

THE RAGGED IRREGULAR



322nd BS



323rd BS



Supporting Units



324th BS



401st BS

Vol. 46 No. 1

91st Bombardment Group (H)

January 2013

The Future of the Tower Museum Bassingbourn

As we know many people will now be aware, Bassingbourn Barracks is in a state of some uncertainty regarding its future use and purposes, the rumour mills are working overtime with speculation and gossip as to what will become of the base; so we wanted to take this opportunity to set the record straight as far as the future of the **Tower Museum** is concerned.

In 2011 the Directors (*volunteers*) of the **Tower Museum** signed a new 15 year lease and in doing so became responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the control tower building and the grounds it resides upon. By signing this lease the Directors, in addition to becoming solely responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the building, have now also become responsible for (*attempting to*) raising the money needed to fully renovate and restore the control tower building and museum, inside and out; a figure in the region of £250,000.00 is needed to complete the task! This is a massive undertaking by a small team of volunteers, and should relay to people the level of commitment involved by the Directors, and the devotion to the history and what the **Tower Museum** stands for.

We are telling you this firstly, so that you have some idea of the behind the scenes work that has been taking place to secure the future for the **Tower Museum** when at times this may have been in question.

Now you are aware of the lengths the Directors have and are going to, to secure and preserve the **Tower Museum** we can come onto what the future of Bassingbourn Barracks may mean for us.

The situation today is *it's business as normal* for the **Tower Museum**. For reasons unknown to us, other clubs and organisations based on the Barracks, were, back in September 2012 issued with notice to vacate

Bassingbourn Barracks by the end of March 2013; we have had no such communication or correspondence to this affect. Each civilian organisation on the Barracks has their own individually agreed lease arrangements, and as such we can only guess that our lease is somewhat different to others.

Our 15 year lease will run for a minimum of 3 years before any options can be taken by either party. During which time the future of Bassingbourn Barracks will be known and the Directors of the **Tower Museum** will be forging ahead with one of two plans we have ready to put into action.

In short and as mentioned above already, the Directors of the **Tower Museum** will be continuing business as normal; the Museum is due to open for the 2013 season on Sunday 10 March and we will continue to promote the **Tower Museum** both nationally and internationally; we will move forward with "OPERATION RESTORATION" – the campaign to raise and secure the funds needed to restore and preserve the **Tower Museum** for future generations - and will continue to further our aims and objectives:

- To honour the sacrifices and memories of the men of the Royal Air Force (Bomber Command) and the 91st Bombardment Group (Heavy) United States Army Air Force, who served at Bassingbourn during the dark days of World War II, and to ensure that their sacrifices and actions are not forgotten;
- To become a centre of historical and educational importance so that current and future generations can learn of the events that took place at this airfield, the sacrifices made and the price that was paid to secure our freedom and liberty;

Continued on page 3

President's Corner**Mick Hanou**

The purpose of the 91st BGMA is to “perpetuate the memory of the former members of the 91st Bombardment Group (H) and supporting units...” which includes raising funds, publishing the RI, maintaining Memorials around the world, holding reunions, cooperating with affiliated organizations, and encouraging the Ring and Web site. The Board recently met to discuss a number of key items which will enable us to maintain a healthy organization. Some are the ongoing need to fund the 91st BGMA Ragged Irregular and Web, while others came forth from the 2012 Reunion business meeting.

You will find inside an insert for the annual dues. The dues have not been raised and \$10 is a pretty good deal for Membership. These dues are insufficient to support the costs needed to upkeep our wonderful website and print the RI. The Board had some options – raise the dues, amend the By-Laws to charge for the RI, or our final decision – request contributions to fund the RI and ask people to receive it digitally where possible. Members in good standing will continue to receive the printed RI if unable to receive it digitally. In support of this, I have taken a passage from Jim Shepherd's January 2011 RI and have donated \$250 to the 91st BGMA (with a company match) and ask those who can to follow that lead.

For FULL members, on the back of the dues notice are two By-Law changes that need to be voted on. They are not substantive changes and they deal with formalizing support for the Web and the Ring in a similar manner as the By-Laws do for the PX. Please vote and return the insert even if you are a Life FULL member who doesn't have to return the dues.

As to the PX – In the October RI, I requested a volunteer to step forward and assist with the PX. This is a source for raising funds but requires someone with more savvy than I have around websites and who has the time and dedication to organize the PX. Jim and Susie handled this very well for years but it is time to pass on the baton. We need someone soon so we can restock the PX in preparation for 2013.

There is going to be a Rally Round at Chino – so save the dates of May 3rd through the 5th. Jim and I are going to be attending to the Chino 91st BG display cases, which we hope to fill with donated items. You recall my Veep's Views on Memorabilia – first to your family to retain context. However, a recent event, where a member's material went to an estate agent, causes me to ask our veterans to assure their Memorabilia goes to the proper place. If you do have any Memorabilia you wish to donate at some point to our growing collection, please state your intentions in your will or advise your family that it be donated to the 91st BGMA and provide our contact details.

The 91st BGMA Board and volunteers are working hard for the organization. Janet, our historian, completed a POW database and is now working on compiling a “yearbook” and you will see a request from her in this RI. Jody Kelly does an outstanding job keeping up with the accounting and membership yet could use help with some of the secretarial duties. Gary Hall's work on the Ragged Irregular is fantastic. Jim continues to maintain our wonderful website, while Mike Banta handles the Ring with aplomb. And, from our friends across the pond, you will see in this RI a report on the health and improvements of the Tower Museum Bassingbourn as well as status on the base.

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

607 Blossom Ct
Pleasanton, CA 94566-7783
Tel: (925) 425-3220
mhanou@comcast.net

1st Vice President**Jody Kelly**

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

2nd Vice President**Tom Freer**

6380 Winstead Ct
Lisle, IL 60532
Tel: (630) 747-3700
tmf1108@sbcglobal.net

Historian**Janet Larocco**fauno-aventi@usa.net**Editor****Gary Hall**

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

Please send Folded Wings information to Jody Kelly.

April R/I submissions must be received by *May 15th*.

91st BG E-mail Ringb17banta@aol.com**91st on the Web**

www.91stbombgroup.com
www.bombsqd323rd.com
www.facebook.com/groups/91stBGMA

Tower Museum - continued from page 1

- To become the flag-ship Museum of its kind within the United Kingdom, and;
- To always keep the memory alive for those who come after.

Should further information affecting the **Tower Museum** become available, we will endeavour to keep our members, friends and supporters informed at all times.

If you should have any questions about the **Tower Museum** please do not hesitate to contact us directly by email to towermuseum.121@btinternet.com or by telephone on 01763 245 300 – leave us a message and we will call you back.

We hope that this statement will alleviate any concerns anyone may have had and would like thank our members, friends and supporters for their continued support.

The Directors of the Tower Museum Bassingbourn



Chino Airshow and Rally Round!

A Rally Round is scheduled in Chino, California at the Planes of Fame Air Museum for May 3rd to 5th, 2013.

A limited number of rooms are available at the Ayres Hotel Chino Hill. They offer a rate of \$89.95 per night if you call the front desk at **(909) 631-2922** and mention the Planes of Fame Museum. The rate includes a full breakfast. We strongly suggest you call today!

Those attending should send a check for \$50.00 per person, payable to Jim Shepherd. This covers your entrance fee and transportation to the Air Show. You will receive a full refund if you do not attend.

Jim Shepherd
 20670 Via Augusto
 Yorba Linda, CA 92887
 (714) 970-5540

Collings Foundation Schedule

Nine-O-Nine is already on the 2013 Wings of Freedom Tour. Stop dates listed below. For more information see www.collingsfoundation.org or call (978) 562-9182.

- 1/28 - 1/30 Fort Myers, FL
Page Field Airport
- 1/30 - 2/1 Marathon, FL
The Florida Keys Marathon Airport
- 2/1 - 2/4 Boca Raton, FL
Boca Raton Airport
- 2/4 - 2/8 Pompano Beach, FL
Pompano Beach Airpark
- 2/8 - 2/10 Fort Lauderdale, FL
Fort Lauderdale Executive
- 2/15 - 2/17 Melbourne, FL
Melbourne International
- 3/1 - 3/3 Leesburg, FL
Leesburg International Airport
- 3/4 - 3/6 Tallahassee, FL
Tallahassee Regional Airport
- 3/6 - 3/8 Destin, FL
Destin - Fort Walton Beach Airport
- 3/8- 3/10 Pensacola, FL
Pensacola International Airport
- 3/11 - 3/13 Hattiesburg, MS
Hattiesburg Municipal Airport
- 3/13 - 3/15 Alexandria, LA
Alexandria International Airport
- 3/15 - 3/17 Tyler, TX
Tyler Regional Airport
- 3/20 - 3/24 Dallas, TX
Dallas Love Field



323rd veteran George Kesselring in command of *Nine-O-Nine*.

It's Dues Time Again!

2013 Dues of \$10 should be sent to the treasurer as soon as possible. We are asking for a \$10 donation from **non-veteran** members who receive the RI by mail to cover printing and mailing costs. If you wish to receive a digital version of the RI, contact Gary Hall via email: raggedirregular@gmail.com.



Burch
Richard W

Engelbretson
Sune

Justen
Charles J

McCarty
Martin W

91st Yearbook Project Update

“Operation 91st Yearbook” created a flurry of activity when it was first announced in the July 2012 Ragged Irregular.

Thousands of men served with the 91st during World War II, but sadly, to date we have received fewer than 100 portrait donations. A few of those portraits are shown above. If you or a loved one served with the Group, and we have not heard from you, please consider contributing to this valuable and important project.

For additional information, or to submit photographs and information, please contact Historian Janet Larocco by email: fauno-aventi@usa.net.



[Above] A small souvenir copy of *Shoo Shoo Shoo Baby* nose art resides in the Experimental Aircraft Association’s museum at Oshkosh, WI. Tony Starcker painted the copies of his original artwork on sheet metal removed from the B-17 during its restoration. Gladys Stevens of Louisa, VA donated this souvenir to the EAA museum.

[Below] Mrs. Jackie Starcker set up a display of Tony’s work at the Community Center in Diamond Bar, CA on Veteran’s Day 2012. Jackie reports a TV crew working on a documentary honoring B-17 nose art recently photographed Tony’s canvases for their program. We will keep you posted on the program’s air date!



The Story Behind the Photograph: Conrad and General "Ike"

By Janet Larocco as told by Conrad L. Lohoefer



Crew members inspect the first major battle damage suffered by this B-17 Flying Fortress in 65 missions. One of the giant three-bladed propellers was torn from its hub by a near-miss flak burst on a recent bombing mission over Germany. The heavy blades scarred the engine cowling, and ripped into the metal fuselage, narrowly missing the likeness of the Supreme Commander, before plummeting earthward. The Fortress was forced to leave the bomber formation after dropping its bombs, and came back to base alone. "Ike" was christened by General Eisenhower with a bottle of Mississippi River water. The intense day-after-day pace of the bombing offensive against targets in advance of Allied ground forces, oil refineries, communication centers, left little time for a 5th star to be added to the "General's" uniform. The Fortress is a member of the 91st Bombardment Group, commanded by Colonel Henry W. Terry, Ossining, N.Y. Crew members pictured here are: (left to right), Staff Sergeant Conrad L. Lohoefer, Amarillo, Texas; T/Sgt. Earl A. Jones, Pennsgrove, N.J.; S/Sgt. John W. Mikesell, Washington, Pa.; 1st Lt. Medford M. Borgeson, Midway City, Calif; and S/Sgt. Irvin W. Kline, Norfolk, Neb. ([sic] National Archives)

Notes on the photograph are correct as to identification. Lt. Borgeson was my pilot; the other three men were from other crews.

After the mission, we were in interrogation, and waiting, you always had to wait for interrogation, and this Lt. Colonel came in and said "I need some guys for a picture." He pointed at me, and the other three guys, said, "Oh, yeah, I need an officer," and he picked my pilot Skip who was sitting next to me.

He loaded us into a jeep and we went over to the hanger where they had parked the *General "Ike"*. They proceeded to stage the picture.

Afterwards, he never told us anything and we didn't know what they did with the picture, but it got into the Associated Press pipeline, and it evidently went all over the world. It appeared in the Amarillo, Texas paper and my mother almost fainted when she saw it! Later she told me that people from all over the country cut it out and sent her copies of it, so I guess it got around. The Amarillo paper did send the original picture they received from the AP to my mother and I still have it. Skip and I never saw the other guys again; that we knew of, so that's about all there was to it.

We did fly the same mission, only in our own plane, *Old Battle Axe*.

The Untold Story

By Theodore Skawienski

PROLOGUE

This is being written in memory of S/Sgt. Donald W. Pubentz, the last man of the 91st Bomb Group killed in combat. This is the second writing of "The Untold Story"; the first was submitted to the 91st Bomb Group Memorial Association many years ago and was apparently lost in the archives.

Yet questions persist as to what happened as indicated by the casualty report, a letter from Paul O. Kennedy and the writing by Lowell Getz's book *"Mary Ruth" Memories of Mobile ... We Still Remember*. Chapter One: "Another Time, Another Place". In addition, there are several other written accounts pertaining to the mission of April 17th on Dresden that have not been considered previously.

First there is the written account by Robert Langston, the radio operator on board *Ragan's Raiders*. Specifically of importance is the fact that the Ball Turret Gunner S/Sgt. Pubentz actually shot down a German fighter, prior to his demise.

Secondly, in James L. Waymire's diary, a gunner flying on the same mission, verified that S/Sgt. Pubentz shot down one of the Me-262's. He further states that there were six Me-262 German fighters that attacked the 323rd Bomb Squadron formation.

Thirdly is Ted Skawienski's account, having flown on 96 combat missions [in both the Pacific and Europe] where

all aircraft returned home to fly again. However, this record is tarnished with the one fatality, the loss of S/Sgt. Pubentz. The memory of losing S/Sgt. Pubentz on his last required mission is agonizing to Ted Skawienski to this day.



S/Sgt. Donald W. Pubentz

THE UNTOLD STORY

The seventeenth day of April 1945 was like any other combat day at Bassingbourn Air Base, UK. Wake up call was at 3:00 AM followed by a breakfast of bacon and eggs. Briefing at 5:00 AM, where 1st Lt. Theodore L. Skawienski ("Kelly" his nick name) learned he was to fly B-17 aircraft #263 *Ragan's Raiders*, as lead of the third high element of the 323rd high squadron; the target Dresden, Germany.

Crew stations at 5:30 AM. Here Kelly met his two new crew members; a 2nd Lt. Co-Pilot, his first combat mission, and Ball Turret Gunner S/Sgt. Donald W. Pubentz on one of the final missions of his combat tour. The crew was jubilant, doing high fives, just another combat mission, a "Milk Run". Briefing stated light FLAK and no foreseeable German fighters.

Ragan's Raiders' engines were started at 5:45 AM. Kelly received the green light from the tower to taxi out

of the revetment and on to the runway. Given the go sign, Kelly shoved the throttles full forward and *Ragan's Raiders*, at full power, lifted off the runway at 5:55 AM. Leaving the coast of England and over the English Channel, Kelly gave the command for the gunners to clear their guns. Continuing to climb, Kelly secured his wing aircraft at 4,000 feet and then led his element to rendezvous with the Leader of the 323rd Bomb Squadron.

Just after leaving the target, B-17 #263 *Ragan's Raiders* was attacked by two or three Me-262 German jet fighters from six o'clock low. On the first pass a 20mm cannon shell went through the center of the ball turret. The exploding shell blew away the rear half of the ball turret and threw S/Sgt. Pubentz partially out, his body dangling in the air stream. In a matter of seconds, before the waist gunners could reach him, he fell away with only his flight boot left on part of the ball turret.

The Me-262 jets' second pass hit the No. 2 engine, damaging one of the cylinders and knocked off the cowling. The tail gunner S/Sgt. Raymond Murakowski was wounded in the chest. An exploding 20mm cannon shell drove parts of his flak vest into his body. The force of the exploding shell drove him back against the ammunition box, breaking his right arm. With loss of power in the No. 2 engine *Ragan's Raiders* began losing altitude. Kelly yelled out for the Co-Pilot to give him more engine boost, to crank up the engine air booster, to #10, normally set at #8. The Co-Pilot did not understand the command. Kelly reached around the four throttles and set the air booster to #10. Glancing out front he saw another Me-262 coming on its attack at twelve o'clock low.

This Me-262 was positive that its attack would finish off *Ragan's Raiders*. Kelly lowered the nose of the B-17 right at the German fighter and called out to the Top Turret Gunner to start firing. The Me-262 broke off its attack to locate an easier target. The battle between the jet and bomber was over in a matter of seconds.

With the extra power (boost set at #10) Kelly was able to get back into the bomber formation, thus hugging the protection of all of the squadron fire power. A subsequent evaluation of *Ragan's Raiders* by the crew members revealed that the tail gunner was badly hurt. Kelly called up the Group Commander stating that he lost his Ball Turret Gunner and that the Tail Gunner was badly wounded. The Group Leader replied that about 30 miles dead ahead was a landing strip under the control of the Americans with an army field hospital.

Kelly started the descent of *Ragan's Raiders* and feathered the No. 2 engine as it was smoking, a candidate for an engine fire. Descending to 2,000 feet, just short of the landing strip, the plane circled. Kelly asked the Flight Engineer S/Sgt. Henry L. Lilley to go back into the waist of the airplane and jettison what was left of the hanging ball turret. The hanging ball turret would have damaged the under belly of the plane on landing.

Ragan's Raiders continued circling the landing strip, now at 1,000 feet as the gunners worked at dislodging the hanging ball turret. After about 15 minutes, with a sigh of relief, S/Sgt. Lilley called up that the remaining part of the ball turret was jettisoned.

1st Lt. Skawienski landed the airplane on the edge of the asphalt runway and taxied toward the army tent field hospital. Kelly paused to watch a B-17 from another Bomb Group landing, but unfortunately it landed long and ended in a ditch nose down at the end of the runway. This B-17 also had a wounded Tail Gunner, another victim of the Me-262 jet fighter attacks. Tail Gunner S/Sgt. Murakowski and the second tail gunner awaited their turn with other troop casualties at

the US Army field hospital. S/Sgt. Murakowski was finally operated on at 10:30 PM with Kelly observing as the surgeon probed for pieces of shrapnel.

After completing surgery, the surgeon, an Army Major, went to get a drink of water from the Lister bag and was shot and killed by a German sniper. Death plays no favorites in war. The next morning the *Ragan's Raiders* air crew used some sheet metal to cover up the hole made by the dislodged ball turret. The No. 2 engine could not be repaired. Next, the crew loaded S/Sgt. Murakowski and the second Tail Gunner aboard *Ragan's Raiders*. Its engines were started for a three engine take off.

Kelly taxied the B-17 down the short asphalt runway, continuing down the road at the end of the runway. They crossed a bridge where the in-board engines barely cleared the concrete abutments and continued down the road to a concrete unloading ramp. Kelly turned *Ragan's Raiders* around preparing for takeoff.

1st Lt. Skawienski gave the following instructions, "We are going to take off down the road, across the bridge and on to the asphalt runway for lift off." Kelly then set the throttles, adjusting them for a three engine takeoff. *Ragan's Raiders'* brakes were released and the plane started rolling down the road, across the bridge and safely onto the road leading to the asphalt runway. Kelly called for ¼ flaps as rudder control speed was reached at the front edge of the asphalt runway. The B-17 was airborne at 1,200 feet down the runway, climbed to 8,000 feet and crossed the English Channel.

Reaching Bassingbourn at 1200 hours, the field was circled as the air crew fired red flares indicated wounded aboard. *Ragan's Raiders* was home a day late. The two tail gunners were taken to the hospital at Wimpole Hall where they fully recovered.



Sebastien Fontaine from Belgium adopted the grave of S/Sgt. Donald W. Pubentz, buried at the Ardennes American Cemetery, Belgium. photo from www.91stbombgroup.com

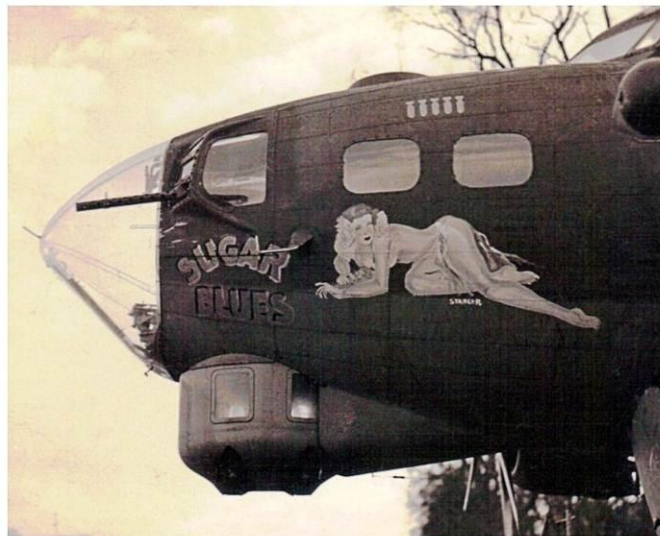
The Last Flight of *Sugar Blues* - February 22, 1944

By Lt. Col. Arthur Clay, AFRES Ret. – Submitted by David Clay

I was a B-17 bombardier in the Eighth Air Force, 1st Bomb Division, 91st Bomb Group, 323rd Squadron, Lt. Roman Maziarz's crew. On a mission to bomb aircraft factories at Aschersleben, Germany, on 22 February 1944, our B-17 *Sugar Blues* was severely shot up by German fighters. Lt. Maziarz was forced to ditch in the North Sea.

At the mission briefing, when Aschersleben was announced as the target, there was a groan from the air crews. We had been to this area on 11 January, and we ran into a real hornets nest. The situation was much the same on 22 February. After the bombers had taken off, the weather over England again delayed our fighter escort operations, so when we got over the continent the only fighter aircraft we saw were Germans. They knew the bombers would be alone, so they were ready and waiting.

If my memory is correct, our plane was flying in the low squadron of the low group, which was made up of planes from the 91st and the 381st Bomb Groups. Before we reached the target, we were attacked by Focke-Wulf 190s. A B-17 from the 381st that was to our left and above was hit, and in seconds it was a ball of fire and we were past it.



Subsequent attacks took out our #1 engine and damaged two others. Our airspeed was dropping and we were forced to drop out of the formation. Without the support of the other guns of the formation we were a sitting duck and the Germans came in for the kill.

After more attacks, the pilot put the plane in a steep dive, from 20,000 feet to 1,000 feet. After the bombs were dropped, we went right down on the deck with a heading for England.

The first thing I saw when we leveled off, at almost treetop level, was a German farmer standing in the field with a horse and wagon. When he turned and saw the American bomber, he put his arms in the air. I guess he thought we were going to shoot him.

At first it was such a relief to get away from the fighters and flak, but we were still in central Germany with big problems and a long way to go. The right inboard

engine was useless, and the propeller was "wind milling", which increased the fuel consumption of the other engines. To conserve fuel, all gun barrels, ammunition and loose equipment were jettisoned.

We passed over flak towers, anti-aircraft guns and an army camp. We were actually too low for them to shoot at us. When the people on the ground started waving at us, we knew we had crossed the border into enemy-occupied Holland.

Lt. Maziarz did a great job of flying. At times it was necessary to pull up to get over power lines. He got everything possible out of the damaged engines.

After about two hours of this thrill-a-minute ride, we reached the Dutch coast, where the crew was told to huddle in the radio compartment and prepare for possible ditching. A short time later one of the remaining engines quit, and another racked the plane with violent vibrations. As we hit the water, the engines tore loose. Under the circumstances it was a superb landing. The co-pilot, Pete Delo, was the only one injured. He suffered stomach, chest and head injuries when his seat broke loose upon impact. Those in the radio compartment got pitched around pretty good. There was a little trouble releasing the rubber

dinghies and the water was rising rapidly, but everyone got out the top hatch.

We got into the dinghies. The pilots stepped directly into the dinghies and remained dry. The rest of us were soaked.

It was difficult to get clear of the sinking plane. The waves kept pushing the dinghies up onto the wing and dangerously close to the jagged holes from the air battle. To avoid a fatal puncture, some of us got in the water between the wing and the dinghies and pushed them free. It was only a few minutes and our bomber went under.

We were in a good mood and thankful to have survived. A P-47 flew by very low. Other planes that were returning to England could be heard above the overcast.

We were confident we would be rescued. We had been transmitting radio signals which were being picked up at locations in England. From these our location could be determined. It was not too long before a RAF Lockheed Hudson Air Sea Rescue plane spotted us. They dropped a large 10 man dinghy, but it landed too far away. On another run they dropped one that we were able to get into.



Sgt. Jake Jacoboski asked me how far we were from land. I replied, "Two miles – straight down". Nobody thought it was funny.

Then there was the wait for the English Air Sea Rescue boat. After a few hours it got dark and much colder. The

waves got bigger and a wet snow began to fall. There was little conversation. Everyone knew that many airmen had not survived a winter night on the North Sea.

After about 6 or 7 hours we saw a light. Flares were immediately shot and a boat came into sight. Our location was much closer to Holland than England, so there was a good chance it could be a German boat. When it got near, we were glad to see the English.

When we got along side, another light appeared in the distance. Someone asked the boat commander about the light. He replied, "Shut up and get your ass aboard, it could be Jerry". We went below and got out of our wet clothes. We were furnished blankets to keep warm.

But the excitement for this long day was not over yet. There was a lot of cheering up on deck so we hurried up to check it out. The navy base we were nearing was under attack by German planes and one of them was going down in flames.

At the base we were given used RAF airman uniforms with instructions to send them back when we returned to our squadron. We never saw our uniforms and flying gear again. An officer explained that it all belonged to the boat crew under the salvage rules of the sea. I thought this was a stretch. I was grateful for the rescue but I sure hated to lose my A-2 jacket. I was never able to get another one.

Lt. Maziarz was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for the courage and flying skill he displayed under extreme adverse conditions. He had long before won the admiration of everyone on his crew.



The crew of *Sugar Blues*.

Back row:

S/Sgt. Robert W. Heller, Tail Gunner
 S/Sgt. Anthony Barbotti, Waist Gunner
 S/Sgt. Walter P. Meader, Ball Turret Gunner
 S/Sgt. Urban J. Jacoboski, Waist Gunner
 S/Sgt. Joseph LaCascia, Radio Operator
 T/Sgt. Joseph T. Depoti, Engineer

Front row:

1/Lt. Roman V. Maziarz, Pilot
 2/Lt. Peter M. Delo, Co-pilot
 2/Lt. Mortimer Pudnos, Navigator
 2/Lt. Arthur D. Clay, Bombardier

Donations

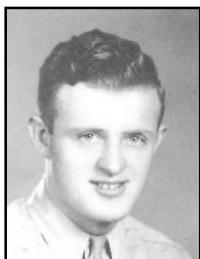
| | |
|---|-----|
| Mrs. Matilde Keneley In Memory of Frank T. Keneley (401st) | 500 |
| Mick Hanou Chevron gift match | 250 |
| Sune Engelbrektsen | 200 |
| Suzi Shepherd | 100 |
| Mrs. Gloria Summers In Memory of Gink Summers (322nd) | 50 |
| James Sikich | 20 |

Folded Wings (continued from page 12)

☛ Goff "Gink" Summers 322nd Age 88

Glennville, WV, November 22, 2012

Reported by his wife Gloria



Gink served in the Army Air Corps as a gunner / toggler during WWII. He flew 23 missions with the 91st Bomb Group and was awarded 2 Bronze Stars and an Air Medal with Two Oak Leaf Clusters. Gink graduated from the West Virginia University School of Pharmacy.

He is survived by Gloria, his wife of 65 years; and three children, Dr. Andrew Summers, Julia McDonough, and Mary Beth Darlington.

☛ Richard F "Dick" Hull 323rd Age 84

Colorado Springs, CO, February 16, 2007



Dick proudly served his country during WWII as a bombardier flying the B-17s. His plane and crew were hit by enemy fire and Dick spent 19 months in a German POW camp. Upon his return home, he met his very special lady, Mary Jane, who was a stewardess with United Air Lines. During his military career, he was awarded many honors, ribbons, and medals including the Air War Medal and the Purple Heart. Dick retired from the Air Force in 1970.

He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Mary Jane; daughter, Kathy (Don) Stephens; and two granddaughters.

☛ James H McPartlin 401st Age 93

Plano, TX, October 12, 2012

Reported by his daughter Daphne
McPartlin-Schroth



General McPartlin attended the University of Detroit, the University of Houston and graduated from the Command and Staff School, Fort Leavenworth Kansas. He was a member of the Michigan National Guard from 1935 – 1938 and enlisted as an aviation cadet in 1941. After receiving his wings, he was assigned to the 52nd Pursuit Group flying P-39 and P-40 aircraft.

General McPartlin was one of the original 91st Bomb Group pilots and was named Operation Officer for his squadron with their move to England. In 1943, he was named Commander of the 401st Squadron, a position he retained until returning home in August 1944. He flew 27 combat missions that included the first air raid on Berlin and the first low-level mission against the submarine pens at Saint-Nazaire, France. He led his squadron on raids to Oscherlaben and Schweinfurt, Germany and Posnana, Poland. He flew an unauthorized mission on D-Day with B/Gen. William Gross to observe the Normandy Beach landings.

General McPartlin became Squadron Commander of the 439th Fighter Bomber Wing at Selfridge Air Force Base. In 1956 he was Wing Commander of the 403rd Troup Carrier Wing and later assigned Wing Commander of the 442nd Troup Carrier Wing at Richards Gebaur Air Force Base. General McPartlin was a Command Pilot with more than 4,000 hours flying time, including 300 hours in jet fighters. He was promoted to Brigadier General, USAF in 1961.

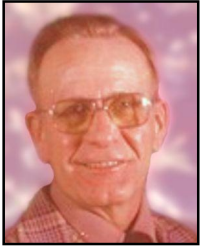
His awards and decorations include: Distinguished Flying Cross and cluster, Ari Medal, Four clusters, The Distinguished Unit Citation and cluster, the RAF Battle for Britain Medal, the European Theater of Operation with four battle stars, the Normandy Air Offensive Award of Europe and France and the Air Force Association Medal of Merit.

General McPartlin retired from the Air Force in 1970. He was active in many military clubs, including, "The Happy Warriors" which he helped found in 1998.

Ginni, his loving wife of 63 years, passed away November 26, 2004. General McPartlin is survived by four sons; James (Elise) McPartlin, Geoff (Rosie) McPartlin, Mark McPartlin, David (Paula) McPartlin; daughter Daphne (Gene) Schroth; seven grandchildren; and two great grandsons.

❖ **Robert L Crist 322nd Age 89**

Hammond, IN, October 21, 2012



Reported by his daughter Sharon Halas Robert, a radio operator / gunner on the B-17 *Red Alert*, flew 30 successful missions over Nazi occupied Europe. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Robert was preceded in death by his wife and high school sweetheart of 66 years Margaret. He is survived by two daughters; three grandchildren; and five great grandchildren.

One of the greatest days of his life was when he went to the WWII Memorial in Washington, DC with Honor Flight Chicago on August 4, 2010.

❖ **William R Dominguez 401st Age 72**

Aurora, CO, January 17, 1995

Reported by his daughter Adrienne Dominguez Dorland William (Willie) joined the CA Coast Artillery and was at Dutch Harbor, AK on 12/6/42. He became a Bombardier / Navigator '44 - 45 with the 401st and was a member of the "Phantom Fortress" crew. Willie returned to the Air Force in '50 to prepare for Korea. His crew went "Top Gun" to remain stateside to train B-29 pilots. He served his country for 26 years, retiring as a Lt. Col in '66.

He is survived by his wife June Percy Dominguez; sons Steven and Gregory; daughters Michelle (Michael) Rowan and Adrienne (Alan) Dorland; four grandchildren; and two great-granddaughters.

❖ **Arthur D Clay 323rd Age 90**

Grand Rapids, MI, December 24, 2012



Reported by his son David Arthur served as a B-17 bombardier / navigator, flying 30 missions over Nazi Germany with Roman Maziarz and Al Kuehl. He was awarded the Army Air Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross. During "Big Week" in February 1944, his plane *Sugar Blues* was severely damaged by German fighters and forced to ditch in the

North Sea on the way back to England. He retired from the Air Force Reserve as a Lieutenant Colonel.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 50 years, Lucille. He is survived by two sons, four grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

❖ **Wilbur W Nicoll 323rd Age 91**

Chattanooga, TN, August 14, 2012



Reported by his wife Lorena Wilbur joined the Air Force in 1941 and was sent to Maxwell, AL. He attended automotive school, was assigned to the military police and later accepted into officer training. He served in the United States Army Air Force during World War II and in Korea. He flew 25 missions in Europe as a bombardier and 52 missions in Korea as an Electronics Counter Measures Officer.

In 1946, he was the Provost Marshal on the island of Okinawa where he received a ceremonial flag and a sword when he returned to the states. In 1951, he was recalled as a captain and was a member of the Number One SAC B-36. During the last years before retirement, he served as a Top Secret Nuclear Weapons Officer. His awards include the Distinguish Flying Cross.

Bill is survived by his cherished wife of 70 years, Lorena Joyce Marshall; his beloved son Regis Marshall (Joanne Z Bowden) Nicoll; and two grandchildren.

❖ **James E Dunn 323rd Age 84**

Egin, ID, January 17, 2010



Reported by his son Wayne James served in the U.S. Army during World War II in England with the 91st Bomber Group, 323rd Bomb Squadron as a tail gunner on B-17 *High Ho Silver*. He acquired the rank of Staff Sergeant.

He is survived by his wife, Stella; sons, Wayne (Luena), Charlie, and Vic (Renea); twelve grandchildren; and twenty eight great-grandchildren.

❖ **Hooper R Maplesden 324th Age 92**

Yreka, CA, May 20, 2012

Reported by his friend Bob Kelley When World War II broke out, Hooper entered the U.S. Army. He was the pilot of a B-17 crew, which flew 35 missions most of them in *Lady Lois*.

Hooper is survived by his daughter Vickie Maplesden; one granddaughter; and three great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 53 years, June in 1999 and his son John in 1993.

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
Woodbury, MN 55125-9282

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Carol Stream, IL. 60199
Permit No. 73

Folded Wings:

❖ **Arthur R Cressman Sr 322nd Age 90**

Overland Park, KS, October 27, 2012



Reported by his grandson Arthur R Cressman III
Art joined the Army Air Corps in 1942, after the start of WWII. He landed in Bassingbourn, England on his 18th birthday. He served his country as bombardier on the B-17 *Yankee Doodle*, and then as ball-turret gunner on *Luftwaffe Waterloo*. He completed 32 missions, and returned stateside to

become a ground school bombing instructor until the war ended in 1945. He retired in 1984 from a long career with Becton Dickinson. For his service, he was awarded two Distinguished Flying Crosses, the Air Medal with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, and other commendations. In 2005, Art was inducted into the Commemorative Air Force Hall of Fame in Midland, TX.

He is survived by his wife of 67 years Lorraine, three children, Art Jr. (Lily); Jim (Mary); and Diane (Keefe); eight grandchildren, and 7 great-grandchildren.

❖ **Thomas E Herbert 323rd Age 86**

Pompano Beach, FL, January 6, 2012



Reported by his son Thomas M Herbert
Tom was a B-17 radio operator who completed 21 bombing missions over Germany from February through April 1945. He celebrated the end of the war while still in England. He told tales of witnessing the raucous celebrations in London with people climbing up and

swinging from the light poles. He served on the *Nine-O-Nine*, and greatly enjoyed a ride on the Collings Foundation *Nine-O-Nine* some years ago as a Christmas gift. After the end of the war, he participated in the airlift of prisoners-of-war from Stalag Luft 1 in Barth, Germany.

Tom's wife, Doris, died 2 weeks after him, and he is survived by his son, Tom, his daughter, Elaine, his daughter-in-law, Ashley, and 2 grandchildren.