

# THE RAGGED IRREGULAR



322<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Sq.



323<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Sq.



Supporting Units



324<sup>th</sup> Bomb Sq.



401<sup>st</sup> Bomb Sq.

Vol. 39 No. 1

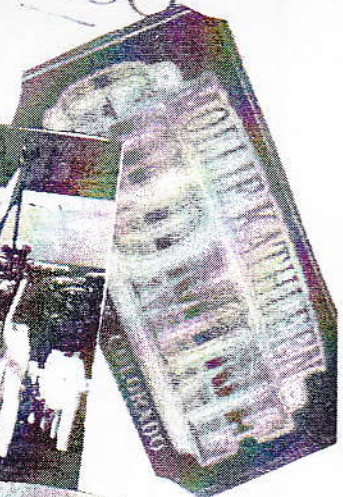
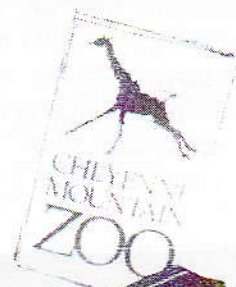
91<sup>st</sup> Bombardment Group (H)

January 2006

## JOIN US FOR A ROCKY MOUNTAIN "HIGH"

### Reunion

Colorado Springs, Colorado  
September 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> 2006



MANITOU  
CLIFF DWELLINGS

PIKES PEAK COG RAILWAY



## From the Presidents Desk:

Hope all of you wonderful 91sters and friends had some delightful holidays and are now preparing for a glorious 2006. We look towards moving our Association into the era when more responsibility will be assumed by our dedicated younger members. By-Laws will be sent under separate cover to all full and life members. Please read the proposed changes to the By-Laws and participate in the voting for our new set of officers during this year.

Plans are developing nicely for Reunion 2006 in Colorado Springs on Wed. 13 Sept. thru Sat. 16 Sept. 06. Looks like we will receive excellent support from the local Visitors' Bureau as we did for Reunion 2002 in Tacoma. Please check the details elsewhere in The Ragged Irregular and start planning your visit. I hope to see many of you at the "Not-so-gala Reception" on Wednesday from 5 to 7+ since the price is right - free; Mick Hanou will be our Hospitality Room manager.

Your officers participated in our quarterly Conference Call on 12 November. We are still planning for closer contact with the 91st Space Wing at Minot AFB, North Dakota and I will probably be visiting their "open house" in August; any interest in a Rally Round? Earl Pate reported on the progress at WPAFB in restoration of *The Memphis Belle* and his efforts to get the Memphis media to appeal for return of any of the parts that may have been removed.

We reviewed the final draft of proposed changes to the By-Laws. We discussed some serious problems that occurred in the PX complicated by all the hurricane warnings and hits and, as you may have seen on the web site (or elsewhere in this RI), have had to cancel orders placed prior to 1 Oct 05; please be patient with the attempt to reconstruct orders and get shipments out. Note that arrangements have been made to offer the 2006 calendars directly from the publisher.

Since the Conference Call we have had some interesting contacts with some of the organizations which support the 91st BGMA. Vince Hemmings continues to donate generously of his time and abilities in England and recently sent an update on the Priory Gardens and Museum at Royston as many of you noted on "The Ring." The EAAS (East Anglia Aviation Society) recently held an election to - among other things - choose a successor to Ray Jude who has been the able interim President after the untimely death of Peter Roberts; they are still working to overcome the problems of radium

contamination at the Tower Museum. Jake Howland recently donated to the Tower Museum some of his CD's for sale to help them raise funds. We continue to explore possibilities that the restoration of the "*Memphis Belle*" at the Museum at WPAFB may afford. The Museum may be interested in being a permanent repository of the 91st BGMA historical records; I have the details on the Museum's policy.

This would in no way conflict with our cooperation with Chino in California or the 91st Space Wing at Minot AFB, ND, to develop display of unit history. I have encouraged the Museum to use the display of the *Belle* as an opportunity to highlight the significance of the Four Horsemen - 91st, 303rd, 305th and 306th - as the beginning of the Eighth Air Force and have been supported by the 303rd in a letter to the Director.

Include your officers in your prayers. We need it. God bless you one and all.

Pres. Ed

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## **2006 REUNION SHERATON – COLORADO SPRINGS**

**SEPTEMBER 13 – 16 2006**

**\$74 PER NIGHT PLUS TAX**

We tentatively plan to offer trips to the Academy, NORAD in Cheyenne Mt., Garden of the Gods, a Ghost Town & Pottery Factory, Royal Gorge with lunch train ride, Buckskin Joe's recreated western town & tourist trap, Cripple Creek Gold Mine, Manitou Springs shopping & Native American Cliff Dwellings, Melodrama Dinner Theatre, Pikes Peak by cog RR (or by bus if enough people want to stay through Sunday) and a few Museums like the Numismatic, Mineral & Industry, Professional Rodeo, Pioneer, and Rocky Mt. Dinosaur. We will have activities on Wednesday through Saturday with the Business Meeting on Friday morn and the Banquet on Saturday night. Hospitality Room will be under the inspiring guidance of Mick Hanou with a free "not-so-gala Reception" on Wednesday from 5pm onwards. We plan to return (after 22 years) to the Flying W Ranch for dinner on Friday night.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND MORE:

**2006 Historical Calendars**

**B-24 & B-17 Historical Calendars**



**\$9.95**

plus \$2.50 p&h (\$12.45 total)  
CA Residence add 7.75% (\$13.41 Total)  
Additional calendars of any type to  
same address \$7 each (includes p&h)

**2006 WWII Bomber Aircraft Calendar**  
(PB4Y-2, PBJ, B-24, B-17, B-29,  
B-26, A-26, B-25 and A-20)



**\$12.99**

plus \$4.00 p&h (\$16.99 total)  
CA Residence add 7.75% (\$18.31 Total)  
Additional calendars of any type to  
same address \$9 each (includes p&h)

**Bomber Legends**  
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1672 Main Street, Ste. E - 124  
Ramona, CA 92065-5257

**www.bomberlegends.com**  
As in the past, your organization will receive a portion of the sale of  
each calendar through Feb. 2006. We track sales by the special code  
in the ( ) following "Bomber Legends" to the left.

If you decide to purchase the 2006 Historical Calendar please let them know that you belong to the 91<sup>st</sup> BGMA and a portion of the sale will go to our treasury.

Note from Kay Ginter (Niece)

Please accept this donation in memory of Howard "Bud" Wilson (see obituary on page 11 of this issue) with acknowledgement to his widow, Nell. Thank you, Bob and Kay Ginter, Wilmington, Ohio.

Sent to Mike Banta's ring.

**This wonderful little Belgian lady is tending the grave of one of our brothers and wants his family to know that she is doing so:**

I'm a Belgian "war godmother", taking care of the grave of 1/Lt. John W. Wilson, who was a member of 401<sup>st</sup> BS, 91<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group (H). I'm trying to find information about him, and I already got some.

I know he was flying "Hellsapoppin" the day he was killed, which was on the 17<sup>th</sup> April, 1943, 20 miles south from Bremen. He was buried here in the Ardennes American Cemetery and Memorial. If you know something about him or someone who could help me in my search, please answer me. Thank you very much in advance, and also for what you guys did for our country!

May this New Year be full of happiness and joy for you and your family.

Warm Regards, Ariane Georges-Villers

Wbnp0006@wanadoo.be (A.G.)

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**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR & MORE**

From Jay Burnett, son of Paul Burnett:

Thanks so much for sending me the "Ragged Irregular". It looks great and the reprint of the first issue brought back a lot of memories. I'll never forget that trip to Memphis (and later, to Denver and Colorado Springs), and I'll always have images of my dad on the floor of his study or at the kitchen table working on the newsletter. The 91<sup>st</sup> was such a huge part of his life. Looking at the photos of that first reunion made me realize for the first time how young you guys were back then. I'm older now than a lot of the folks who attended the Memphis reunion! But, after all, it had only been 25 years – less time than I've been out of college (and college just seems like yesterday). I can only imagine what it must have been like for all of you to be back together again after all that the group had been through during the war. Again, thanks for the newsletter and the wonderful tribute to my dad. Best Jay, Managing Ed. of Water's Edge, Jacksonville FL [www.waters-edge.com](http://www.waters-edge.com)

I enjoyed the October Edition as always. I read it and then delivered it to my Dad, Chuck Galian this weekend. Old memories keep him going these days.

The world owes a lot to guys like the two of you and the rest of the 91<sup>st</sup>. Without your heroics, I'd probably be wearing a brown shirt and tie, speaking German and would not be very happy.

Thanks for what you did back then and for what you're doing now to keep the memories alive.

Butch Galian - God Bless America

Dear Steve and Nancy,

We add our thanks to you for another great issue of The Ragged Irregular! What a great one this is, as always, but to have the '67 issue recopied takes us back in our memories of our great Group and earlier years!

All of the articles are of great interest in this issue and it is all so well-done.

Thank you for all the time, sweat and labor that goes into this great work that you two do!

Hope you are both doing well. Thanking you both and wishing you much good health and happiness.

Roy & Lois Fratz

**Editors note: This page makes it all worthwhile. - Steve & Nancy Perri**

Hello Steve & Nancy:

We received our copy of the October issue of the "Ragged Irregular". What a keepsake that issue is to many members who were not even on the membership list. That issue really tells it all from the beginning. I remember it well because I decided to ride back to Jefferson City with Gerald Massie in his car and leave a day early. But I had a major problem, someone the night before carried my big green album to their room and proceeded to make photographic copies of many of the photos in the album. The Album was gone when I was about to leave. I left word with Frank Donofrio that someone has stolen the album, figuring that I would never see it again. After a few days back home, I received it in the mail. WOW! I have seen many of the identical photos surface now over the internet with credits to another person's name.

More to the story – I couldn't schedule a flight back to Seattle from Jefferson City, so flew in a 6 passenger mail plane, stopping at many little towns to Kansas City. There I visited Bill Pulliam and then flew to Seattle from there.

Thanks again for the special History issue of the "Ragged Irregular". Love Joe & Jenny

By now we have all received our copy of the October R/I. Making the first issue of the R/I, October 1967, as a tribute to Paul Burnett the middle section of the current issue was a brilliant idea. Great job, Steve, and isn't it interesting that the Memphis Belle's preservation as a monument to the 91st Bomb Group and the Mighty Eighth Air Force was a feature story in both issues.

We have to thank Memphis for keeping our pride and joy safely for sixty years but only the Air Force Museum at Dayton can preserve in perpetuity this trophy of the air battles between the best German fighters and the mighty B-17s of the Eighth Air Force. Such a battle between fighters and bombers never happened before and will never happen again. A dwindling few of us saw this take place before our eyes. The Memphis Belle will keep the terror we experienced in the skies over the German occupied continent alive for generations to come.

Mike Banta, 91st Ring

Thanks Nancy & Steve, good job on the R/I again. God bless you two on your walk in life. Marion Hoffman.



**KUDOS TO THE GROUND CREW:**

(THE MEN WHO SERVED ON THE GROUND)

Story Contributed by Jack Gaffney

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article, by an unnamed author, appeared in the summer 1999 newsletter of the National Capitol Area Chapter of the 8AFHS.

Many did not understand the relationship – or lack of it – between air and ground crews. Whatever their tasks, the ground crew did everything they could to minimize the hazards faced by the air crews. Ordinance people toiled through the night to haul bombs from the dump to each hardstand, to select and assemble fuses, make certain they were properly safetied, yet ready to be quickly armed, checked bomb racks and shackles and hung bombs securely. Frequently, orders for bomb loads were changed after all aircraft had been loaded. This meant the old loads had to be removed and the new ones installed in short order. Many times, two ordinance men loaded 500-pound bombs manually on the racks (above their heads) in order to save the time it took to use mechanical hoists. All of this was accomplished so each plane was loaded and ready before the aircrew arrived. Occasionally, they rode surreptitiously on a mission to check out a faulty shackle or other failure in release. Yet, the crews were hardly aware of their existence except perhaps when they saw the strange trucks and trailers used to transport the bombs from the storage dump to the hardstands.

Ground crews literally prayed for the safe return of every plane and crew and "sweated" until the end of every mission. They knew when a mission went off, there would be planes downed over Europe, men would be in POW camps, lives lost. When Chaplains came to the hardstand to give their blessing, the ground crews knelt with them to give their spiritual support. After the mission, they would be fascinated by the stories, especially the vivid descriptions of flak and fighters accompanied by appropriate gestures.

Crew chiefs and their mechanics were respected and valued by the crews of each aircraft they serviced. What about the men in Supply who struggled to have spare parts available? The instrument maintenance people who made sure bombsights were effective, and the communications technicians who assured radios and navigational equipment were in first class order, that the VHF channels had the correct crystals for the frequencies designated for the day's mission. What about the armaments men who serviced and maintained the guns or the

truck drivers who fueled the planes? The mess personnel who never failed to have nourishing food ready when it was needed and the medics who looked after the aircrews' health. There were men in Operations, Intelligence, Traffic Control, Finance, Legal and the all-important Postal Men so essential to the morale and support of the flying activities.

There was a touch of envy on the part of the ground crews. They marveled that men who had spent only a few months together as a combat crew, counting their missions, reaching the magic number and returning to the States, could look upon this relatively brief part of their military service and of their lives as having had such importance during an entire lifetime. The camaraderie of an aircrew was certainly understandable because of their obvious interdependence in tight situations.

Because aircrews were a smaller unit, usually together only for the few months it took for crew integration, fly 25 or 30 missions, attached to a Group only during their months of combat, their tight little unit was the focal point for their nostalgia. Each man was concerned only with the men in his crew. You might say there was a connection of sorts with other crews who may have been on the same missions or gone through flight school together, but it was a loose one.

Those on the ground of all ranks and military specialties, who remained with a group for one, perhaps more than two years, from its activation in 1942 or 1943 to its demise in 1945, had a far different wartime experience than did the transient air crews.

The tasks of these "ground pounders" were often mundane and sometimes boring. They were fragmented into relatively isolated groups, defined by their particular functions. The intentional dispersal layout of the various facilities at the base fostered separation.

The ground personnel have a nostalgic feeling for the base. After all, it was home – mud and all – for perhaps two or more years. Today, they enjoyed reading the Air Division Journals and the Group newsletters as they recall the exploits of the men who were with them a short while and went on their way.

Perhaps, this reminder will help former airmen understand why many ground personnel do not share their enthusiasm for reunions. This perception is unfortunate, indeed. These ground bound airmen gave confidence to the air crews, and they were an integral element of the victorious air campaigns of WWII.



## "MEMPHIS BELLE"

### Will be moved to museum

Air Force will take famous bomber to Ohio

As reported by the Associated Press

The National Museum of the United States Air Force is located on Springfield Pike, six miles northeast of downtown Dayton. Admission and parking are free. It is open seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day).

Supporters of an effort to keep the famous Memphis Belle, WW II bomber say they're giving up and returning the plane to the Air Force to be placed in a national museum, at Wright-Patterson, AFB, Dayton Ohio.

"To the community, it's like the loss of a landmark," said Andy Pouncey, President of the Memphis Belle Memorial Association. "This plane is a landmark in time for folks." The plane was famous for being the first B-17 Flying Fortress to complete 25 bombing runs over Europe with its original crew.

The plane's pilot, Col. Robert Morgan, piloted the bomber and named the Belle for his wartime girlfriend, Margaret Polk of Memphis. Morgan died last year in North Carolina.

The airplane has been in the city since 1946 after local leaders resurrected it from a junkyard for old military equipment. But local efforts to build a permanent museum to display and preserve the Belle failed, and the Air Force said it intended to take it back.

Pouncey said the bomber's move to the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base could come as early as October.

"We know it is going to a place where it will be well taken care of and a place where more people can see it," Pouncey said.



The "Memphis Belle"  
On its way to Wright Patterson AFB



## From Across the Pond

by Vince Hemmings

### The Memorial Service at the American Military Cemetery, Madingley.

Once again Margaret and I attended the Memorial Service at Madingley on 11th November. Upon arrival one is invited to a reception held in the foyer of the Cemeteries office where doughnuts, croissants and a cup of coffee were available. We enjoyed a conversation with a M/Sgt who had only been in the country for four weeks, having come from Korea. He has seven children who have been born in various parts of America and the world and some speaking several languages.

The small marquee (it seats about fifty) was in place again this year which is very welcome. The platoons lined up were from the US Navy, Air Force and one from the Royal Air Force. A group of Scouts were also present. The distinguish guest's were introduced. These included two American Generals, Commanding Officers of the nearby American and British bases and local dignitaries. Not many civilians attended as most towns and villages throughout the country have their own Memorial Services.

An RAF Tornado performed the opening flypast. I do applaud the fact that Brigadier General Robert. Steel, Commander of the 48th Fighter Wing, RAF Lakenheath and Group Captain Dennis Baker, Chairman of the Tri-Base British American Community Relations Committee jointly laid a wreath. The whole Service was ably conducted by Chaplain, Captain John Kenyon from the 423rd Air Base who told us, that he has spent some of his service time at the Arlington Military Cemetery.

The closing flyover was an RAF Jaguar from RAF Cottishall. The Jaguar's Squadrons are beginning disbanded next year.

Coffee and biscuits were available at the end of the Service.

The 423rd Air Base Squadron who are stationed at RAF Molesworth, RAF Alconbury and RAF Upwood organized the Service along with the Cemeteries permanent staff. They all do a wonderful job particularly as our weather can be so changeable.

It is a privilege and an honour to be invited and to represent your Group.

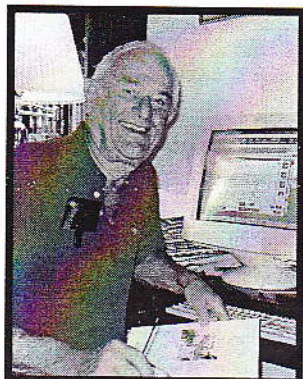
Vincent. A. Hemmings.





**STORY'S from the Ring –****Mike Banta Ringmaster**

**Become a member of the ring by e-mailing Mike at [B17banta@aol.com](mailto:B17banta@aol.com)**



The following letter was received from Tom Davis:

I have some news about Dick Pressey, a member of the Ring, and former pilot with the 401st Squadron.

I learned from Dick's son last night that Dick broke his neck last Thursday! His son said Dick was in his garage standing on a stool and reaching for the fuse box...circuit breaker box, and fell off the stool to the garage floor with his head hitting a parked car, which must have snapped and broke his neck. Surprisingly, and thankfully, he was not paralyzed, and he crawled into the house to phone for help. However, the phone did not work as it was on the circuit that was out. So he crawled out of his house down his driveway and into the street where a neighbor saw him and called an ambulance. He was successfully operated on (his son said the surgeon told him that 20% do not survive this surgery) and had two pins put in his neck...I'm sure he meant vertebrae. He was to be on an assisted breathing apparatus for two days, but his son said that when he returned on the second day, it was out and Dick was alert and talking. Dick is currently recovering in a rest home and apparently is doing very well, as his son said Dick is complaining and still has a sense of humor. He remarked to his son that all he's seen in this place is a bunch of old women! His son said he told him, "well Dad, that's in your favor and maybe you can...." Dick's remark "oh' God!" Any way, the prognosis is good, and he'll be staying at the rest home for a while.

(I asked his son for how long, and he said he really doesn't know...yet). It looks like

Dick will celebrate his 89<sup>th</sup> birthday of 23 December 2005 at the rest home.

I will keep you posted on his progress.

**THE B-17G 'FUDDY DUDDY' ARRIVES AT ITS  
NEW HOME - CHINO, CALIFORNIA**

B-17G "Fuddy Duddy" arrived at John Wayne Airport in Southern California yesterday.

Recently purchased by General William Lyon, the aircraft joins General Lyon's B-25 and A-26 at Martin Aviation.

Shown here on final, "Fuddy Duddy" is the second operational B-17 in Southern California, joining Palm Spring Air Museum's "Miss Angela".

We are so lucky, lets all pitch in and do whatever we can to see that "Fuddy Duddy" remains operational, so that all can witness one of our nation's national treasures.

Fuddy Duddy was flying regularly until about two

years ago; at which time it was put on display at the

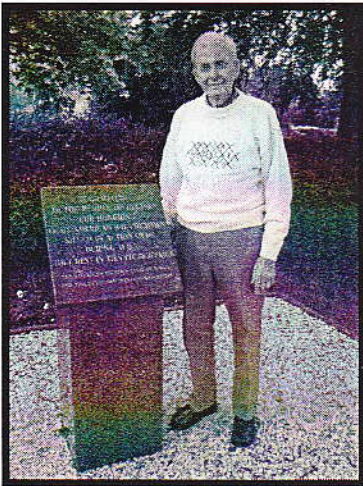


National Warplane Museum. The aircraft's paint scheme is that of the original "Fuddy Duddy". Like "Aluminum Overcast," the airplane did not see combat and is fully equipped for passenger flights.

The "Wings of Eagles" B-17G was built by Douglas Aircraft in 1944 at their Long Beach, California plant and delivered to the Pacific Theater where it was converted for use as a VIP transport. In 1946, Gen Dwight D. Eisenhower used the aircraft on his tour of the South Pacific. Gen. Douglas MacArthur also used it in the 1950s. Acquired by the National Warplane Museum in 1986, it was restored to resemble the "Fuddy Duddy," an 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force B-17G assigned to the 708<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, 447<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group that was lost in a mid-air collision over Manheim, Germany, on December 30, 1944.



Photos from Opijen - from Jake Howland



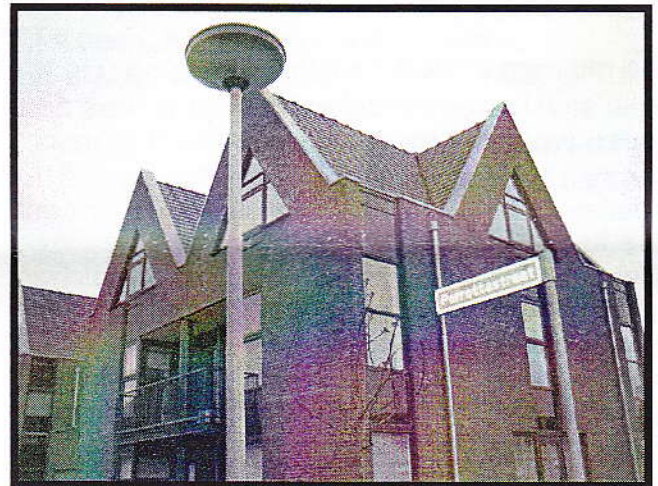
This is the new community that has been erected by the wonderful people of Opijen in honor of the crew of "Man O War", 323<sup>rd</sup> Squadron. Eight were killed that fateful day, July 30, 1943 and all the streets were named after the crew.

The streets in the photos "Polingstraat & Sparksstraat" are such that one side of the street is Polingstraat and the other side of the street is Sparksstraat. In reality, there were only four actual streets in the housing development. So it became creative to wind up with ten different street names

John Bruce, Copilot- at the Memorial



Spark Straat. – corner of Duggan's Straat



Perrotta Straat – corner of Duggan's Straat



Bruce Straat and McCammon Plein



Blackwood and Cianfichi Poort



This Poem is a Tribute to the memory of ROGER FREEMAN - 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Historian

**THE SKY WAS NEVER STILL**

By Roger Freeman

The old man sat in the English pub,  
As he had for many a year,  
And listened to the stranger's talk,  
As he sipped a temperate beer.

A stranger asked how long he'd lived  
In the village here about?  
"Why all my days," the old man said,  
"An age, without a doubt."

"I envy you" the stranger sighed  
"Your tranquil village life.  
The gentle fields, the muted sky,  
Devoid of urban strife."

The old man smiled a wistful smile,  
"That's just a townie's dream.  
For I have seen the sky aflame  
And heard the meadows scream."

"I've known a thunder at each dawn  
That shook the very ground,  
As warplanes sought to gain the clouds  
From airfields all around."

"They called some "Forts" and others "Libs",  
And there were fighters too.  
I've counted hundreds at a time,  
Yes, what I tell is true."

"They'd climb and soar like flocks of rooks,  
And round and round they'd mill.  
From north and south, from east and west,  
The sky was never still."

"Sometimes there'd be a wondrous sight,  
A sight beyond compare.  
The bombers going out to war,  
Forging the frigid air."

Four miles above, just silver specks,  
Like sunshine on the dew.  
And trailing lines of cloud-like white,  
Across the cosmic blue."

"They set the heavens all a-throb,  
That did not fade away.  
For others rose to meet the night,  
Invisible to stay."

"And when was this?" the stranger asked.  
"And who were those you saw?"  
The old man drank and then replied,  
"It happened in the war."

"They were but boys and many died.  
Some lost without a trace.  
For them the sky in foreign parts,  
Could be a violent place."

"Yes, they were boys and me a child,  
but I remember well.  
And if you have the time to spare,  
There's more that I can tell."

The stranger said that: "he must go,  
Perhaps, another day?"  
Indifferent to the old man's tale,  
He quickly slipped away.

The old man turned to inward thought,  
His memories to tend.  
He knew that those who were not there,  
Could never comprehend.

Those who'd not known the crowded sky,  
The sounds that drenched the land.  
Or stood in awe and wonderment,  
Would never understand.

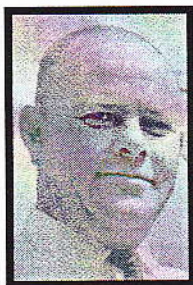
The old man left the English pub,  
And stood awhile outside.  
The evening vault was milky blue,  
Cloud-free and stretching wide.

He raised his head and scanned the sky,  
That held so still and clear.  
And in his mind, a memory,  
And in his eye a tear.



**FoldedWingscont'd:**

★ **Robert Hanson, 324<sup>th</sup>, Age 85**  
**Albuquerque NM, October 1, 2005**



As reported by Harold Kious Memphis Belle Crewman Robert Hanson, Radio Operator and the last surviving crewmember of the famed B-17 bomber, "*Memphis Belle*," who had had suffered from heart problems for some time, died of congestive heart failure.

Hanson told his family stories about a chase involving several German planes, the bomber's tail being shot off and a nose dive that left the crew wondering if they should use their parachutes; "It's the end of an era. Hanson's daughter, Mary Black, said. Hanson is survived by his wife, Irene; daughter Mary Black, son Rick Hanson; and six grandchildren.

★ **Robert (Lee) Lovely, 322<sup>nd</sup>, Age 83**  
**Springboro OH, November 2, 2005**



As reported by Marion Hoffman Bob flew 29 missions from '43 - '44. on Lt. John Boyce Jr.'s crew. He received the DFC with 3 OLC's. After the war he had a 39 year career with Amer. Steel. We would meet weekly on Saturday mornings at he and Dan's barn. We called ourselves "The Barn

Gang" made up of all WWII military services. He is survived by Daughter Robin (Steve) Dowd and 2 bothers Jack & Dan.

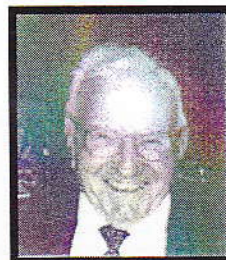
★ **John E. Wallin, 323<sup>rd</sup>, Age 83**  
**Lindenhurst, LI, NY, June 5, 2004**



As reported by his nephew Gary Wallin John was born October 6, 1920 in Brooklyn NY and served with distinction during WW II as a gunner in a B-17. He flew 26 missions over Germany and received the DFC, Air Medal with three clusters and commendations from Winston Churchill. John worked as a

printer and spent his final years in the Union Printers home in Colorado Springs CO. He is survived by two brothers, Robert and Phil, a daughter Lynn and a son, John.

★ **Howard L. Wilson 323<sup>rd</sup> Age 88**  
**Maysville, KY, December 10, 2005**



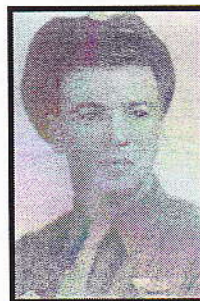
Submitted by his niece, Kay Ginter He was born August 4, 1917 in Maysville KY. He entered the Army Air Corp. April 1942 and flew 35 missions on B-17s. He was a top turret gunner on "Hi Ho Silver", piloted by Dusty Hoffman and crashed landed three times; the last time on

June 5, 1944, with a full bomb load, after a diversionary bombing of Bordeaux France on the day before D-Day. He was recently given a medal from France commemorating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Normandy Invasion for his participation. He also served in the South Pacific on C-54's. Discharged as Tech. Sergeant, October 1945, he was awarded the DFC and Air Medal with 3 OLC's., two Presidential Citations and ribbons from the European, Asiatic and Pacific Theaters.

He worked at Hendricksons Bottling Co. for 28 yrs. and then at Emerson until retirement. He was a farmer in Dover for 50 years and worked with the Scouts graduating 16 Eagle Scouts. He received the silver Beaver Award and was named a Kentucky Colonel by Gov. John Brown and assisted in establishing the Blue Devils team restarting football at Maysville HS. He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Nell, a son Doctor Donald Wilson and two grandchildren, Nicole and Andrew.

★ **William F. Morrison, Jr., 323<sup>rd</sup>, Age 80**  
**Crofton, Md, December 6, 2005**

As reported by H. B. Tegler A WW II combat veteran and retired winesalesman, died of pneumonia -emphysema.



He joined the Maryland State Guard when he was 17 as he was too young to "serve" in the USAAC, then, on his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, he enlisted. He flew 29 combat missions and achieved the rank of sergeant in 1945 after saving the life of a fellow crewman after their plane was hit by enemy fire. He

also received the Air Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters. After the war he purchased the Chestnut Café and operated it for 11 years. He then joined Kronheim Liquors as a wine salesman until retirement in 1977.

He is survived by his sons William and Robert, daughter Cathy Patrick, 15 grand-children and four great-grandchildren.



LET US KNOW BEFORE YOU MOVE

Published quarterly, January, April, July and October. The purpose of the Newsletter, THE RAGGED IRREGULAR, is to keep alive the Spirit of the 91<sup>st</sup> 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

Page 12

The Ragged Irregular

January 2006

## Folded Wings:

We are very sorry to report the passing of:

❖ **Roger Anthony Wilson Freeman, Age 77**  
**A.F. Historian, England, October 7, 2005**

Source: The Daily Telegraph (London)



The son of a farmer, he was born at Ipswich, Suffolk, May 11, 1928. He was educated at Colchester HS, and when he proved a poor student, his parents withdrew him and he began working on the family farm at age 15. Alongside making his living as a farmer - He became one of the world's foremost military aviation historians specializing in the history of the USAAC, Eighth Air Force, the

largest air striking force ever committed to battle.

Growing up on a farm in East Anglia he had a boyhood obsession with aircraft which developed into a historical interest in the airmen and operations of the Eighth, a force with some 3,500 bombers and almost 1,000 fighters occupying some 60 airfields in the area. During the early post-war years, Freeman researched the history of the Eighth, when farming allowed. After almost 25 years research, he managed to interest a publisher in his compilation, although publication was dependent on a declared American interest since "few people in the UK will be interested in what the Yanks did". The Americans were persuaded, although, they expressed reservations about the title. He was given an hour to come up with something more pithy and lit on "The Mighty Eighth". The book was an instant success and became the first of a trilogy on the Eighth's operations mounted from Britain. They have become standard works, with a worldwide circulation and translations into several languages.

His enthusiasm for aircraft was ignited when a number of airfields were built in his local area, one (Boxted)

next to their farm. Long-range escort fighters flew from Boxted, and the Freemans' were given permission to carry out haymaking and other agricultural activities on the airfield. Roger delighted in raking hay while surrounded by the hefty Thunderbolt long-range fighters of the 56<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group, known as the "Wolf Pack", which provided escort for the armada of bombers.

With his teenage friends, he cycled hundreds of miles to watch and record the activities of the aircraft at other airfields. He always knew where to go, thanks to schoolboys' word of mouth. On one occasion towards the end of the war, Freeman recalled seeing more than 30 formations of bombers, totaling more than 1,000 aircraft, heading for Germany.

He married in 1956 to Jean Blain, who survives him along with two daughters and a son. Two sons died in infancy.



Roger Freeman, Lt. Col. Piggins, Base Commander, Bassingborn and Col. Wray 1974