

# THE RAGGED IRREGULAR



322<sup>nd</sup> BS



323<sup>rd</sup> BS



Supporting Units



324<sup>th</sup> BS



401<sup>st</sup> BS

Vol. 44 No. 2

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

April 2011

## Chasing Rabbits – The Continued Story of the 324th Squadron Insignia



Brigadier General William Gross, commander of the 1st Air Division, Major Immanuel "Manny" Klette, commander of the 324th Bomb Squadron, and Major Charles Hudson, lead bombardier of the 91st Bomb Group, relax beside *Klette's Wild Hares* after a mission. The nose art on this plane, painted by Corporal Charles Busa, plays a part in the story which starts on page 4.

**President's Corner****Jim Shepherd**

Gary Hall has our trip to Bassingbourn on schedule and we are excited about going back to Bassingbourn. Suzi and I were there in 1992 and we knew very little of the history of the 91st Bomb Group. However, since we published the web page on 17 January 1999, we have gained a world of knowledge and have had the privilege of knowing many of the veterans, reading their stories, sharing their experiences face to face.

Recently, we visited the Air Museum at the Palm Springs Airport. After talking to several veterans there, I told them about the photos on display, the name of the plane and names of some of the crew. They had a picture of *Wee Willie* and a model of *Little Patches* so I advised them that Hal Johnson was the pilot who flew the plane to Merseburg on 2 November 1944.

The best part was talking to a veteran of the 379th who was based at Kimbolton. I told them the story of Col. Wray moving the 91st from Kimbolton to Bassingbourn because it had the best facilities and quarters for the men. Now he knows why the 379th was based at Kimbolton.

We have donated money to the Planes of Fame Museum in Chino California and given them a list of items we currently have to donate for the display cases they will build. We have 2 original leather jackets, Ike jacket, hats, Oxygen mask, War Department Identification Card, samples of Flak from different time periods of the war, many books and pictures. If you have anything that you want to donate to the museum, please let me know.

We have a complete set of *The Ragged Irregular* and will donate them to the museum. All the *R.I.*'s up through 2009 are on the web page. If you type in a veterans name or supporter of the 91st, it should direct you to the *R.I.* edition where they are listed. This is great for researching the 91st.

Over 1,000 pictures have been received and many are published on the web page. Every month we get emails from family members saying, "that's my Dad" or "my Grandfather" or "my Uncle" and we then add their name to the web page. We need your continued support so we can keep adding pictures and stories of the 91st Web Page. For 12 years I have paid approximately \$500 per year just to publish this extremely large web page, and your donations will help keep the Association financially sound. Please send us what you can.

NEW ITEM: Web page visitor FLAGS showing the countries interested in the 91st. You should check on this as it's interesting. People from 30 countries have visited the web page and the history of the 91st in the last few weeks.

**91st BGMA Officers****President****Jim Shepherd**

20670 Via Augusto  
Yorba Linda, CA 92887-3102  
Tel: (714) 970-5540  
[jshep91@earthlink.net](mailto:jshep91@earthlink.net)

**1st Vice President****Mick Hanou**

2398 Sandpiper Way  
Pleasanton, CA 94566-5323  
Tel: (925) 425-3220  
[mhanou@comcast.net](mailto:mhanou@comcast.net)

**2nd Vice President****Bob Friedman**

6015 Valkeith Dr  
Houston, TX 77096-3832

**Secretary / Treasurer****Jody Kelly**

3829 Sunset Ln  
Oxnard, CA 93035-4135  
Tel: (805) 984-7706  
[njelly@roadrunner.com](mailto:njkelly@roadrunner.com)

**Historian****Janet Larocco**

406 S Payne St  
Alexandria, VA 22314-5911  
[fauno-aventi@usa.net](mailto:fauno-aventi@usa.net)

**Editor****Gary Hall**

1054 Sunrise Dr  
Woodbury, MN 55125-9282  
Tel: (651) 260-2397  
[raggedirregular@gmail.com](mailto:raggedirregular@gmail.com)

Please send Folded Wings information to Jody Kelly.

**Submissions for the July R/I need to be received before June 15th.**

**91st Bomb Group E-mail Ring**  
[b17banta@aol.com](mailto:b17banta@aol.com)

**91st on the Web**

[www.91stbombgroup.com](http://www.91stbombgroup.com)  
[www.bombsqd323rd.com](http://www.bombsqd323rd.com)

**Veeps Views****Mick Hanou**

As I sit down to write this, I realize it is March. There were many significant months during the war. August represents the first 8th AF raids and Schweinfurt #1. October was when you established the base and also known for Schweinfurt #2. November was the 91st's first raids and the Merseburg raid. March makes me think of your Hamm and Berlin missions and reminds me of my old friend George Birdsong. So I grabbed his book, *Stormy Weather*, and perused it again. It caught my attention the first time I ever read it, and never fails to do so each time I re-read it. I want to thank you all again for your service.

Many of you are planning to go on the Bassingbourn Rally Round in May. I am sure you are going to enjoy it and kudos to Gary for all the work he did to prepare this trip. Sorry I am not going but it conflicts with my Collings B-17 and B-24 stop in my home town and flights. I will go to England in July as I do every year. I'm sure Chris and Tom will show you how much the Tower Museum has improved under their guidance.

**Wings of Freedom Tour Schedule**

*Nine-O-Nine* continues on the Wings of Freedom Tour with a swing through the Southwest. See a replica of the famous 91st B-17 along with Collings Foundation's P-51 and B-24. Visit [www.collingsfoundation.org](http://www.collingsfoundation.org) or call 978-562-9182 for more information.

4/1 - 4/4	Victoria, TX Victoria Regional Airport
4/4 - 4/6	Kerrville, TX Kerrville Municipal Airport
4/6 - 4/8	Fredericksburg, TX Gillespie County Airport
4/8 - 4/10	Austin, TX Austin-Bergstrom International
4/11 - 4/13	Fort Stockton, TX Fort Stockton-Pecos County Airport
4/13 - 4/15	El Paso, TX El Paso International Airport
4/15 - 4/18	Marana, AZ Marana Regional Airport
4/18 - 4/20	Phoenix, AZ Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport
4/20 - 4/22	Deer Valley, AZ Phoenix Deer Valley Airport
4/22 - 4/24	Scottsdale, AZ Scottsdale Airport
4/25 - 4/27	Lake Havasu City, AZ Lake Havasu City Airport

**91st Donations Total \$5,525 for Quarter!****\$1,500**

In memory of Carla Barnsley - Sidney Barnsley

**\$500**

Frank Keneley

**\$200 - \$250**

In memory of George G Burnette Jr 322nd and all crew members of the *Madame Shoo Shoo* - George Burnette

Edward Dobrinski

Robert Greutter

In memory of Dorothy Howland - John Howland

Conrad Lohoefer

Morris Spielberg

Sherwood Wagner

In memory of TSgt William A McGavern 323rd - Virginia McGavern

In Memory of Perry E Wofford 323rd - Eleanor Wofford

**\$100 - \$150**

In Memory of Marvin E Nichols 324th - Mrs Marvin Nichols

Robert Stevens

Marian Breckenridge

Glen Crumbless

In memory of Lt Col Ehud Merkel co-pilot *Paper Dolly* - Col George Mankel

**\$5 - \$50**

Charles Giauque

Jean Yavis Jones

Clyde Mason

Donald Mounts

Warren Schulthies

Gerold Tucker

Rick Tierney

James (Dick) Dempsey

Arvin Battersby

Roy Forsbacka

John Janse

Robert Newman

Richard Senffner

Phyllis Bibbo

Phillip Lunt

Charles Collins

Kay Duzynski

Roger Moore

George Witt

John Carr Jr

Owen Cooper

Edward Causey

Edward Damro

Otto Eggert

Gloria Elroy

Basil Hackleman

Wallace Harpster

James Humm

Glen Kessler

John Morris

George Parrish

Michael Pungercar

Robert Roach

Herbert Saska

Eugene Sell

Max Shambaugh

James Sikich

Howard Stebelton

Joanne Thompson

Aurora Viarengo

James Hoffman



## Chasing Rabbits by Gary Hall

I must admit the write up regarding the 324th Squadron Insignia change on the *Ragged Irregular* cover page started as a fluff story, or page filler, for the last issue. To my surprise, the phone began ringing as soon as people finished reading the article. After many phone calls, emails and some research, we received an item in the mail which may help answer the "blue bunny" question.

The first call came from Jackie Starcer, whose late husband Tony is arguably the most well known nose artist from the Eighth Air Force. Jackie has a large print of the postcard which had been signed by members of the 91st BGMA and presented to Tony. She was certain Tony had not done the artwork for this print. He had painted copies of the 324th insignia after the war, but they contained the brown rabbit, runway and hangar.

Following some other leads, I came across a note that Charlie Busa had painted the nose art on the B-17 known as *Klette's Wild Hares*. Charlie passed away in 2006, but I was able to track down his granddaughter Cindy. After consultation with her family, it was confirmed that Charlie had painted the nose art.



Charlie Busa and the 324th Insignia he painted

While on a short escape from winter in sunny Florida, I visited Bill Uphoff. Bill provided a copy of a photo published in the July 1993 *RI* showing Charlie with his painting of the 324th Insignia at Bassingbourn. He also provided photos of his A2 jacket with a copy of Busa's brown rabbit painted on the left breast (photo on right).

Now, back to the postcard. I received a package from Al Lanfear of the 322nd Squadron. In it was the image

used as the basis for the postcard I'd found and a note that may explain the origin of the alternate insignia.

*Maybe I can add to the history of the insignia by sending you a copy of this plaque which I purchased at Bassingbourn from B. Frank Ashby, Cpl. with 91st Intelligence Section at Bassingbourn. He was an accomplished artist who drew chalk renderings of bomb targets as they might appear from altitude. He made up these pieces I think using silk screening, and the reason squadron info etc. was not added was censorship – the war was ongoing.*



Artwork by B. Frank Ashby

At this point we have only speculation on the reason for a blue rabbit. It may have been something as simple as blue paint was available at the time or possibly the altered insignia was easier to reproduce. Whatever the reason, we've traced the original brown rabbit to Charlie Busa and the blue rabbit to B. Frank Ashby.

I have to thank everyone who provided information answering the questions from the original article. What was seemingly an insignificant article turned into a very interesting interaction with people who had both first and second hand knowledge of the events.



## VA's Caregiver Support Program Expanding

REACH Program Improves Quality of Life for Caregivers and Veterans

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans (VA) is expanding support nationally to caregivers of Veterans with Alzheimer's disease. A pilot program of the REACH VA (Resources for Enhancing Alzheimer's Caregiver Health in VA) program showed great success in reducing stress on caregivers while improving care outcomes for the Veterans.

"The REACH VA model exemplifies the many different kinds of support VA offers to the caregivers of Veterans," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "This program has been proven to provide the right resources, training and a renewed focus on personal health that can make a world of difference to those caregivers and their Veterans."

"Caregivers step up every day to serve Veterans they love who sacrificed to defend our Nation," Shinseki added. "To them, caregiving is a labor of love and devotion, but that alone does not ease the burden and personal stress placed on those who provide daily care for the disabled."

REACH VA involved 127 caregivers connected to 24 VA medical centers. The median age for the caregiver was 72 and the majority of the participants were spouses.

Typical issues caregivers face when caring for Veterans with Alzheimer's disease and dementia include memory problems, behavior problems and the need to provide basic attendance such as grooming assistance. Caregivers typically reported feeling overwhelmed, frustrated, cut off from family and friends, lonely, prone to bouts of crying and having worse physical health than the year before.

For six months, the REACH VA caregivers were provided 12 individual in-home and telephone counseling sessions; five telephone support group sessions; a caregiver quick guide with 48 behavioral and stress topics; education on safety and patient behavior management; and training for their individual health and well being.

Caregivers saw their burden reduced; drops in depressive symptoms and their related daily impacts; fewer frustrations, including those that have clinical potential for abuse; and decreases in dementia-related behaviors from the Veterans they cared for. Caregivers also reported they were able to spend fewer hours per day devoted to caregiving duties.

"Dementia caregiving is such an all encompassing task," said Dr. Linda Nichols from the VA medical center in Memphis, Tenn., and co-author of a recent study on the program. "The intervention provided time for themselves, which caregivers never have enough of. REACH VA improved our caregivers' knowledge to manage care, made them feel more confident and competent as they formed bonds with the VA staff supporting them, and decreased the inevitable feelings of isolation and

loneliness that come from a selfless, but very sacrificial duty of care."

VA will roll out REACH VA on a national basis through home-based primary care programs across the country. In addition, the program will be modified to assist caregivers of Veterans with other diagnoses like spinal cord injury and traumatic brain injury.

"Providing support to caregivers who sacrifice so much to allow Veterans to remain at home surrounded by loved ones is the right thing for VA to do," said Dr. Robert Petzel, VA's under secretary for health.

An article on the REACH VA program is being published in the Feb. 28 issue of the Archives of Internal Medicine. Nichols and Dr. Jennifer Martindale-Adams, also from VA's Memphis facility, are the lead authors and based the VA pilot on the National Institute on Aging and the National Institute for Nursing Research funded REACH II study. REACH VA is the first national clinical implementation of a proven behavioral intervention for stressed and burdened dementia caregivers.

Local caregiver support coordinators are available to assist Veterans of all eras and their caregivers in understanding and applying for VA's many caregiver benefits. VA also features a website, [www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov), with general information on REACH VA and other caregiver support programs available through VA and the community.

## BASSINGBOURN 2011 IS A GO!

33 people have signed up for the England / France tour taking place May 27 through June 8. If you missed the March 15th application deadline, but are interested in the trip we may be able to acquire more rooms. Please phone Gary Hall at (651)260-2397 as soon as possible to check on room availability.



**"Peeling Off" for landing at Basingbourn**  
from the Joe Harlick Photo Collection



## Boeing B-17G "Flying Fortress" of the 91st Bomb Group (H) 8th Air Force

Originally printed in *Friends Journal* Winter 2010/2011. Used with permission.

The 91st Bombardment Group was activated at Harding Field, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on 15 April 1942. After training at MacDill Field, Tampa, Florida, and at Walla Walla Army Air Base, Washington, the group received orders to deploy overseas in August of 1942. From 1942 – 1945 the group operated from RAF Bassingbourn, England. The unit became known as "Wray's Ragged Irregulars" after the commander (Lt. Col Stanley T. Wray) who took the group to England. The group consisted of the 322nd, 323rd, 324th, and 401st Bomb Squadrons. As one of the first heavy bombardment organizations located in England in the early days of World War II, it had to learn techniques and tactics through experimentation, and frequently suffered heavy losses until it had mastered such lessons.

During World War II, the group flew 340 bombing missions with the Eighth Air Force. The group lost 197 aircraft in combat and of the approximately 5,200 crewmen who flew combat missions, 887 were killed in action, 123 were missing in action, and 959 became prisoners of war.

Survivors of the 91st Bomb Group and their family and friends gathered at the National Museum of the United States Air Force on September 30, 2010.

The museum collection includes two aircraft of the 91st; *Shoo, Shoo, Shoo Baby* and the *Memphis Belle*.

The reunion participants were given a VIP tour of the museum restoration facilities where the *Memphis Belle* is being restored.



Three Generations review work on the *Memphis Belle* Michael P. Fodroci II, Michael P. Fodroci and Michael P. Fodroci III



Douglas Smith, Kenneth and Virginia Smith, Fred Rinke, Phillip Collins and Museum volunteer Pete Briton



Jody Kelly, Tom Gill and Bob Dickson

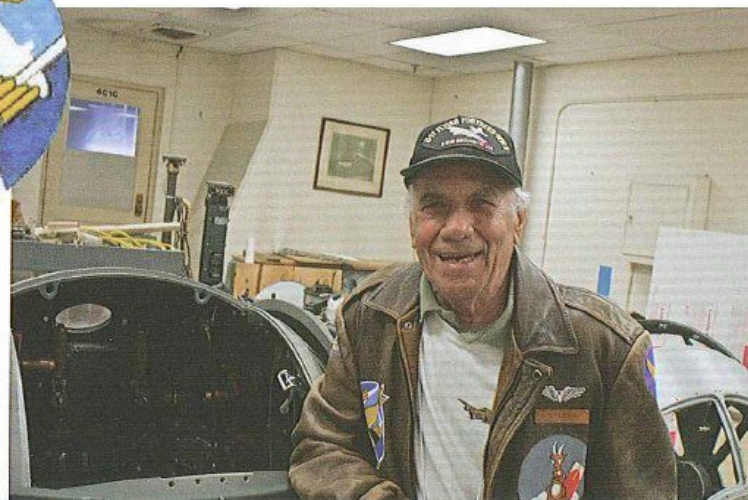


Andrew Caswell and Virginia Smith



Vern and Onie Woods



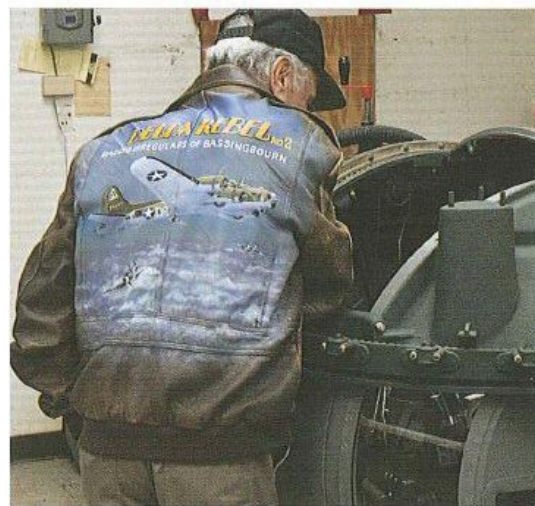


*Delta Rebel No. 2* Ball Turret Gunner Steve Perri attended the 91st BG Reunion at the National Museum of the United States Air Force on September 30, 2010

Below. Steve models his *Delta Rebel No. 2* flight jacket as he examines the ball turret of the *Memphis Belle*, undergoing restoration at the museum.



The crew of *Delta Rebel No. 2* at RAF Bassingbourn in 1943. Steve (circled) is leaning on another crew member to his left, recognizable as the actor Clark Gable. Below. *Shoo Shoo (Shoo) Baby*



*Friends Journal* is a published quarterly and one of the many benefits received by becoming a Friend of the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force. For more information regarding membership, contact:

The Air Force Museum Foundation, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1903  
Wright-Patterson AFB OH 45433  
Phone: (937) 258-1225

## Mike Banta's Web Ring

Contact Mike Banta to join or ask questions of the Ring at email: B17banta@aol.com. If you'd like to comment on or answer any of the following and do not have email access, simply drop a line to the *Ragged Irregular* (address on page 2) and the information will be forwarded to Mike and the Ring.

### Where were you VJ Day? – Mike Banta

Where were you that day? I had been honorably discharged as I had 86 points and it took 85 to get discharged. A buddy of mine who was still in the Army but home on leave and I along with two dollies were heading over to Hollywood to do something or other when the radio station broke in with a special announcement. "Japan has surrendered and the war is over," the announcer said. Then the music of that period resumed. We had stopped the car in the middle of the street and turned the radio up. Out of the car we went jitterbugging with our girl friends in the middle of the street. I remember it as if it was yesterday.

Got a story? Pass it along to the Ring. Mike Banta, 91st Ringmaster

### VJ Day - Hank Hall

What did I do on VJ Day? I was stationed at Douglas, Arizona working as a line chief in a B-25 squadron. As soon as the word got out everyone headed for the rec hall to celebrate. There was plenty of booze as the town was right on the Mexican border. I remember that there was a huge old antique grand piano that someone tore the legs off. It was on the floor but it was still being played.

I was one of the first to be shipped out for discharge. When I arrived at Fort Mac Arthur it was so mobbed they said come back in three days. I thumbed home to Bakersfield, got myself a job, went back got discharged and was a happy civilian.

### VJ Day – Dave Hanst

I remember very well where I was on Aug. 14, 1945, VJ Day. When I returned to the U.S. in Aug. 1944, after completing my combat tour with the 91st, I managed to get into MATS (Military Air Transport, an airline operated by the military). On VJ Day I was flying a MATS C-47 on a scheduled flight from Seattle to Sacramento. I learned that President Truman was about to speak on the radio with some important news. Our flight was carrying a load of military passengers and I thought they would be interested in the President's announcement. We had a male purser on board, I gave him a headset with a long cord that was plugged into a radio in the cockpit. As the President spoke the purser, his name was Peck, walked up and down the cabin, giving a blow by blow account of the speech. When Truman said that the war is over the roar from the cabin of that plane was unbelievable. At that moment I figured that flight on MATS might be one of my last, sure enough, a month and a half later I was discharged at Camp Beale, CA.

### Roxy's Special – Frank Farr

I have a problem for some 91ster with a long memory - one who was at Bassingbourn in October, 1944. I was dealing, in my new book, with the long lucky stretch between Sept. 9 and Nov. 2 when we lost only one airplane - or was it two? [Turner Publishing's] *The Ragged Irregulars'* list of missions flown shows none for Oct 24, 1944. Neither does Ray Bowden's *Plane Names and Fancy Noses*. But the *The Ragged Irregulars* does list #338348 as having been lost Oct. 24, 1944, on a "Night Cross Country" flight. No. 338348 was *Roxy's Special*, shown elsewhere as missing Sept. 8 over Ludwigshafen. Suppose the "Night Cross Country" thing Oct. 24 was, somehow, just a misprint? I'd appreciate learning if anyone knew of a night flight loss Oct. 24. [Ed - #338348 is correctly listed missing Sept. 8 three lines above #338398 missing Oct. 24 on page 23 of the Turner book.]

### Roxy's Special – Mike Banta

I've copied below from Curly Havelaar's *The Ragged Irregulars of Bassingbourn*, Appendix 2: Aircraft Assigned, his brief record of #338348, *Roxy's Special*. I've found his Appendix 2 to be very accurate.

43-38348      322 LG O      *Roxy's Special*  
27 07 44 Added to Air Force Inventory, 10 08 44 Arrived Over Seas, 18 08 44 Gained by the 91st, 08 09 44 Failed to Return, Flak, Exploded, Crashed at Oggersheim, Germany - Lt David McCarty Jr. - 7 KIA, 2 POW - MACR8807 - See: NASA62747AC, C62747AC.

So it appears that *The Ragged Irregulars* has a typo error. Unfortunately, Marion's book has no code for Lost on Training Flight. This is too bad since we know of B-17s that were lost that way including the one that is mentioned in the *The Ragged Irregulars*.

OK, Ringsters, can we help Frank out with the serial number of that B-17 lost on a training flight?

### Roxy's Special – Ray Bowden

It was 43-38398 (un-named) that was lost on the cross country night flight on 24th October 1944 flown by DeLisle. His Gee box and radio compass went out and he struck a hill at 500ft which damaged the right wing. DeLisle took the plane up to 2000ft and four crew bailed out. DeLisle's body was found several hundred feet astern of the crash with chute unopened.

### Roxy's Special – Vince Hemmings

I believe I can shed some light on the 91st BG (H) aircraft lost on the 24th October 1944. I met the Navigator of that aircraft namely the late John Wallace, 801 Locust Street, Philadelphia while I was Curator of the Tower Museum. John told me he was on that aircraft but did not say much other than to say that fog had clamped in and they became lost.



I found John a very nice person and he was extremely upset that his pilot was killed. To make sure I have my facts right I wonder if there is a loading list for that flight.

For airmen to be lost or have problems with bad weather during WW II was not uncommon. We had a Miles Magister crash just behind our house on the outskirts of Ashwell in January 1940 which was flying in a snow storm from RAF Henlow and RAF Duxford. The aircraft was a two seat trainer with two Pilot Officers on board. They belonged to 19 Squadron at RAF Duxford the first Squadron to have the Spitfire. One of the Pilot Officers was killed when the aircraft hit a tree and it took the port wing off. My Dad called me to our back garden and said "Look up there" pointing to the crash site. I ran over the fields (I was thirteen at the time) and for the first time in my life sat in the cockpit of an aircraft. I can recall two further occasions when aircraft both DH Tiger Moths landed near our home during WW II when pilots had lost their way.

#### **Roxy's Special – Mike Banta**

Vince, thanks for your information of the B-17 lost 24th October 1944. It's interesting that you actually knew the navigator of 338398 lost that day. Here is the history of 338398 from Marion's book's Appendix 2.

43-38398            322 LG O

31 07 44 Added to Air Force Inventory, 01 09 44 Arrived Over Seas, 10 09 44 Assigned to 91st, 25 10 44 Turned over to 2nd Strategic Air Depot.

This gives us no information as to the training mission accident. But there is this information on the Casualty List page of our web page site, "Night Cross Country; Landing aborted, 4 crew members bailed out safely; Don Delisle died-his chute failed to open in time." From this we know that the crew was comprised of five men which would be a normal crew for a cross country training flight. The late John Wallace, Navigator was one of the four members of the five man crew to survive this incident. The only source of additional information re this accident is your summation of what John said to you and Ray's information that their Gee box and radio compass went out.

Concerning aircraft that had become lost, this thread of research brings back memories of "Darky" which was a unique way for hopelessly lost aircraft to find their way back to their base where they were flying on instruments. For various reasons, we had to fly back to base alone several times during our 35 missions. I remember Ray, our co-pilot, saying over the intercom, "Hello Darky" if the navigator showed the least bit of doubt as to our position.

When you were lost, you could call "Darky" on the radio channel assigned to Darky. They would pick you up by radar. Then search lights all over England would turn on pointed straight up. Then they would lower pointing in the direction of your base. The pilot of the lost aircraft would point the nosed of his plane to the center of where they the light beams would cross. Arriving at that center, he would find his base.

## **91<sup>st</sup> BGMA Board Meeting**

February 12, 2011

**Attendees:** Jim Shepherd, Mick Hanou, Bob Friedman, Jody Kelly, Janet Larocco and Gary Hall

### **Treasury Report - Jody**

- There are 403 91st Veterans, 285 Associates and 14 Public Relation Memberships for a total of 702.
- General \$27,492, Putnam \$7,425, Total of \$34,917.
- Dayton reunion shows a profit, but we have not received invoices from the bus company.
- Mick to be notarized and replace Ed Gates on the Putnum document.

### **Historian – Janet**

- Putting finishing touches on a POW data base. Hope to be done by end February and will publish.
- Received a request on what German Fighter Groups were facing the 91st on their missions.

### **Chino Display Cases – Mick and Jim**

- Working to get Joe Harlick's material back from Minot Air Force Base. Will especially try to get the negatives and photos back.
- Frank LaBlottier to donate material to Chino
- Chino will design display cabinets based on material donated.

### **Rally Round - Gary**

- We've received deposits for 24 people and have 15 people verbally committed.
- Chris and Amy Murphy of the Bassingbourn Tower Museum have done an amazing job of putting together a schedule for the tour.
- Guy Bechtel had a brother on the Coen crew and Guy has been invited to attend. Effort underway to raise funds to cover his costs.

### **Reunion 2012 - Jim**

- Reunion 2012 is to be mid-continent, suggestions are:
  - San Antonio
  - National Park like Yellowstone
  - New Orleans
  - Chicago
- Group will assess cost, travel arrangements, available activities and availability of a local coordinator. Will start evaluation in April.

### **Miscellaneous**

- Future board meetings will use Skype in order to save money on the conference call.
- Website – All
  - Mick repeated suggestion for placing a "donate pop-up" on the website.

**Board Meeting (continued from page 9)**

- o Material for the website is backing up. Jim's son's business is ramping up, so he doesn't have as much time to add new material.
- o Reviewed suggestion from last Board meeting that expenditures be done on a project-by-project basis rather than a monthly basis.
- o Need ability to document and verify what the web money is spent on.

**Folded Wings (continued from page 12)**✧ **Robert F Dealey 324th Age 86**

Magnolia, TX, December 27, 2010

Robert is survived by his wife, Nancy; two daughters and three grandchildren.

✧ **Herbert D Campbell 323rd Age 85**

Saint Joseph, MO, July 23, 2008

✧ **John B "Jack" Haus 323rd Age 91**

Houston, TX, February 7, 2011



Jack joined the Army Air Force in 1940 as a navigator. Shot down January 11, 1944 on his 11th mission, three of the crew survived and became POW's. Upon returning to the US, Jack visited the families of every crew member he lost. In Houston he met, fell in love with and married Audrey Brickwede Morgan,

the widow of the co-pilot on that ill-fated strike. In doing so, he became the beloved step-father and mentor to Richard Greer Morgan, who was only 17 days old when his father perished.

Jack and Audrey had two children, son John and daughter Dale Susan, both of whom predeceased him. Jack lost Audrey to cancer in 1983. In 1991 he married Bertie McEachern, whom he loved and cared for until her passing in 2004. He is survived by his step-son, Richard Morgan (Betty Lou); step-daughter Nancy (Jim) Bruce, son-in-law, Doug Waldoch; and four grandchildren.

✧ **Allan N Morey 401st Age 92**

Jamesville, NY, March 10, 2010

A graduate of Central High School, Allan was a B-17 Army pilot during WWII and served in the Western Europe and Northern France campaigns. He retired in 1981 after 29 years with General Electric Co.

His wife of 67 years, the former Betty Heindorf, died in March 2009. Surviving are his daughters, Judy (Bob) Daino and Cheryl (David) Gandino; 4 grandchildren; and 5 great-grandchildren.

✧ **Vassil Georgeff 324th Age 92**

O'Fallon, IL, October 28, 2009



A meat cutter at Georgeff's Market, Vassil later became Commissary at the U.S. Army Depot in Granite City, Ill. He served in the Army Air Force during World War II.

Surviving are his wife, Frances Elizabeth (nee Foose) Georgeff; three grandchildren; one great grandchild; and sister, Jo Hulsey.

✧ **Edward Malachoski 323rd Age 92**

Philadelphia, PA, August 2, 2010

Edward served on the sheet metal crew of the 323rd.

✧ **Waldo U Bowen Jr 324th Age 88**

Conyers, GA, April 15, 2009

✧ **Charles J Leiman 324th Age 93**

Towson, MD, January 27, 2011

Reported by Jim Bard Jr  
Charles was drafted into the Army in March 1941, and at the end of the year, transferred to the Army Air Forces, where he was trained as a bombardier. He completed 25 missions over Germany. Discharged in 1945, his decorations included the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with Three Oak Leaf Clusters.

✧ **Charles M Borchert 401st Age 83**

Odessa, TX, November 20, 2006



✪ **Ehud "Ed" Merkel 323rd Age 90**

Palm Springs, FL, February 22, 2011

Reported by his stepson David Clark

Ed was the co-pilot on the Kolts crew flying *Paper Dolly*. They were shot down February 22, 1944 on their 16th mission. The target was Oschersleben, Germany and the plane went down at Kurkenbruch, Germany. He was a Prisoner of War for almost two years at Stalag Luft I.

Lt. Colonel Merkel is survived by his loving wife of 19 years, Helen (Downs) Merkel; son, Gary; daughters, Janet (Paul) Cunningham; Judy Rae (Tom) Ferguson; five grandchildren.

✪ **Robert M Paulson 323rd Age 87**

Playa Del Rey, CA, December 10, 2009

✪ **Joseph J Kremer 401st Age 85**

Jefferson City, MO, October 10, 2010



Joseph served in the Army Air Corps during World War II as a radio operator and gunner, completing 35 missions over Nazi occupied territory. He also served in the Army during the Korean Conflict. After his honorable discharge from the Army, Joseph worked with the Missouri National Guard from 1947-1985. He was

appointed the first Command Sergeant Major in the State of Missouri in 1963 and served in that capacity until his retirement in 1985.

Survivors include: three children, Joseph (Tani) Kremer Jr., Karen (Steve) Maier, and Cheryl (Mark) Stoner; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and one sister, Ann Conlon.

✪ **Nelson Richardson 401st Age 82**

Canton, OH, February 24, 2007

Reported by Mrs. Charles Walker

Nelson was the tail gunner on Harold DeBolt's crew. On a mission to Merseberg November 21, 1944, the crew bailed out of their B-17 which had been crippled by flak and enemy fighters. The crew was rescued and the plane landed near Liege, Belgium. *Stars and Stripes* ran a story the next day calling the B-17 a ghost ship or phantom fort.

✪ **John H Fuchs 392 BG 548 BS Age 87**

Reported by Roy Loyless



91st Associate Member, John Fuchs was a flight engineer and shot down on his first mission over Germany on September 12, 1944. He spent 11 days eluding the Germans before being captured and sent to Stalag Luft IV. On January 29, 1945, he was sent by boxcar to Stalag Luft I in Barth, Germany where he was

reunited with Roy Loyless (401st). They were liberated by the Russians in May 1945.

✪ **Frederick L Christopher 322nd Age 84**

Altamonte Springs, FL, April 27, 2009

✪ **James M Mounts 322nd Age 82**

Vero Beach, FL, December 9, 2002

Reported by Don Mounts

Lt. Mounts was the bombardier in B-17-G 43-37819 and was shot down 20 July 1944 over Zwickau Germany. He eluded capture for nearly two days. Captured 22 July 1944 in Aue Germany he spent the remainder of the war in Stalag Luft 1, in Barth Germany.

✪ **Edward J Reilly 322nd Age 86**

West Babylon, NY, January 10, 2011

✪ **John H "Jack" Mitchell 322nd Age 86**

Amherst, OH, June 23, 2009

Reported by his daughter Janet



Jack served in the Army Air Force as a TSgt with the 708th Bomb Squadron from 1941 – 1945, receiving the Flying Cross Air Medal with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters.

He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Viola M (nee McKee); children Karen (John) Kapcoe, John Edgar (Jeanie), Janet (George) Osman, Jackie (Jim) Brady, Bruce (Jan); Grandfather of 12; and Great Grandfather of 7.

THE RAGGED IRREGULAR is published quarterly in January, April, July and October. The purpose of the newsletter 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 Gary Hall

Ragged Irregular  
1054 Sunrise Drive  
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**Folded Wings:**

✪ **Robert M Slane 401st Age 87**

Shreveport, LA, March 16, 2011



Reported by his wife Lee

Col Slane had a distinguished military career, enlisting on his 18th birthday in the Army Air Corps. Applying for pilot training, he graduated with the first class of flight officers. He began B-17 flight training and became a B-17 First Pilot at age 19. He served and was a POW in Germany for 19 months.

He trained in the B-26 Night Intruder and flew 40 missions during the Korean War. Upon returning to the states, he trained in B-47's and B-52's. While flying a B-47 in 1956, during the Cold War, he had an Aileron Control Failure causing the aircraft to spin wildly. Col Slane was the only survivor of this horrible accident. He continued to fly in South Vietnam completing 29 combat missions in the EC-121, and flew a total of 78 combat missions in Southeast Asia. He was Base Commander at Bien Hoa, Vietnam. Returning to the United States, he served as Base Commander at Carswell AFB, TX, came to Barksdale as Base Commander in 1972. He retired in 1974. Col Slane was a member of AFA (Air Force Association), Order of Daedalian, and the MOAA.

Col Slane was preceded in death by his beloved daughter, Judy. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Mary Lee; son, Thomas; and two grandchildren.

✪ **Edward J Kaiserski 323rd Age 90**

Canoga Park, CA, January 19, 2011



Reported by his son Jim

At the outset of WWII, Ed joined the Army and was selected for the Air Corps, qualifying as a B-17 bombardier and flew 25 combat missions over France and Germany. He was awarded the distinguished air medal after tending to a fellow crew member severely wounded by shrapnel during a combat mission. During training at Santa Anna, California, Ed met the former Ruth Knauf of Thief River Falls, Minnesota. After finishing his overseas tour Ed and Ruth married and stayed married for almost 60 years until her passing in 2003.

He is survived by five sons, James, Robert, Joseph, Michael, and Thomas; and seven grandchildren.

Folded Wings continued on page 10