

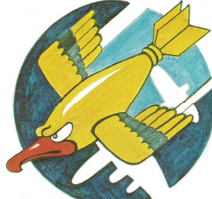
# THE RAGGED IRREGULAR



322<sup>nd</sup> BS



323<sup>rd</sup> BS



Supporting Units



324<sup>th</sup> BS



401<sup>st</sup> BS

Vol. 45 No. 4

91st Bombardment Group (H)

October 2012

## 91st BGMA Reunion Banquet Message from Charles E. "Chuck" Yeager, Brig Gen USAF (ret.)

To: 91st BOMB GROUP (HEAVY)  
UNITED STATES ARMY AIR CORPS

September 3, 2012

Gentlemen,

My schedule doesn't give me the opportunity to join you in person today.

Thank you for the honor of inviting the 357th Fighter Group, including me, to your reunion.

I have all the respect in the world for you guys.

It was a real pleasure and honor to keep you safe.



Victor "Sonny" Schilleci delivers Chuck Yeager's message at the reunion's Saturday evening banquet.

Frankly, my first mission in which I shot down an enemy aircraft, the bombers ultimately protected me. Due to stinkin' weather for the first daylight raid on Berlin, I was one of two P-51's escorting the bombers. I didn't get the recall message.

It was a very successful raid. On the way back, I had lost my wingman and was out of ammunition, so I needed protection.

I radioed a box of bombers I saw up ahead returning home. I told the lead pilot I was out of ammunition and wanted to come close to the formation. I asked the pilot

to make sure his guys knew I was a friendly – and not to shoot me down.

The 357th Fighter Group shot down 609 German fighters while protecting the bombers. General Jimmy Doolittle changed the strategy – instead of hanging too close to the bombers, he told us our mission was to destroy the Luftwaffe. We were to get out ahead and destroy the attackers before they got to the bombers. And we did.

As you know, but I didn't until just before I wrote this:

From Basingbourn, England site, the men of the 91st Bomb Group (H), participated as part of the 8th Air Force in The European Theater of Operations (ETO) during World War II. After forming and training in Tampa, Florida and Walla Walla, Washington U.S.A. they arrived in the ETO in September 1942, supported by 2,000 ground personnel.

The 91st officers and enlisted airmen flew 9,591 B-17 combat sorties on 340 missions from 7 November 1942 thru 25 April 1945 in the air battles for freedom.

The 91st list 197 B-17's while destroying 420 of Adolf Hitler's German aircraft. Lost were 1,010 combat crewman (899 killed) and 111 missing in action and more than 960 crewmen became prisoners of war.

Two Distinguished Unit Citations were awarded the 91st for missions on 4 March 1943 to Hamm and 11 January 1944 to Oschersleben Germany.

The *Memphis Belle* (first 8th AF bomber to finish 25 missions), and *Nine-O-Nine* (completed a record 140 Missions) were 91st B-17 Aircraft.

We all lost a few but; I think you will agree, we saved a lot more.

Thank you again, for this honor from all of us in the 357th Fighter Group.

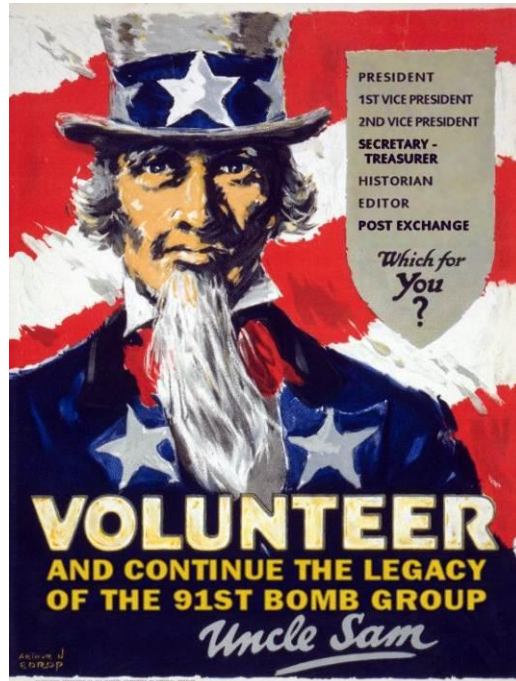
Very respectfully;

Charles E. "Chuck" Yeager, Brig Gen USAF (ret.)

**President's Corner****Mick Hanou**

As I move to this page, I wish to express gratitude to the 91st BGMA members for their votes and hope that I meet your expectations. I'll keep this brief, to just highlights, as most of the items regarding the Reunion, Business Meeting, and Board meeting are being reported later in this issue and I encourage you to read those reports. I would first like to thank Jim for his years of service and for such a good job handling the Reunion details. Segue on that to the subject of the PX. Jim has requested to hand over the PX and we really need someone to step up and volunteer to do this. The By-Laws state this can be either an Associate or a Full Member (the spouse can assist).

And, I'll maintain my Veep's View opinion on encouraging those who have been Associate Members for three years to apply to the Board for Full Membership. We did have a question during the Business Meeting about Members whose spouse is not a member but wishes to help. The Board is still discussing this and I want to recognize those who have been helping for many years, but never became an Associate because their spouse was. Some spouses solved the issue by signing up as an Associate themselves for \$10, which also helps with our funding.



The Board recognizes the great value of the Web and the Ring in communicating with the public and disseminating information amongst members. We intend to continue support of these venues and make permanent positions in the By-Laws (with Jim Sheppard and Mike Banta's advice of course) similar to the PX position.

Last, but certainly not least, is that Jody agreed to fill the role of our vacant Secretary / Treasurer position (per the By-Laws) with the caveat that we solicit a volunteer to help in the role of the Secretary.

And, as my last message as Veep - I want to thank all the folks who helped me at the Hospitality Suite: Larry and Jacque Ruth, Bob and Shiela Striegel, Dean and Bonnie Selje, Craig Murray, Tom Freer and Lanelle Garrison. Without your help, it would not have run so well.

**We need help now with the PX and Secretary positions. Please contact me to volunteer!**

**91st BGMA Officers****President****Mick Hanou**

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Please send Folded Wings information to Jody Kelly.

January R/I submissions must be received by *December 15th*.

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**91st on the Web**

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

## Ambassador presents honor to Sonnier

by Nicholas Persac. Originally printed in The Daily Advertiser, June 29, 2012

Lorcey Sonnier sat on a bicycle seat in 1943, but he wasn't riding down the oak-shaded streets in his hometown of Leroy. He sat on that bicycle seat in the back of a B-17 "Flying Fortress" during the more than 30 missions he endured as a tail gunner in World War II.

On Thursday, Sonnier had a far better seat than one he used when shooting at Axis enemies.

He sat at the head table in Our Lady of Perpetual Help's community room -- the same table as Francois Delattre, the Ambassador of France to the United States, who came to Acadiana to present Sonnier with France's highest distinction, the title of Chevalier de la legion d'honneur, or French Knight in the order of the Legion of Honor, for his role in helping liberate France from Nazi control.

"My position was the worst one on the aircraft," said Sonnier, who was born in 1924. "The longest mission was eight hours and 20 minutes when we went to Berlin, and I went there two or three times. I was only a young boy when I entered the service, and I grew up after that. I've been a man ever since."

As Delattre presented the medal to Sonnier on behalf of French President Francois Hollande, the ambassador told the veteran, "You are our hero."

"You're French is wonderful," Delattre said as he pinned the medal the left breast of Sonnier's blazer. "That's all we speak here," Sonnier replied.

Delattre said Sonnier's bravery during WWII earned him the "undying affections and eternal gratitude" of the entire French nation.

"The French people will never forget what you did to free our country and Europe from Nazi oppression," Delattre said. "The position of tail gunner is a very dangerous and rough one, and you survived more than 30 extremely dangerous missions, an act of bravery that earned you the Distinguished Flying Cross and this honor today."

Delattre said the title of Chevalier de la legion d'honneur is "France's highest award and one of the most coveted in the world." Napoleon Bonaparte created the award in 1802 "to acknowledge services rendered to France by persons of great merit and accomplishments."

"He didn't realize how big of a deal it is at first," said one of Sonnier's three daughters, Sue Sonnier. "He is such a patriot, and his eyes light up when they talk to him about his war days. He loves his country and what he was able to do for other countries."

In addition to his three daughters, Lorcey Sonnier has six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. His wife,



WWII veteran Lorcey J. Sonnier smiles and waves after being presented the Legion of Honor Award, France's highest honor, by Francois Delattre, Ambassador of France to the United States, right, Thursday afternoon at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in the community of Leroy, near Maurice. Photographer Leslie Westbrook.

Annie, died in 2009, but Sue Sonnier said her mother would have been proud of her father's honor.

Sue Sonnier said she will put her father's newest medal in a display case in his living room, "right by his leather recliner where he sits and reminisces."

After visiting with Sonnier and at least 50 of his friends and family members, along with a handful of local public officials, Delattre toured Acadiana to get a taste of the region's unique culture.

On Thursday, Delattre also met with members of the Francophone community and the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana, toured the Bicentennial Exhibition at Lafayette Science Museum, mingled with French citizens residing in Acadiana and attended both a lecture on General Lafayette's ship *Hermione* and a gala at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette to raise money for study scholarships in France.

Sonnier served in the 322nd Squadron, 91st Bomb Group, Eighth Air Force in Cambridge, England in February 1943 and then served as a tail-gunner on a B-17 bomber from March to August 1944. He fought on air defense in Normandy, France during D-Day events. During six months, Sonnier participated in more than 30 missions in France and in Germany, garnering him the "Distinguished Flying Cross" and other medals from the U.S.

"On behalf of my country, your example gives us inspiration for the future," Delattre said to Sonnier. "We are trying the best we can to prove ourselves worthy of your legacy in our shared values."

## Vermont Yields Two 91st-ers

by Richard H. Hamilton



Roger Layn and Richard H. Hamilton

Two 91st-ers came together, each having lived over 66 years in the small state of Vermont, each without the knowledge of the other being from the 91st Bomb Group. The occasion took place in Bristol, VT at the annual dinner hosted by the American Legion Post #19 honoring former prisoners of war.

Roger Layn of Bristol, in Northern Vermont, was shot down on February 4, 1944 flying as an observer on a PFF B-17 over Frankfurt. Richard H. Hamilton of Brattleboro in Southern Vermont, Radio Operator on Lt. Charles Van Ausdall's *Destiny's Child*, was shot down on July 20, 1944 on a Leipzig-Mockau Airfield raid.

The time Roger Layn and Richard Hamilton spent together was much too brief, so the two are looking forward to other occasions to continue their warm friendship.

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## Old Friends Reunite at Freedom Wing

by Shawn J. Jones 514th Air Mobility Wing public affairs

6/26/2012 - **JOINT BASE MCGUIRE-DIX-LAKEHURST, N.J.** -- For the first time in more than 50 years, Joseph Bentzel looked upon the B-17 Flying Fortress he flew during World War II.

The aircraft, which is known as the *Chowhound*, crashed in Normandy during the liberation of France, killing several of Bentzel's colleagues.

Bentzel, who was a B-17 engineer and top turret gunner, visited the wreckage here June 9, and said it

was difficult to see the aircraft in its current condition after seeing it fly so many successful missions in his youth.

Reserve Airmen of the 732nd Airlift Squadron retrieved the wreckage of the *Chowhound* in September 2011 after more than 50 years of being stored in a French farmer's barn.

The wreckage is now stored in a warehouse shared by the 514th Air Mobility Wing and the 87th Air Base Wing, and there is hope that it will be displayed in a museum.



Joseph Bentzel (center) looks upon the wreckage of the B-17 Flying Fortress he flew during World War II. The aircraft, which is known as the *Chowhound*, crashed in Normandy during the liberation of France, killing several of Bentzel's colleagues. He was an engineer and the top turret gunner on the aircraft. Both Lt. Col. Dennis Duffy (left) and Lt. Col. Jonathan Bradley (right), played key roles in retrieving the *Chowhound's* remains after they spent more than 50 years in a French farmer's barn. Bentzel visited the wreckage here June 9, and said it was difficult to see the aircraft in its current condition after seeing it fly so many successful missions in his youth.

(U.S. Air Force photo by Shawn J. Jones)

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**The Mustang P-51**

*Jake Howland's response to Chuck Yeager's message.*



First of all, a bit of history.

During World War II the 91st Bomb Group became operational on November 7, 1942. During the next 2-1/2 years, one hundred ninety seven B-17s were MIA and lost more than 1,010 men in the line of duty (899 KIA, 111 MIA and 960 as POWs). Our wartime losses were greater than any other bomb group in the entire 8th Air Force.

As Chuck Yeager said in his letter, The Distinguished Unit Citation was issued for a raid to Oschersleben. That was my first raid, January 11, 1944. Although the mission was recalled due to bad weather, the Wing Commander did not respond. With only an extremely limited escort, the Luftwaffe reacted fiercely and losses were quite heavy. What Chuck did not say is that 42 bombers were lost that day, or 15.8 percent of the attacking force of 266 B-17s. Losses that big meant, with luck, we could only expect to survive six missions. After that, luck was all gone.

About that time, we were extremely fortunate that the cavalry came to our rescue riding their Mustangs, also called P-51s. These were fabulous fighter planes flown by equally fabulous pilots. The Luftwaffe fought back, but the tide had turned.

Our powerful escorts were with us wherever we went. Deep penetrations to Berlin, Munich and Vienna were no problem since the P-51 had a phenomenal range, with drops tanks, of about 2,000 miles.

It is indeed my great pleasure to be able to thank our guests and honor the fighter pilots tonight. I personally feel that I owe my very existence to Chuck Yeager, the 357th Fighter Group, as well as their colleagues in other fighter groups.

Jake Howland, Pathfinder Navigator, 324th Squadron

**91st BGMA in NOLA**



Jody Kelly, Suzi and Jim Shepherd



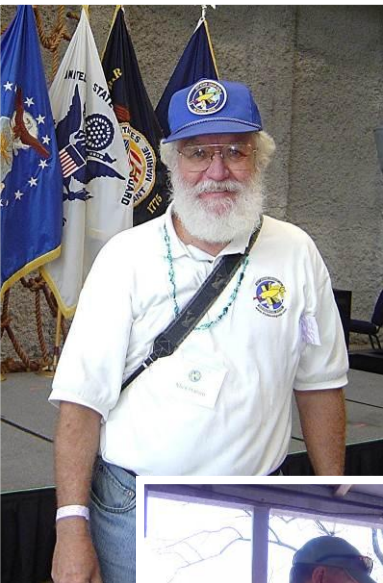
Andy Caswell, George Bruckert and Ken Smith.



Don and Mary Freer.



Andy, Jo, Don and Craig Murray.



Clockwise from left:

Mick Hanou at the National WWII Museum. Leslie and Hannah Thompson chat with Mel Dart at Oak Alley Plantation. Harold and Phyllis Johnson. Sharon Baird, Linda Wilson, Vernon Baird, Sheila and Bob Striegel. Jake Howland with the map he used to lead bombers through overcast skies to Gold Beach on D-Day, now in the National WWII museum. Jake Howland and Ted Skawienski. Craig Murray holding a baby gator on the swamp tour.



More reunion photos available on the 91st BGMA Facebook page!



Melvin Schissler, Frank Farr and Ted Skawienski. (above)

Mary, Don and Tom Freer. (middle)

Jacque and Larry Ruth. (below)



Jim Shepherd and Conrad Lohoefer



Zoe Perkins, Frank and Meredith Annis. (above)

Rebecca Belmont and Janet Larocco with Lorcey Sonnier and his Legion of Honor Award. [see page 3] (below)



Jim White



Dean and Bonnie Selje



## 91st BGMA 2012 Reunion Business Meeting Minutes - September 15, 2012

The Business meeting was called to order at 9:10am by President Jim Sheppard. There were 28 in attendance, including 11 WWII veterans. After a short introduction welcoming everyone, the meeting was turned over to Secretary / Treasurer Jody Kelly.

Jody reviewed the 2010 Business meeting. New Full Members voted in by the Board ; Larry Ruth, Janet Larocco, Gordy Alton, Lowell Getz, Chuck Egender, Bob Striegel and George Bruckert.

There followed a Treasurer report of the amounts in the various accounts in 2010. Next came a report of the numbers of various members in various categories. Jody reported on the costs of the website at the time. Gary reported on the reduction of costs of the R.I. Mick reported on the By-Laws errata corrections. Jim spoke to Memorials and Donations. The motion was made to accept the 2010 minutes as read, seconded, and passed.

Jody next reported on the current balances in the 91st BGMA accounts: Checking \$39,443, PayPal \$512, Putnam \$7,429. Note - Checking account includes \$6,057 in reunion funds that have not been spent. Total treasury funds net of reunion funds \$41,363. Jody next reported that these balances were this good because of donations as dues and PX sales are down. Specific acknowledgement went to Gary Hall, who had donated \$3,000 and gotten a company match of a similar amount. Gary and Rochelle also donated substantially to the Europe trip. There are other recent donations by Jake Howland and others, noted in the R.I. each issue. The website has also generated donations. Membership totals 598 members in the following categories: 165 Life Members, 136 Full Members for a total of 301 91st Bomb Group Veterans, 183 Associate Life, 84 Associate Members, 18 Associate Full Members and 12 Public Relations members. A question from the floor asked about the number of Life and Full Members. There is sometimes confusion in this regards – a member can be a Full or Associate Member, and can be an annual-paying or a Life Member. One does not have to be a Life Member to be a Full Member. The motion was made to accept the 2012 Treasurer's Report as read, seconded, and passed.

Question from the Floor: Can we change the waiting time for an Associate to become a Full from 3 years to 1 year? The By-Laws were written to encourage a long-standing commitment to the 91st BGMA, hence the 3-year time frame. The difficulty is in getting Associate Members in good standing to become Full Members. The second difficulty is that generally a spouse did not sign up for a separate membership in the past, so is not an Associate and is unable to become a Full Member.

Follow-up Question: Can we split the roles of Secretary and Treasurer? This has been a discussion in the past. The Board will take these two matters into consideration at the follow-up Board meeting after the Business meeting.

Jake Howland reported that he had a database of Veterans who had passed in action and can make it available to all and the Website. Questions on what categories and types of data are in there? Jake can answer offline (not from memory). Don Freer also has microfilm and raw data on this subject. Jody mentioned there used to be a book on where people were buried. Believes Paul Limm may have a copy. Audience consensus is these items should be consolidated.

Janet reported that a database of POWs has been developed as a PDF file. This has been lots of work because of errors and different sources of information. She has reconciled these with original MACR and cleansed up the database as much as possible. Janet is also making a "Yearbook" of photos of 91st Crewmen. Lastly, Janet is making a comprehensive index of Haavelar book "Ragged Irregulars of Bassingbourn". Jim reinforced the message that the website is collecting all these reports and data – in the case of the POW database as a .PDF file.

Gary reported on the Ragged Irregular quarterly newsletter. Significant cost savings have been realized by emailing electronic versions rather than hardcopy. He continues to work closely with FedEx to get a 50% discount on the hardcopy mailings. Used to send 800 hardcopies out, but now sends 400 by mail and 100 by email.

Jim then mentioned that the 91st BGMA can only survive if we can get more help from Members in the future. The more Members engage, the more we can do to further the memory of the 91st BG. Specifically; we need assistance on the Databases, the PX and ordering online, and the Secretary position. He asked Mick to the podium. Mick thanked Jim for his past service and especially for the handling of arrangements for the 2012 Reunion, then withheld further comments for later.

Jim made a tribute to Vince Hemmings and had a discussion of the wreath-laying and service by the various associations in England, France, and The Netherlands . Ivo De Jong-Margarten and Eric Domincus-Opijen & Ardennes. Jim opened the floor to questions from the audience.

Jody: Regarding the PX – can we get some search optimization on the website so that our PX sales on the Internet improve? Jim responded by giving an example of how we raised money years ago for the banner at the 8th AF museum in Savannah via "advertising" on the Ring and then reiterated the need for "advertising".

Don Freer: Is there any attempt to coordinate with the 8th AF organization? Jim: Not at this time, we seem to like having the intimacy of our own reunions. Mick: We can have meetings with the 8th AFHS on the "Rally-Round years between our annual reunions; The By-Laws specify this. Gary: He has had discussions with other groups on

the subject. Consensus: we will investigate the possibility of coordinating with the 8th AFHS in 2013.

Question from the Floor: Do we sell advertising space on the website? Jim: we try but don't get a lot of response.

Question from the Floor: Heard the Tower Museum is closing? Mick: No, the building has been listed and is under the running of the Tower Foundation. Jody: What about the Prop Memorial Garden? Mick: should stay where it is unless the situation changes. Mel Dart: Is there a separate access to the Museum? Mick: reported on the separate access. Chris and Amy have done an outstanding job on the Tower, on moving the endangered metal signs of the 323rd and 441st Sub-Depot, and acquiring a WWII Nissan Hut. It was proposed to set up a Skype meeting with Chris and Amy at 13:00 that day (which did happen).

Conrad: Expressed appreciation at the work of the non-veterans for their volunteering. He also mentioned the Tower Museum which has improved a lot over the years.

As questions from the floor were at an end, Jim proposed closing the meeting. Mick made a point-of-order that the results of the election had not yet been reported. Larry Ruth, head of Nominating Committee, reported the results: Mick Hanou as President, Jody Kelly as Vice President, Tom Freer as second VP, Gary Hall as RI editor, Janet Lorrocco as Historian. The position of Secretary / Treasurer was unfilled. The motion was made to accept the results, seconded and passed.

Mick, as new President, thanked Jim for his work on this Reunion and his past years serving as President. He thanked the 91st BGMA members for their votes and expressed the hope that he meets their confidence. There are a number of key areas to maintain attention to: the Web, the Ring, the Tower Museum Bassingbourn, Memorials, the Chino 91st BG display, Associate and Full Members, the Secretary/Treasurer position.

Discussion then proceeded to the next Reunion (West) – suggested possibly in San Francisco in conjunction with flying B-17 and B-24. Hal Johnson asked about the relationship with the Collings Foundation; Mick responded that it is still good and there are no plans of them making any changes to 909. Don Freer asked about the population of 91sters across the country. Mick: roughly 40% west, 20% central, and 40% east; we can verify this with an analysis of the zip codes of members. Larry Ruth: what about time of year – fall is hard to get kids off school. Mick: hopes that having it over Memorial Day, in conjunction with the Collings Foundation stop will make it easier – over a long weekend and after some schools are out. Don Freer: suggest you ask the NextGeneration when a good time for them is. George Bruckert: Focus on younger people using Facebook. We can also engage re-enactment organizations. Ted Skawieski: make sure to place Press Releases in newspapers, USAF magazines, 8th AF, etc.

Motion was made to close the meeting, seconded, passed.



Mick Hanou, Chris Murphy (on the laptop), Jody Kelly, Gary Hall and Rochelle Treziok converse using Skype.

## Donations

Donations for the third quarter of the year totaled \$1,687.50! Included is Sonny Schilleci's refusal of the 50/50 prize awarded as part of the raffle at the reunion banquet.

Lu Ann Allen		\$20.00
Rebecca Belmont		\$25.00
Phyllis Bibbo	In Memory of MSGT John P. Sutera 322nd, Crew Chief of <i>Ack Ack Annie</i>	\$30.00
William Cameron		\$100.00
Lisa Hammerly		\$20.00
Robert Hoffman Jr		\$50.00
Jake Howland		\$600.00
Danny Linn	In Memory of Maj William Cornell, Commander, 91st Bomb Group Air Inspector's Office	\$100.00
Danny Linn	In Memory of MSGT Rice C. Linn, 91st Bomb Group Air Inspector's Office	\$100.00
Danny Linn	In Memory of MSGT Malcolm Coubrough, 91st Bomb Group Air Inspector's Office	\$100.00
Danny Linn	In Memory of SGT Donald Northcott, 91st Bomb Group Air Inspector's Office	\$100.00
Sonny Schilleci		\$412.50
Ralph Simin		\$10.00
Douglas Wood		\$20.00

## Special Folded Wings



91st Veteran Robert Ball and Vince Hemmings hold the 91st BGMA wreath at Madingley on May 26, 2008.

### Vincent A Hemmings

Diss, Norfolk, UK, August 23, 2012

Reported by his son Gary

Vince was an unassuming, modest man whose passion for WWII aviation and the 91st Bomb Group was evident throughout his life.

Vince was part of a small group of enthusiasts who created the East Anglian Aviation Society in 1965. The EAAS volunteers worked with the Imperial War Museum and the Cambridgeshire County Council to create the Duxford Aviation Museum. The EAAS then began work on the Prop Memorial and Tower Museum at Bassingbourn. Vince became the second curator of the Tower Museum in 1978. He also found time to be the chairman of the Shuttleworth Veteran Aeroplane Society at Old Warden near Biggleswade for a number of years.

Vince was a strong supporter of the 91st BGMA and was always ready to help. He laid the wreath at the Madingley during the Memorial and Veteran's Day services, and provided a write up of the event for the *Ragged Irregular*. Many 91sters have fond memories of Vince greeting them when travelling to England.

He is survived by his wife Margaret and his two children, Gary and Margaret.

## Folded Wings (continued from page 12)

### ✪ Charles "Carley" A Skidmore 324th Age 88

Fort Worth, TX, September 5, 2012



Carley enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1942 as a pilot and retired as a major after 25 years of dedicated service. He was also a Mason and a Toastmaster. Charles was a loving and caring father, grandfather and great-grandfather who will be greatly missed.

He joined his wife of 58 years, Virginia May Skidmore, in heaven. Survivors: Children, Carla (Bill Ison) Finlay, Charles (Trisha) Skidmore, Susan (Ken) Chamberlain, Scott (Carol) Skidmore, and Gale (Rick) Winningham; 10 grandchildren; and 5 great-grandchildren.

### ✪ John R Waldron 323rd Age 87

Blue Bell, PA, August 17, 2012

Reported by his wife Betty

Born June 4, 1925 in Philadelphia, PA. John served in the Army Air Corps as a Radio Operator Gunner. He was the last survivor of the crew on the *Ramblin' Rebel*.

Bob is survived by his wife Elizabeth; daughters: Sr. Elizabeth SSJ, Maureen; son: Dr. John R. Waldron Jr. (Kathleen); 3 grandchildren; and 3 great grandchildren.

### ✪ Linwood "Lin" F Wright 323rd Age 85

New Sharon, ME, May 17, 2011



Lin enlisted in the Aviation Cadets and graduated a bomber pilot. He arrived in Bassingbourn late 1944, flying missions as a co-pilot. After VE Day, he participated in the evacuation of Allied POWs. After leaving England, Lin ferried bombers home to the Midwest. During this mission he met Patricia Ann Blake and was soon married.

He was recalled to participate in the Berlin Airlift, flying more than 120 missions hauling everything from coffins to coal. For the next 20 years, Linwood was involved in keeping the Soviet Union at bay flying B-29s, B-47s and the first B-52 into Loring AFB in 1956. Lt Col Wright retired in 1966 as Director of Safety, 8th Air Force.

Lin was predeceased by his wife, Patricia, with whom he shared 60 years of marriage. He is survived by his six children, Barbara (Frank) Gooding, Lynne Walsh, Jeffrey (Cindy) Wright, Kim (Carlton) Gardner, Kerry (Jonathan) Blacker, and Gregory (Kari) Wright; 14 grandchildren; and 14 great grandchildren.

✪ **George H “Dutch” Odenwaller 323rd Age 87**

Hillsdale, NJ, September 1, 2012



Reported by his brother-in-law John Krumm George served with the 91st Bomb Group as a B-17 ball turret gunner, flying 26 successful missions. He was a talented commercial prototype artisan for most of his life and was active in the VFW, the Aviation Hall of Fame and Museum of N.J., and the Metropolitan Sports Squadron (model airplanes).

As his hobby developed, he drew and constructed many World War II and some World War I model plane designs to scale. George was consulted by many historians of those periods for information about planes as well as his experiences during World War II.

George is predeceased by his son George M. Odenwaller. He is survived by Eva, his beloved wife of 50 years, brother-in-law John (Genevieve) Krumm, and many nieces and nephews.

✪ **Rudolph “Rudy” E Moretti 324th Age 93**

Wooster, OH, December 20, 2010

Reported by his wife Alice

Rudy was born Jan. 3, 1917, in Wooster, OH. He served his country during WW II with the U.S. Army Air Corps.

Surviving are his wife of 53 years, Alice Coccia Moretti; and many loving nieces and nephews.

✪ **Charles B Rongey Jr 401st Age 90**

Dunedin, FL, January 20, 2012

Survived by his wife, Dorothy; sons, Thomas and Terry; and three grandchildren.

✪ **William D Cameron 323rd Age 87**

Rancho Santa Fe, CA, August 17, 2012



Reported by his wife Betty

William served in the 8th Air Force, 91st Bomb Group of the U.S. Forces as a tail gunner on a B-17 in World War II with his missions flown over Germany and is a Charter Member of the National World War II Museum.

He is survived by his loving wife Betty Gibson Cameron of 60 years, daughter Colleen Cameron, son Phillip (Melissa) Cameron, and two grandsons.

✪ **Edward L “Ned” Davis Jr 401st Age 91**

Washington, DC, February 7, 2012

Reported by his wife Juliet

Edward was born in Philadelphia. He left Yale University to serve in the Army Air Corps during World War II. He served as a bombardier-navigator and flew 35 combat missions, including a 1944 raid on the heavily defended oil refinery at Merseburg, Germany.

Edward worked for the Army Security Agency and the Air Force Security Service before joining the new National Security Agency in 1952. He left in 1961 to join the State Department, where he became a liaison to the CIA.

Survivors include his wife of 61 years, Juliet Gill Davis; four children, Edward L. Davis III, Nina Davis, Diana Ferris, and Jennifer Davis; and six grandchildren.

✪ **Loren E Roll 401st Age 94**

Bay Minette, AL, July 7, 2012

Reported by Randy Martz



Expressing an early interest in flying, Loren took his first plane ride at the age of thirteen. After graduating high school he entered an airplane mechanics course and then worked as a mechanic for a flight training school to pay for flight lessons and earned his private pilot's license.

Loren enlisted in the Army Air Corp on 1 November 1941 and was in primary training when Pearl Harbor was bombed. Initially assigned as a flight instructor for B-24's, he volunteered for combat duty overseas in 1943. While on a layover in Mobile, AL for repairs to the B-17 he was piloting to England, Loren met his future wife of 69 years, Mary Ruth King. After a one week courtship, they were married on March 19th, 1943. Loren's flight crew named the B-17 "*Mary Ruth – Memories of Mobile*" in honor of the wedding.

Loren flew 31 successful missions including two on D-Day. After the war he returned to Montana to work for the Bureau of Reclamation, but returned to active duty in the Air Force at the start of the Korean War. Stationed in Japan and Korea until the end of the Korean War, Loren transferred to Okinawa where he was re-united with his family until 1957 when they returned to the United States. Loren retired a Major in the US Air Force Reserves and in 1974 he retired from the Army Corp of Engineers.

Loren was preceded in death by his wife Mary Ruth Roll. He is survived by his three children Judy Flugstad, Glenn Roll, and Karen Larson; 6 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren.

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

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**Folded Wings:**

✪ **Neil A Daniels 401st Age 92**

Los Altos, CA, May 29, 2012



Reported by his daughter-in-law Annamarie Neil had his first airplane ride at the age of 12 at the county fair. The one dollar, five minute ride used up his allowance, but the noises, smell and thrill "sunk the hook in for good."

At age 16, he earned his pilot's license. Following his dream, he joined the Army Air Corp in 1941 and became a

B-17 pilot. Neil flew 29 missions, 10 of which were unescorted. He was awarded the DFC, three air medals, Presidential Unit Citation, plus two battle stars. After his tour of duty, he enjoyed a flying career for 35 years and retired from United Airlines as a 747 captain.

He was predeceased by his wife, Jan, in 2009. He is survived by his children Kris, Carol (Keith) and Todd (Annamarie); four grandchildren; and two great grandchildren.

✪ **James D Fletcher 401st Age 93**

Sun City West, AZ, July 24, 2012



Reported by his daughters Jim, like most of his contemporaries, answered the call to defend his country during World War II, serving in the Army Air Corps. Before he left to fly 32 combat missions over Europe as co-pilot in the B-17, he married Ruth Louise Manthe, his bride of 58 years until her passing in 2001.

Upon his return to the States, he continued his career in the Air Force, completing 35 years of dedicated service. His favorite assignments were in Germany and England where he could travel extensively and maintain contact with his friends in the 91st Bomb Group.

He is survived by his three daughters Jamie (Spence) Daniels, Mary (John) Hermes, and Patricia (Rusty) Mitchell; and six grandchildren.