Alexander Thomas. He flew 30 missions, the final one on July 4, 1944. His most memorable missions were to Schweinfurt, Berlin, Dessau, and the clandestine D-Day mission with Lt Col Berry. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters. He returned to the U.S. aboard the HMS Queen Mary in October 1944 and later attended C-54 crew chief school. He was honorably discharged in October 1945 with the rank of Staff Sergeant. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Agatha, three children and five grandchildren.

★ **Raymond Walter, 401st**
Columbus Ohio, May 13, 2005

Ragged Irregular was returned as "deceased". If anyone has any information please let the editor know and it will be reported in the October RI.

★ **Neville Hardin, 323rd, Age 84**
Sanford FL, June 6, 2003

He was born in LuLu FL, Sept. 3, 1916. He was a Mess Sergeant with the 323rd Bomb Squadron. Went over with the original group on the "Queen Mary".

His wife Marjorie and son Lynn survive him.

Folded Wings cont'd:

★ **David Wolnowitz, 322nd**
Copiate NY, April 30, 2005



As reported by his wife Faye
 He was born March 9, 1923 and served his country completing 35 combat missions as a flight engineer and was awarded the air medal with 5 clusters. Although he arrived in England as a propeller specialist he volunteered to fly combat missions.

After the war, he enlisted in the Naval Reserve at Floyd Bennett Field because he loved to fly.

He worked as a TV Repairman but insisted on going on calls rather than staying at the bench. After retirement he worked part time at Sears And soon earned a reputation as "the old guy" who went out of his way to figure out what the problem was.

He adored his family and grandchildren and will be missed by many who were fortunate enough to know him with a wealth of wonderful memories. "A good Person" Dave earned that title in the way he lived every day.

★ **Daniel Haley, 324th, Age 80**
Sacramento, CA, Jan. 26, 2005



As reported by his daughter Anne DeCicco
 Born in LA, his boyhood was spent in San Diego. He attended San Jose State University and graduated from the University of Santa Clara, earning a law degree in 1949 and started a law practice. He moved to Fair

Oaks in 1964.

He served in the Army Air Corps in WWII as a 1/Lt. completing 35 missions over Europe as a Bombardier/Navigator with the 91st BG.

He loved to travel the back roads of California with his wife Clair and had a great love of Music and played the Trumpet.

Dan is survived by his wife of 57 years, Claire, son Patrick, daughters Joan Biergam and Annie DeCicco (Thomas) and 10 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren and his brother Robert.

He was laid to rest at Golden Gate National Cemetery in San Bruno.

★ **Philip O. Swanson, 322nd, Age 88**

Hingham MA, October 15, 2004

As reported by his son Peter Swanson



I'm sorry to report that my father, Philip Swanson has passed away. My Dad welcomed the opportunity to serve his country, and also felt immense appreciation for the courage and competence of his crewmates on the Skunkface II where he served as Navigator. Dad

stayed in touch with many other buddies from the 8th. He was a decorated veteran of WWII, serving with honor and was awarded the Air Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross, two Oak Leaf Clusters, and a Purple Heart flying missions over France and Germany.

Born in West Duxbury, MA, he was a Hingham resident for nearly 60 years. He will be fondly remembered for his love of nature and his many years of teaching science in the Public Schools and worked tirelessly encouraging conservation. He is survived by his sons Peter (Ann) and David (Essie). If my father hadn't suddenly come down with cancer, I can guarantee he'd have moved heaven and earth to make it to the 2006 reunion.

★ **Jerry Bernasconi, 323rd**

Ontario, Canada, Jan. 2005

Reported by Phil Mack & His Nephew Tony Bernasconi

Jerry has lived in Canada for about as long as I can remember and has been disabled and under medical care.

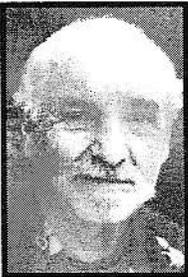
Jerry was assigned to fly with another crew nearing the completion of his own tour. The aircraft was shot down. Jerry survived but was injured in the bail out. He became a POW for the duration.

I always felt bad about Jerry flying with another crew and getting shot down when he was so near to completing his tour. Dave Bramble, our Pilot, had become 323rd Squadron Operations Officer and probably assigned Jerry to the flight at the last minute when the regular crewmember was unavailable for some reason. I know Dave felt very bad about Jerry. Our tail gunner picked up a couple of Purple Hearts but Jerry was our only crewmember who was shot down.

**WILL THE CIRCLE REMAIN UNBROKEN
 BYE AND BYE LORD, BYE AND BYE
 WILL OUR CREW BE ALL TOGETHER
 IN THE SKY LORD, IN THE SKY**

Folded Wings cont'd:**★ Ralph Rappaport, 324th****Portland Oregon, April 22, 2004**

As reported by Dana Fadely & Kasey Marks>



I am sorry to tell you that Ralph died a year ago, April 22. Ralph was a lifelong friend of mine (he was, in fact, my babysitter) and my family. He became ill with lung cancer in Sept of 2004 and we moved him up here to Oregon to live with us so we could care for him. He was very close to my 9-

year-old daughter and was glad to be near her at the end of his life. We miss Uncle Ralph very much and treasure our memories of all of the years we had together. Ralph was Jewish and although he was very proud of his family heritage I think he was prouder still of his WWII bombardier past. For that reason, we had him buried in Willamette National cemetery in Portland Oregon.

If there is anything else I can tell you about Ralph I would be glad to send it along. I don't know if your organization runs memorial pieces in your newsletters or not. I have a nice photo of him speaking to my daughter's second grade class about his bombardier experiences. He brought old photos of himself in his training plane, a few old Yank magazines, and his "short snorter." The kids were captivated. Ralph was a friend to everyone. We miss him.

Thank you for your time. Sincerely, Kasey Marks'

★ William "Bill" Stevenson, 322nd Age 87
Danville, IL, April 25, 2005

He was born Dec. 18, 1917, in Charles City, Iowa. He married Lois Margaret Griffin on June 5, 1949, in Waterloo, Iowa.

He was a veteran of World War II, serving with the United States Army Air Corps 8th Air Force, with rank of 1st. Lieutenant. Bill was a

bombardier on the B-17 "Flying Fortress." His plane was hit by enemy fire after completing its mission and then exploded. He and the pilot were captured as POW's and were imprisoned for 16 months in Germany's Stalag Luft I. Bill was manager of Sholem's Good Shoes in Danville. He was a life member of American Legion Post 210 and past commander. He also held life memberships in VFW Post 728, DAV, American Ex-POW, Military Order of Purple Heart, and 8th Air Force Historical Society

and the Danville Rotary. He enjoyed golf, reading history, and was an avid Illinois fan. He is survived by his wife Lois, four daughters, Rebecca "Bekki" Knox., Nancy (Mike) Moore, Linda Valdes and Barbara (Jeff) Conover; one son, Paul (Michelle) Stevenson, 13 grandchildren, 3 step grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren; and two sisters, Louise Glass of Cedar Falls, Iowa, and Janet Gray of Waterloo, Iowa.

★ Robert Schuster, 322nd, Age 80**Owatonna, Minn., April 1, 2005**

As reported by Bob Roach, Pilot & Al & Anita Standish



Bob was a Waist Gunner on "The Sweet Dish". Robert Worked for OTC & Truth, Inc. before owning and operating Jerry's Restaurant in his hometown. He was a member of many organizations. He and his wife attended many of the 91st

reunions. He is survived by his wife Gloria, sons' Mark & Curt, daughters Cynthia & Heidi, their spouses, 2 grandsons, three sisters and one brother.

★ Mangold, 322nd, Jack R. Age 86**Ontario CA, May 15, 2005**

As reported by #3 son, Mike Mangold

Just a note to inform you that Major Jack R. Mangold passed away quietly in his sleep. Services were held by the Color Guard at the Riverside Military Cemetery.

He was born in Tacoma WA, April 21, 1919 and was a resident of Ontario for 26 years. He served the USAF for 21 years and was in the USMC for four years.

He loved golf and working crossword puzzles. Survived by his companion, Vivian Catlett, daughter Kay Sullivan, sons Larry, Kenneth & Dale, 11 grandchildren & step-grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

★ Frank L. Panek, 323rd, Age 83
Allendale, NJ, April 21, 2004

As reported by his children

He served with the 91st BG, Bassingbourn England from January 1943-1946. He was awarded the Purple Heart, Air Medal, European Theatre Medal and WWII Victory Medal.

His wife of 62 years, Ora Vivian, three children, Suzanne, Raymond and wife Noceen and Frank, Jr. & wife Susan and 9 Grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren survive him.

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Published quarterly, January, April, July and October. The purpose of the Newsletter, THE RAGGED IRREGULAR, is to keep alive the Spirit of the 91st Bomb 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. Editor Steve Perri

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The Ragged Irregular

July 2005

Folded Wings:

✪ Carl B. Cheaney Jr. 324th San Antonio, TX, Oct. 8, 2004



He was born Dec. 3, 1924 in Coleman TX where he spent his early years and then attended N. TX Agricultural College in Arlington TX. He joined the USAAC in 1944, completed pilot training and was assigned as a B-17 co-pilot flying a number of missions over Germany. After the war, he attended SW

Texas State University and graduated in 1949. He taught school in San Antonio and completed his Masters in 1952. In 1954 he joined the 433rd "Alamo Wing" reserve unit and in '59 became a full-time Air Reserve Technician. During the 60's the 433rd moved to Kelly Air Force Base and he assumed a wide variety of functions as a senior pilot including check-pilot, instructor and standardization officer while flying C-199's and C-124's. In 1968, the Alamo Wing was called to active duty for 16 months during the Vietnam Conflict and he flew C-124's all over the world carrying troops and equipment. After active duty he returned to Reserve status and served as a senior pilot and instructor flying C-130's. During his military career, he attained the rank of Lt. Colonel and accomplished 6000 hour of flying time. In 1979 he became a Civil Service C-130 Simulator Instructor and remained there until his retirement in 1985.

He is survived by his loving wife, Alice, sisters Billye Banner and Nancy Lindsay, son Carl, daughter Ellen Brown, stepchildren Ron Bento, Sylvia (Dennis) Fry and six grandchildren as well as many other family members. Internment was at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.

✪ Richard A. Lechner, 401st, Age 78 Sioux City IA, March 3, 2002

As reported by his wife Ardyce Lechner Richard was born June 7, 1924 in Sioux City, Iowa. He enlisted in the AAFC November 19, 1942 and graduated from Pilot School in 1944. He flew a B-17 and was assigned to the 91st BG 401st Squadron. He flew 33 missions over Germany and was discharged as a 1/Lt. He was a life member of the 8th Air Force Historical Society and the 91st BG Memorial Association.

He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Ardyce, three daughters and 6 grandchildren.

✪ Edward Ah Tye, 324th, Age 91 Stockton CA, May 14, 2005

As reported by his wife Blanche Ed was born in Oakland CA, Jan. 13, 1914, #6 of 15 children. Six brothers served in WWII and all came home safe and sound. Ed was a top turret gunner/engineer on the B-17 Bomber "Wild Hare". His first mission was the "Big B" (Berlin) over Germany. He flew 35 missions from June-November 1944 and was awarded the Air Medal with 3 Oak Leaf clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Ed was a Mason, past Master of San Joaquin Lodge #19, a member of Scottish Rite, Ben Ali Shrine and United Methodist Church.

His wife of 64 ½ years, Blanch and children – Judy (Ray) Hong, Lani (Greg) Farkas, Doreen Ah Tye and Gordon (Marian) Ah Tye and four grandchildren survive him.

