

THE RAGGED IRREGULAR



322nd BS



323rd BS



Supporting Units



324th BS



401st BS

Vol. 41 No. 2

91st Bombardment Group (H)

April 2008

91ST BGMA REUNION

JUNE 24 – 29, 2008

AT THE WYNDHAM HOTEL IN FULLERTON, CA

Hotel Phone: 714-992-1700

WE HOPE EVERYONE IS ABLE TO ATTEND!



If you haven't done so, please make your hotel reservation by calling 1-714-992-1700 before May 24th. Identify yourself as a member of the 91st BGMA. There are a limited number of rooms available at a reduced rate of \$89 per night.

A blue registration form has been inserted inside this issue. It is the same form included in the January issue. If you have not mailed the form to Ace, please do so no later than May 1st. See the registration form for further instructions. If you need additional forms, please contact Gary Hall at (651) 260-2397 or email raggedirregular@gmail.com.

Reunion Events

Ponte Family Estate Winery offers visitors a unique opportunity to experience the best of Wine Country. You can sample delicious wines, explore the winemaking process and tour their beautiful grounds. The Tour and Tasting provides a fascinating and educational look inside a working winery.

Catalina Island has been called the jewel of the Pacific! It is not just an Island...It's another world! Catalina Island, 26 miles from shore, boasts a perfect, mild climate. Enjoy clear, tranquil waters, abundant sea life, tours, great food, shopping, beaches, and more.

The Planes of Fame Museum is dedicated to the preservation, perpetuation and exhibition of historical aircraft, and to the men and women, both famous and unknown, who devoted their lives to flight. There are numerous aircraft on display at the museum and many are sole surviving examples of their type

Knott's Berry Farm Chicken Restaurant's traditional chicken dinners are something to crow about just as they were back in 1934 when Mrs. Knott served them at the Farm for the very first time. The menu still features the same famous chicken, biscuits, and boysenberry pie.

March Air Reserve Base is home to the Air Force Reserve Command's largest air mobility wing. In addition to the Air Force Reserve Command, March ARB is home to units from the Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve and Air National Guard.

Downtown Disneyland offers something for every member of your family. Take a short walk or monorail ride to this lively promenade that offers unique shopping and dining as well as nighttime excitement and activity.

Nixon Presidential Museum is a three-dimensional walk-through memoir featuring a 52,000 square foot museum, 22 high-tech galleries, movie and interactive video theaters, the spectacular First Lady's Garden, the President's faithfully restored 1910's birthplace, and the flower-ringed memorial sites of President and Mrs. Nixon.

The Crystal Cathedral is located in Garden Grove, California, and is the home base for the international Crystal Cathedral Ministries, including a congregation of over 10,000 members and the internationally televised "Hour of Power." There is Something for Everyone - Especially You!

President's Corner**Jim Shepherd**

The 2008 Reunion is just around the corner, June 24 to 29, in Fullerton, California. Our hotel is located near Disneyland and Knott's Berry Farm, so this is a great time to bring the kids, grandkids or great grandkids. One of the scheduled events is a trip to the famed Knott's Berry Farm Chicken Restaurant for dinner.

A Hospitality Room will be open the entire reunion and will host a few special events. This is a great place for the veterans to catch up on old times and share stories.

The reunion schedule is as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Wednesday
June 25 | Choose between a trip to the beautiful wine county of Temecula Valley or a trip to the famous Catalina Island. |
| Thursday
June 26 | The Planes of Fame Museum in Chino, California. The museum houses a memorial to the 91 st Bomb Group that is worth seeing. Mick Hanou plans to fly in a P-38 and if there is interest, someone might get a ride in a P-51.

Dinner at Knott's Berry Farm Chicken Restaurant. |
| Friday
June 27 | March Air Force Base tour and a presentation regarding their current mission.

A special evening with a Disneyland representative talking about the Nose Art on WWII aircraft. Tony Starcer painted nose art on over 100 planes of the 91 st . |
| Saturday
June 28 | Business meeting in the morning at the hotel or a morning trip to the Richard Nixon Library in Yorba Linda, Ca.

Banquet in the evening at the hotel. |
| Sunday
June 29 | Special trip to the Crystal Cathedral Church for the morning service. |

All of you should consider attending this reunion, especially the veterans because we need their experiences and this gives the rest of us the opportunity to thank you for our current freedom.

We need volunteers for the reunion. One or more volunteers are needed for each trip to get the people on the bus and make sure we have the same people on the returning bus. Anyone interested in volunteering, please contact me at jshep91@earthlink.net or (714) 970-5540.

We plan to have a story telling area and would like volunteers to tell of their experiences at Bassingbourn, as a POW or a special event.

Welcome New Life Members

Robert A. Dickson
George W Mankel Jr.
William G. Reid
Greg Varhall

James G. Young
Addine Carpenter, AL
Bonnie Selje, AL

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91st on the Web

www.91stbombgroup.com
www.bombsq323rd.com

Veeps Views by Mick Hanou

As the time for the reunion approaches, I am looking forward with great anticipation to seeing you and hearing your stories and recollections. I once again encourage you to invite the grandchildren and family. Please bring scrapbooks, memorabilia, and photos to share your history with them. I realize there are a lot of activities offered that week, but we also have a Hospitality Suite for you to enjoy and relax in the evenings should you decide to stay at the hotel for dinner.

Hopefully, many of you will attend the Chino event. Here again is the opportunity to connect with the next generations while viewing numerous one-of-a-kind aircraft in one of the most comprehensive and remarkable collections of WWII aircraft in the world. For an overview, we suggest that you visit their website:

<http://www.planesoffame.org/museuminfo.php?site=Chino>.

They have a B-17 under restoration known as "Piccadilly Lily" which is the one that was used in the TV series 12 O'clock High, and we have arranged permission to tour her. Also, I have donated a P-38 flight for your enjoyment (subject to airworthiness, safety and weather). This is one of only three flying P-38s in the world, so don't miss this opportunity. We are pursuing the possibility of having an operating B-17 fly in as well.

The business meeting at this reunion is open to all members this time. However, only full members can vote. The 91BGMA, dedicated to keeping the history alive, can only survive with your participation. "I Want You" as a famous WWII poster said applies today as well. If you have been an Associate Member for 3 years, you can apply to the Board for full membership.

If there are any who wish to volunteer to help me at the Suite, please call me at 925-425-3220 or email me at mhanou@comcast.net.

2008 91st BGMA Donations

Verne Woods	\$500
Paul Kahl	\$300
Virginia McGavern	\$100
Boots Thompson	\$50
George Mankel	\$50

Letters to the Editor

From Lowell Getz:

The original account regarding the bomb group to which Glenn U. Brooks was assigned was correct. Glenn was in the 92nd Bomb Group. He was shot down on 22 March

1943, before the 94th arrived in England. The 92nd had some problems and was stood down from flying combat. But, crewmen could volunteer to go to another Group to fly combat missions. Glenn, along with a number of other crewmen did so. Glenn and others were sent to the 91st. Six of the other crewmen on Glenn's aircraft when it was shot down were from the 92nd Group.

[Thank you for the correction Lowell! January's RI corrected Glenn U. Brooks' Bomb Group assignment stated in an article from the October RI, but the original article was in fact, correct.]

2008 Wings of Freedom Schedule

See The Collings Foundation's B-17 *Nine-O-Nine!*

4/2 – 4	San Antonio International San Antonio, TX
4/4 – 7	Austin-Bergstrom International Austin, TX
4/7 – 9	Lubbock Preston Smith International Lubbock, TX
4/9 – 11	Albuquerque International Sunport Albuquerque, NM
4/11 – 14	Scottsdale Airport Scottsdale, AZ
4/14 – 16	Chandler Municipal Airport Chandler, AZ
4/17 – 20	Marana Regional Airport Tucson, AZ
4/21 – 24	Gillespie Field San Diego, CA
4/24 – 28	McClellan-Palomar Airport Carlsbad, CA
4/28 – 5/1	French Valley Airport Murrieta, CA
5/1 – 6	Long Beach Airport Long Beach, CA
5/6 – 8	Brackett Field Airport LaVerne, CA
5/8 – 12	Bob Hope Airport Burbank, CA
5/12 – 14	Camarillo Airport Camarillo, CA
5/14 – 16	Paso Robles Municipal Airport Paso Robles, CA
5/16 – 24	Moffett Federal Airfield Mountain View, CA
5/25 – 27	Livermore Municipal Airport Livermore, CA
5/28 – 30	Stockton Metropolitan Airport Stockton, CA
5/30 – 6/2	McClellan Airfield Sacramento, CA

Please visit www.collingsfoundation.org for schedule updates and more information regarding the tour.

Report from the Tower Museum Bassingbourn

By Chris Murphy (Vice Chairman / Public Relations & Sales and Marketing Manager)

First may I apologize for not reporting on events at the Tower Museum sooner; this report was due to be submitted for the October 2007 RI but due to a hectic schedule, it was not to be. Anyway, that said, there were a couple of items that occurred after October, which I will now include in this report.

I wish to start my report by going back to 2006; as it was at this time that we were starting to get back to normal after various issues affecting the East Anglian Aviation Society were resolved. It was also in 2006 that Col. Ed Gates visited the base and I had the pleasure of being his escort for some of his stay. I also met with Mick Hanou when he visited the UK for his annual trip to the Flying Legends air show at Duxford.

To get things back on track, I in my capacity as Sales and Marketing Manager (among other hats) decided to arrange an open weekend at the museum; calling on many of my friends the area around the Tower was transformed for the August open weekend, WW2 vehicles were abundant, as were re-enactors dressed in the war time uniform complete with pushbikes of the period, a large cinema screen and projector system were erected in a seated marquee to show films from the war years. This of course included the 1943 documentary, Memphis Belle. With all the publicity that the media gave to the event we ended up with about 500 visitors over the weekend and many emails and letters were received from those who visited saying what a wonderful weekend it was.

It was in September of 2006 that the decision was made to design and build a permanent exhibition about the Memphis Belle. The reason for this was that most of our visitors now are the public looking for somewhere different to go, so we needed to have a hook to pull people in with. As most people have heard of the Memphis Belle and the fact its war time history as well as the documentary was made here at Bassingbourn, this seemed to be our biggest pull on the general public.

I set about designing and building the display, which took every weekend (both Saturdays and Sundays) from just after Christmas 2006 until the last weekend in April 2007. The exhibition was officially opened on May 17, 2007 by the Commanding Officer of Bassingbourn Station, Lt Col Nigel Smith and Major Daniel Stone of the USAF; a pilot from RAF Mildenhall here in the UK. In addition, present on the day were the regional newspapers and the regional television stations, as well as a reporter from Flypast Magazine (the UK's most popular aviation magazine). The upshot of the display and the media attention has been increased visitor numbers, the more people we get visiting the museum, the more people will learn of the 91st Bomb Group and the sacrifices that were made, that after all is what we are trying to do to EDUCATE people.

Running in parallel to the building of the Exhibition I was also arranging a large fundraising event that would take place in June 2007. This was to be a 1940's hangar dance with the orchestra playing being non other than the Memphis Belle Swing Orchestra who appeared in the 1990 Hollywood film of the same name. Come the date of the event and some 800 people danced in to the early hours and I was honoured that a 91st Bomb Group veteran and his wife could be with us, the guest was Chris Goodwin. The event raised about £8000.00 pounds profit (\$16,000.00) which will be used for the running of the museum.

In July 2007 I met once again with Mick Hanou; we discussed much and had a very positive meeting. Mick did report on his trip to the UK in the October edition of the RI.

In September 2007 we again held another open weekend. The weather this time was truly appalling, but for those who braved it and made the effort to visit again, they had a good time and the Museum generated some more income.

In October of 2007 the Regiment here at Bassingbourn held a charity boxing night in aid of the Army Benevolent fund and local charity's. The Commanding Officer Lt Col Nigel Smith named one of the organisations to benefit from the event would be the Tower Museum and on November 14th 2007 I attended a cheque presentation and received £1200.00 for the Tower. I and the rest of the committee are extremely grateful to Nigel Smith for his enthusiastic support to the Tower Museum.

In December 2007 we held our Annual General Meeting at which time we said farewell to Mr. Mick Killaspy, who stepped down as the Secretary. Mick has given loyal and faithful service over many years, and to show our appreciation, he was presented with a crystal decanter and glasses.

The new secretary for the Tower Museum is Mrs. Amy Murphy (yes my wife). Amy is a professional team secretary in her working life and will no doubt bring new skills and ideas to the post. Another new committee member is Mr. Dick Childs who assumes the role of Membership Secretary having taken over from Mr. Mick Craven who has moved away from the area.

Apart from the items reported on above the following items are also worthy of note: The old East Anglian Aviation Society no longer exists as we have changed our name officially to The Tower Museum. This change was made to reflect what we do, which is to run the Tower and the Museum within. Our aviation activities (like owning aeroplanes) ceased long ago.

We have a new website; the old web sites should be ignored as they are no longer maintained and the new website address is: www.towermuseumbassingbourn.co.uk. Our email address is: towermuseum.121@btinternet.com.

As many of you may know the Tower became a listed building a couple of years ago. Since that time we have been working with the MOD (Ministry of Defence) to see when a program of refurbishment for the building will commence. Well, the latest news is that it is hoped that refurbishment works will commence in 2008. If all goes to plan this will see the Tower well for another 50 years, I will keep you informed of progress on this matter.

We continue to lecture to the military recruits here at Bassingbourn about the station's history and the units that have served here and about 800 to 1000 recruits a year

come to us for these lectures this is on top of our normal visitors.

In closing, I would like to say that the Tower Museum is looking forward to the future. We have made good progress over the last couple of years as can be seen from the report above and there is much in the pipeline for the future. New blood has also had an impact and hopefully will continue to do so, so be assured that we are KEEPING THE MEMORY ALIVE FOR THOSE THAT COME AFTER (Museum Motto).

May I wish you all a healthy 2008 and please if you wish, do contact us even if just to say hello.

BFN (bye for now)

Chris Murphy Tower Museum Bassingbourn



Pictures from the 1940's hangar dance held at Bassingbourn. Music performed by The Memphis Belle Swing Orchestra who appeared in the 1990 Hollywood film of the same name.

Merseburg, 2 Nov 44: "It's what we know - that ain't so!"

By Ed Gates

A late-19th Century humorist, Josh Billings, from Alabama or Mississippi said, "It ain't what we don't know what gets us in trouble. It's what we know - that ain't so!" I used that for many of my lectures on intelligence collection during my 3 1/2 years on the staff at the Strategic Intelligence School in Washington, D.C. in the 1950's. It seems quite applicable to some of the research and the memories of "those who were there" at Merseburg on 2 Nov 44 and I speak from first hand experience. When I wrote my article about Merseburg for the Turner Publications' book Memoirs of the 91st BG in 2002 I included only those memories of which I was sure.

It was only afterwards when I went to the National Archives II and looked through the actual mission files that I had to write an apology with considerable chagrin to admit that some of those things of which I was so sure were, in fact, wrong. I had us leading the low element of the 323rd Squadron (we were flying right wingman for Donohue), our crew chief/top turret "Pop" Griswold as a corporal (he had been promoted to T/Sgt by then), and I "remembered" that both the other aircraft in our element were gone (only Donohue's left wingman was shot down). I did correct the account on our website. It is some comfort that our 91st Historian Emeritus, Hilary "Bud" Evers did tell our 91st BGMA Board in 2004 that his worst sources were often "those who were there." (As an intelligence collector for 15 years in the USAF and a listener to "Law & Order" shows, I should have known that being on the scene does not guarantee accurate memory.) The following account of what probably took place on 2 Nov 44 is primarily based on analysis of the 100 pages (about half of those in the files) that I copied from actual records from the 91st BG that are on file at the National Archives II in Adelphi, Md. (Those of you who were at the 91st BGMA Reunion in the DC area in 2004 had the opportunity to visit the facility.)

The reason that the matter has arisen at this time is because Ray Bowden, the British author, is preparing a book about the WW II missions to Merseburg, the most important German synthetic oil refinery. (His other books include two fine ones about the nose art on 91st BG aircraft and another about the missions to Berlin on which many of us flew; both are available through our 91st BGMA PX.) He has been kind enough to afford us the opportunity to get the matter straight. If you have any facts and/or comments on this article, please contact Ed Gates by e-mail at gainmutual@yahoo.com or snail mail at 13311 16th Ave. Ct. S, Tacoma, WA 98444.

The 2nd of November, 1944, dawned like any normal day for flight crews alerted for a mission at Bassingbourn AB, England, the "Country Club" base of the 8th AF with its brick barracks, "permanent" office buildings (still in use today), four big hangars and solid infrastructure. Some guy woke you up at 0430 so you could go have breakfast

at 0530 with delicious powdered eggs, something resembling French toast, orange marmalade, etc. Some of us dodged the powdered milk - not because of the taste but because if you were going to fly a mission in an unpressurized B-17 at over 25,000 feet you did not need more gaseous food; gas warfare was prohibited by the Geneva Convention.

Keeping Josh Billings warning in mind, it is important when looking at the records to know who did what to whom as well as what we knew when we were making log entries or being debriefed. The role of the Navigator included being the scribe for the crew; he had to note down fighter attacks as gunners called them out, make entries of flak sightings, estimate locations, etc. If we were above clouds hopefully his action and time entries were right, but his accuracy of location depended on dead reckoning. Considering the instruments that we were using, without precise knowledge of the wind at our altitude dead reckoning could be dead wrong. We had no GPI, rudimentary knowledge of upper air activity (never heard of a jet stream), radar that was in development and compasses that were not always perfect. (Anybody who flew into Salt Lake City or Ogden, Utah, in the 1940's and 50's will remember the warnings about deviation of both the navigational "beam" and your own compass.)

Probably not many of the flight crew stopped to think of all the other base personnel who had been up long before. We were aware that the Ground Crew may have been up all night getting the aircraft in the best condition possible for the day's mission. We may have thought about the sheet metal guys who had spent as much time as required to patch holes from a prior mission. Some of my more sensitive contemporaries may have even thought of the men who prepared breakfast, readied the weather forecast, put together the briefing materials, etc., etc. A few years ago I was surprised to see on the "Notification Sheet" (for those who alerted us) over 55 contacts that had to be made that morning.

The telegrams began arriving at Bassingbourn just before midnight on Nov. 1 alerting our headquarters people that Merseburg/Leuna was to be our target and a lot of people went to work. The 91st would fly tail-end Charlie of the seven Combat Wings (CBW) from the 3rd (12 Groups in four CBW) and 1st Divisions (6 Groups in three CBW). Field Order 541 from 1st BD (Bomb Division) laid it out. The interval between Groups was to be 2 minutes (about 8 miles given the forecast wind inbound). Supplement #1 from our 1st CBW Hq. gave us our take off times, check points, etc; the 91st would be 10 minutes behind the leader of the 40th CBW leading the 1st BD. Annex 1 to F.O. 541 sent 11 minutes after midnight told us which fighter groups would provide support including - most important to us - the 352nd who would provide "close" support to the 1st

CBW - both the 398th BG and us. The Intelligence Annex from 1st BD had arrived before midnight telling us what to expect in Enemy Aircraft (E/A) - 150 in the Hanover area and 300 in the Merseburg area. It ended with a truly prophetic observation: "The GAF has had a long rest and this may be the day."

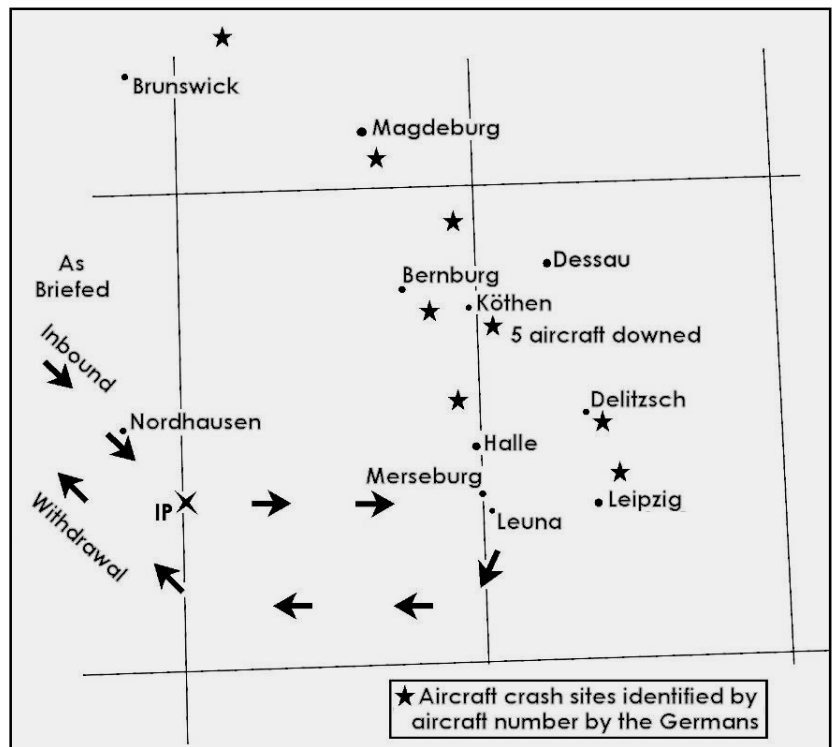
Life had been pretty good in the month of October. It had been the first month since the 91st went into action two years earlier in which we had not lost an aircraft to enemy action. Gen. Patton had taken his tanks racing across France letting Gen. DeGaulle liberate Paris and he was knocking at the Siegfried and (former French) Maginot lines of defenses. Our guys were winning. And the P-51 fighter guys always seemed to be around to protect us.

But for the 91st Bomb Group flying out of Bassingbourn, the 2nd of November would be remembered as the day on which we lost the most aircraft on a mission during the entire 31 months of commitment to the war effort. It would rank as the second highest percentage loss (36%) on any mission in which the 91st BG put more than a dozen aircraft over the target. Merseburg would become the target second only to Berlin in claiming the most aircraft and the most lives from the 91st during the war. Furthermore, it would become a day of historical controversy and, for some, recriminations. Somebody had to be at fault! Right? Who better than the 91st Mission Commander, Lt. Col. Don Sheeler? In looking at the records it appears to be a bum rap - and I regret I did not do the research before he died. Sorry.

Lt.Col. Sheeler was with the 91st from its early days and was by this time Deputy Group Commander. He led the 91st BG on the Anklam mission on 9 Oct 1943 as one of 6 groups of the 1st Div to fly a "diversion" while the main force struck east to Danzig. When he returned he told then 91st C.O., Col. Wurzburg, "Now we have one to match Schweinfurt." (referring to trauma on the 17 August 43 raid which the 91st led; we also led the 14 Oct 43 raid but the 91st only lost one B-17). He was described by one of his contemporaries as a "tall, good-looking boy from South Bend, Indiana." He was certainly imminently familiar with the "neighborhood" risks since the 91st had lost 8 B-17's from 322nd, 324th and 401st at Leipzig on 20 Jul 44 and 6 at Halle all from the 324th on 16 Aug 44. This was no "green" lead pilot. The song in the show "The Music Man" says, "You gotta know the territory," and I think he did. (He was actually left in command for the last month after the war in Europe ended to bring the Group back to the U.S.)

Two errors in the information on file seem to hold the key to what researchers have reported as happening. One is a report sent by the Assistant Group Navigator, Lt. Sulli,

(who was not on the mission) apparently at midnight on 2 Nov 44 in which he gives supposed route coordinates that put us off course to the north inbound to the target bombing 20 miles NE of Merseburg (near Delitzsch); then for the withdrawal of the 91st BG he showed us turning south (as we were briefed to do) which would have taken us over Leipzig (which we certainly were not briefed to do), then turning NW from a point 7 miles SSE of Leipzig and heading toward Brunswick and on to a point between Bremen and Hamburg. (This report is in the 8th AF records which are those which have been used by researchers and appear to be the basis of a map in those records which Ray Bowden sent to me.) There is nothing in the actual files to support the coordinates which show us significantly off course inbound, nor a turn to the south after the target (though the target location is possibly close - rather than hitting the Leuna refinery near Merseburg). Thus the withdrawal route is incorrect.



The second problem is in the "Mission Report" sent by Col. Terry, our C.O., which gives 1247 as the time of the fighter attack beginning on the 91st. Actually, the records seem to indicate 10 minutes later at 1257 - nearly 40 miles difference. Apparently because of that time researchers have concluded that the 91st was attacked by Luftwaffe fighters from unit JG3 who intercepted bombers at 1247, rather than JG4 who struck a different group at 1257. Ray Bowden has provided detailed locations of where the 91st BG aircraft crashed from German records and nearly all of the ten 91st BG planes lost near the target (3 others elsewhere) crashed in the vicinity of Dessau, 30 miles north of Merseburg, which was the area in which JG4 intercepted a bomb group. Frank Farr, navigator on

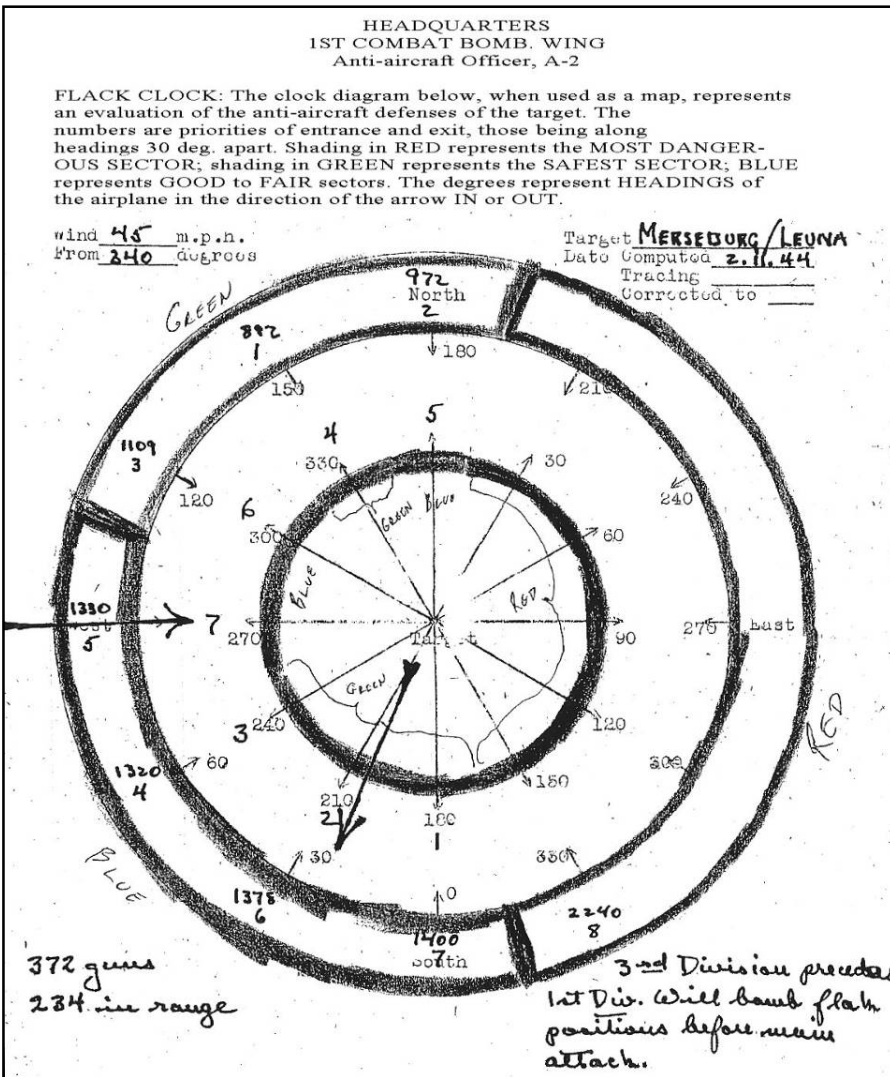
Snow's crew, knows he was taken prisoner near Dessau. These would seem to prove that we made a turn to the left after the target (wherever it was) - not right, and were intercepted by JG4. One Ball Turret gunner described the E/A as "dark, grey green with horizontal white stripes on their tails."

Take off, assembly over the base and arrival at check points along the inbound route appear to have been made 3 to 4 minutes ahead of schedule and reasonably on course. We were in the 1st Combat Wing in which we trailed the 398th Bomb Group and were due over the target at Merseburg/Leuna at 1249. (Ray Bowden reports that the 94th Combat Wing including the 401st Bomb Group and the 457th which preceded us deviated to the northeast on the inbound route ending up at least 40 miles north of Merseburg; we now believe the 457th which lost nine aircraft was attacked by JG3 at 1247 after they had turned south trying to find the bomber stream.) The "Mickey" radar for navigation over clouds in the 323rd PFF (Pathfinder Force) lead ship "blew a tube" when we were still more than an hour from the target. The 91st post-

mission report shows that the 398th "disappeared from sight" when we were 10 minutes from the IP at about 1222. (Ray Bowden's info of subsequent action by them suggests that they deviated to the east as we were inbound to the IP.) Now you have two groups - the 398th and the 91st - flying alone with our fighter escort, 352nd composed of P-51's from the 8th AF, trying to cover both of us. Because of the 2 minute interval planned between groups, the missing two Groups of the 94th CBW and the 398th disappearance, the 91st would have been 6 and 8 minutes behind the 40th CBW. It gets lonesome up there.

We had already lost a 401st B-17 to flak half an hour before, but now things really began to turn badly for the 91st. We turned 5 miles NW of the IP at 1232 because of "congestion" over the IP which was the first groups of the 3rd Division withdrawing from the target area and arriving west of the IP. Given that this put us about 3 miles north of course with a wind forecast over the target (see the Flak Clock) at 45 mph from 340 degrees the 117 degree heading that we flew from the IP should have taken us to the target at Merseburg/Leuna. Unfortunately, after turning

on the bomb run the PFF went out in the lead B-17 in our 401st Squadron and was not working well in the 322nd lead (High Squadron). The wind apparently was from the south - not north - and we ended up over Halle 10 miles north of Merseburg with a dead reckoning bombs away for the 401st Sq and the 323rd dropping on their smoke marker. The 322nd tried to use their PFF but according to the only strike photo in the file bombed at a location identified after the mission by a photo interpreter as "Approx. 5131N - 1225E" probably at 1st BD.



While there is no report in the 100 pages that I copied from the Archives confirming it, many of my compatriots recall that we turned "the wrong way" off the target (wherever it was). Since we were briefed to turn right to the south, presumably those "memories" would suggest that we turned to the north. I "remember" - and note how great that was - that there was a big black cloud off to our right as we were in the target area. A couple of references also appear in reports to clouds causing us to descend 1000 feet just after bombing. By this time our fighter escort had left us - we were later told because they had heard about enemy aircraft reported elsewhere. Now - you are an experienced combat commander with clouds off to the right, out of sight of the bomber stream, Leipzig - a bad place to be - off to the right, the safest outer ring exit according to the Flak Clock was to

the northwest between 285 and 345 degrees course, and the possibility of catching up to the bomber stream if you short cut to the left. What would you do?

Bombs away was at 1243 1/2 for the 401st from 27,000 feet and a bit later for the 323rd and 322nd. If the photo intelligence location was correct for the 322nd bomb strike photo (showing lots of clouds) was right then a turn to the north would have put us precisely where the German fighter reports from JG4 indicated at 1257 when strikes began on us. It is perfectly consistent with the crash sites identified by Ray Bowden's research of the German records.

I believe the actions of the 91st were imminently logical. We know that we went over the "target" (wherever we were) on an easterly heading (110 to 117 degrees) from the individual crew debriefings. We assume that the one available strike photo taken by the "High" squadron (322nd) was correctly identified as "Approx. 5131N, 1225" by photo intelligence. (I assume that it is from that photo that researchers came up with the location of our bomb drop as east of Halle.) We know the lead dropped at 1243 1/2. We know that the 323rd (low Sq) bombed on the Lead (401st) smoke bomb, but the 322nd bombed on their Mickey equipment. We know that the "Scouting force had suggested PFF bombing and had warned all groups of high clouds..." over the Merseburg area. Col. Terry's report says, "High cloud was en-counterred in the target area causing the formation to lose about 1000 feet" after bomb drop and that cloud cover was reported as 10/10ths. Given my "memory" of the cloud bank off to the right and comments that we turned the "wrong way" from our briefed right turn off the target, we can assume that we turned left towards Dessau. We know that the Lead Sq left the target area on a 282 degree heading and the 323rd departed on a 250 degree heading.

However, we know that our aircraft were actually on a heading of about 300 degrees because of the location of the sun at 2pm local (1300 GMT) according to our gunners in their reports of claims of E/A fired upon. We know that the lead ship PFF came back on at 5317N, 0926E (SW of Hamburg) and that Group Commander Sheeler at that point (from his report) "decided to go out over the North Sea rather than lead the Group through more enemy territory." We know the Mission Commander concluded their fluxgate compass was off as much as 35%; we had relied on it after the target when the Mickey radars in the other 2 PFF ships went out of operation. We know all of the remaining 91st aircraft landed at Bassingbourn between 1630 and 1645 except Mullins who lost 2 engines (apparently late) in the fighter attack, came out under the 91st formation and landed at 1717.

If you assume that we came over Halle, that the PI estimate of the High (322nd) Sq bomb pattern was correct

and that the times of E/A intercept were correct, then these are very reasonable track and E/A contact conclusions. It is reasonable to assume the 91st made the proper turn toward the IP and did not overrun. Because of "congestion of groups in the area of the IP" the 91st "turned inside ... also the time interval on the preceding Group was such that it was necessary to gain time." Assuming the 94th CBW was headed for Bernburg and the 398th "disappeared" we would have been about 8 to 10 minutes separated from the 40th CBW. We may have been slightly north of course (10 miles) inbound from the IP area due to unexpected wind in order to go over Halle on a 117 degree heading. If the High Sq bombed where we are told they did and if they were in position to the right of the lead Sq then we would have ended up having completed assembly about half way between the bomb drop 15 miles east of Halle and Dessau at about 1248 or 1250 on a westerly heading. The mission report says, "high clouds at the flying altitude slowed down the rally of the three squadrons" implying that the turn may have been slower than normal which would have pushed us towards Dessau. In order to get back on the left side of the Lead Sq on a 282 degree heading, the 323rd would have needed a heading of about 250 degrees for awhile. An experienced Group commander who knew about our previous losses at Halle and Leipzig would have not been inclined to turn south over Leipzig, especially if there were high clouds there. He also would have wanted to head west as soon as possible to avoid getting into the red rings of the flak clock on the east side of Merseburg. If you plot out the times of the 457th in the Dessau vicinity, assume a turn to the right, an intercept time of 1247 by JG3 is imminently logical. They would have been turning to the south in an arc to the west of us while we turned left to the north.

Debriefing notes show that nearly everybody thought we had successfully bombed the Leuna plant and that there was more concern expressed about guns that had been removed from our aircraft than about the route flown. Each squadron lead aircraft was equipped as a PFF so the ball turret had been replaced by a white dome protecting the radar. In addition 5 B-17's had had either the ball turret or waist guns removed as an experiment to "save on weight and increase performance." The reaction at debriefing in the 323rd Squadron ranged from "Ball turret absence invites attacks from the rear" (Kirkham) to "Put my G .. D .. guns back in the aircraft" (Mullins who lost two engines and came back alone).

If I am right, then a confluence of events - wind plotted the wrong way, congestion at the IP, fighter escort leaving us, faulty PFF and fluxgate equipment and the experiment of removing gunners - all conspired to improve the odds for the Luftwaffe on 2 Nov 44. Some gunners reported seeing the enemy aircraft shadowing us just after the target, so no turn that we made could have improved our chances. Nobody was at fault - certainly not Bud Sheeler.

91st BGMA Board Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Jim Shepherd, Mick Hanou, Ed Gates, Gary Hall, Bob Friedman, Steve Perri and Asay Johnson.

Chino: Mick

- B-17 *Fuddy Duddy* – Mick to check cost of flying a B-17 over to Chino for the day – we might do it.
- Ed suggests contacting Greg Varhall for the possibility of an Air Force fly-over. Mick will do in coordination with Jim. Mick has arranged a P-38 flight.
- Lunches – In and Out Burgers.

RI: Gary

- Feedback given on last RI – good.
- Content on the reunion sufficient for the intro RI on the reunion. More content on the reunion in next issue.
- Gary will place in the RI contact numbers for Ace, Jim, Mick should people have questions.
- Ed - Any feature stories should be run by Steve (historian) particular to the Memphis Belle Assoc reports about the "horrific" losses.

Treasury: Ace

- Good news is that we have \$40,467.32 cash on hand.
- Profit loss statement shows that we lost \$1,320.87 in 2007, not surprising on off-reunion year. Treasury good for 20 years even at that rate.
- Dues are coming in normally, about a 50% response. Ace will send "reach-out" letter.
- Membership comprised of 266 full members, 65 associate members, 259 life members, 148 associate life members and 19 public relations.
- Bad news – onerous burden, got a letter from the IRS, records indicate that you didn't file a return – true. However, your filing requirements may have changed. Annual notice should include (variety of items) – but the bothersome one is – verify your annual gross receipts and your membership status. 501(c) says that we can not have more than 8% of our membership that are not veterans. At least 30% are not veterans. Ace has brought this up over the last 10 years, and it needs to be dealt with; he will pass this on to the subsequent treasurer, but will submit the e-file indicating gross receipts, etc.
- Discussion of pros and cons and possible solutions.
- The reason this is an issue is that unscrupulous people find the old group identification numbers and then use those to launder money. Hence, the IRS is searching to verify status as a legitimate organization.
- A significant amount of income has been in the form of donations. Suggest that donors are mentioned in the RI.

Comments on events: Bob

- Seems there are again too many choices in number of events. (Jim) "If there are not enough attendees we can cancel an event. We will adjust the event schedule accordingly".
- (Ace) Has not received any reunion forms.
- (Mick) suggest you put in the April RI "If you haven't gotten your reservations or haven't sent your forms in, please do so ASAP so we can plan events." Also suggested including another form in case people lost the first one.

Interview on Delta Rebel: Steve.

- Interview on how Delta Rebel got its name. Will take place on 21st February (Katie Savage), uses photos and videotapes.

Logistics: All

- Ray Bowden "Plane Names and Fancy Noses" books. Mick will not be visiting. Jim and Mick to work offline on how to get them here avoiding the VAT and shipping.
- PX brought in \$4,093.75 gross last year. Expenses \$1,842. There are new hats and shirts.
- (Steve) mentioned a book "Shootdown" that is excellent by William Wheeler. (Ace) seconds that it is a good book, then mentioned a number of books that are also good. He has quite an extensive library. Gary might want to contact Ace on what are the good books and a short blurb on them.
- (Ed) Update of Greg Varhall's contact with Disney? Greg Suggested we contact Disney and see if they want to do anything in accordance with our reunion visit such as work they may have done on cartoon, patches and put something together. Greg contacted a classmate of his in the week of January 13th for the second time and is pursuing this. He did establish contact with Dave Smith "Disney's highly respected Chief Archivist" who assigned Robert Tierman to staff Greg's request. Would they come to the banquet, or reunion, or do something on site that day. Greg believes Dave Smith and Robert Tierman will follow through to see if they can turn up something of interest in the archives (perhaps regarding Disney contact with Col. Wray or other officers of the 91st as mentioned in Bechler's manuscript).
- (Ed) will you have more on banquet in next RI – who will be guest speaker. (Jim) working on it. (Ed) number of events – would Jim have any objection to Ed arranging a visit to the Queen Mary since many of our members either/or went over or returned from England on the Queen Mary? (Jim) doesn't know when that might be. Depends on turnout to various events. (Ed) Will contact the Long Beach Visitors' Bureau and Queen Mary and find out information but not formalize yet.
- (Ed) Have you heard anything more on the 70th anniversary at Bassingbourn on June 28th. Only that they are having a ceremony that day. Col Nigel Smith has invited all the former commanders of Bassingbourn to attend. And also a representative of the 91st BGMA. Who might that be? (Ed) Offered to contact Col. Marty Whelan, the 91st SW commander to see if he might be interested in establishing reciprocal contacts with the Bassingbourn CO; if so this might be an opportunity to attend if Lt. Col. Nigel Smith, Bassingbourn CO, is also interested perhaps in coming to Minot AFB's Northern Neighbors Day in June 2009. (Jim) Asked Ed to contact Col. Smith to see if there was any chance they could change the June 28th date of their ceremony so it would not conflict with our Reunion; if it were a week later Mick could attend since he will be going over for the Duxford Air Show and Steve Perri might be interested.
- Chris Murphy will not be coming to our 2008 reunion.
- (Ed) Asked if we had endorsed Larry Smelser as our representative to attend a Heroes Breakfast at Walla Walla, WA on March 19th since he is interested in attending? (Jim) Will do so.
- (Ed) Greg Varhall, as one of the Planning Committee for Reunion 2010 in Wright Patterson AFB, will visit this year,

perhaps at the time of the April 30th Reunion of the 91st Strategic Recon Wing. Believe it is being held in conjunction with an Eighth Air Force reunion at WPAFB. Will get an item in The RI on this to see if any of our other members are interested.

- (Mick) Can Jim send me an outline of the hotel arrangements so that I can determine how I am setting up the Hospitality Suite.

Mike Banta's Web Ring

United States Air Force wireless station Bassingbourn

I am very interested in finding out any information that I can on the Bassingbourn bases Radio Wireless Station.

I can remember it surrounded by a large metal fence on top of Chestnut lane, and the fact that it had a thick blast wall around the outside of it, in fact my father was one of the farm workers that helped knock it down in the early 1970's.

Do you now anyone that might have any information or a picture of it as it would mean a lot to me, as I used to play in the building when I was very young and I have fond memories of it.

Yours Sincerely,

Mr. Colin Matthews
Bassingbourn, England

Colin can be reached via email s.matthews@tesco.net or in care of The Ragged Irregular.

An interesting story of 323rders

I got to thinking of our Tokyo days past, and how at the collapse of the Air Weather Service us older members seemed to get away. Going back to Tokyo, do you remember Dusty Hoffman who ran the Climatology shop? He was my boss and was responsible for me being promoted to Warrant Officer. Time moved on, and we went on different assignments. One day in the 70s I was attending my old WW-2 91st Bomb Group reunion in Memphis and walking across the dance floor where I was stopped by Dusty Hoffman and he says "Hey what are you doing here?" I replied that I belong here. What about you? We hugged each other in surprise and kept us a correspondence, and attended several more 91st reunions functions.

Would you believe we were both in the 91st Bomb Group, 323rd Bomb Sq, and the whole time we worked together back in Tokyo, we never discussed our WW-2 activities.

He was a pilot of a B-17 *Hi Ho Silver*, and I was the same Squadron's Sheet Metal Crew Chief with a crew of 6 to 8 other sheet metal men who repaired the 323rd battle damaged B-17, including his B-17 on several occasions. We spoke to each daily but never exchanged WW-2 experiences and his bomber was struck more than once by enemy fire, had a few conversations about the damages on his ships return.

On our tour with the 1st Weather Wing and worked in the same office, we never spoke our WW-2 experiences. How strange considering our jobs, and we never inquired about his Wings and our ribbons. After our meeting in Memphis, We maintained contact with each other until Dusty died a few years ago. He was a great Boss and friend.

Whitman Hill, 323rd Bomb Sq, Sheet Metal Crew Chief.

Folded Wings (continued from page 16)

☛ **Harold E. Kious 322nd Age 91**

Albuquerque, NM, March 6, 2008

Reported by his son Mike Kious



Harold E. Kious passed away peacefully at home on March 6, 2008. He was born in Kingsburg, California, but his family moved to Fresno following the death of his father and the near-death of his mother from the Spanish flu in 1919.

Following the war, Harold used the G.I. Bill to attend Fresno State College where he majored in accounting. He ran his own accounting business in Fresno until told of a job opportunity in Albuquerque by a good friend, Lin Price, whom he had met while both were prisoners of war in Germany. He was hired and became the city of Albuquerque's first finance director. He formed his own investment banking firm, Kious and Co., in 1971.

His death came just two days past the 65th anniversary of the Hamm mission of March 4, 1943, when the B-17 he was co-piloting, the *Rose O'day*, was shot down and crashed into the Waddenzee near the island of Texel, Holland. In 1987 he was reunited with three of the men who pulled him unconscious from the icy waters of the Waddenzee that day. The people of Texel have never forgotten the sacrifices of the American airmen who eventually liberated them. Harold visited Texel every summer from 1987 until just 3 years ago; they grew very fond of him and were thrilled to learn that some of Harold's ashes will find a resting place on their island.

Folded Wings (continued from page 11)❖ **Charles "Chuck" Galian 323rd Age 86**

Milwaukee, WI, February 23, 2008

Reported by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

He was preceded in death by Connie, his beloved wife of 61 years. He leaves behind his devoted son and daughter-in-law Chuck and Polly Galian and loving daughter Sandra Greuel; grandchildren Christian (Laura Kusumoto) Greuel, Chuck (Wendy) Galian, Adam Greuel, Noel (Todd) Ringe, Troy Greuel; great-grandchildren Samantha Jean Galian and Treyvon and Keshawn Currie; sisters Frances Driscoll, Mabel (Lamar) Johnson, Lila and brother Joseph (Lydia) Galian, Jr.; sister-in-laws Pearl Blanchette, Daphne (Harry) Hope and June (George) Richer. Also preceding him in death were his parents Joseph and Barbara Galian; stepmother Bertha Galian and sisters Anne, Helen and Violet.

During WWII, Chuck served in the US Army Air Force on the ground crew for the 91st Bomb Group of the 323rd Bomb Squadron. As an electrician he repaired B-17 "Flying Fortress" bombers. While stationed in Bassingbourn, England, he met the love of his life Connie at a USO dance. They married in London on Connie's birthday-July 8, 1944.

Chuck was a lifelong Milwaukee resident and worked at WI Bell for over 30 years. He enjoyed designing and constructing model airplanes, creative writing and cooking. Chuck will be remembered by all for his love of joke telling and sharing old stories with family and friends.

❖ **Henry J. McCanney 441st Age 92**

Faribault, MN, February 27, 2008

Reported by the Morris Sun Tribune



Henry Joseph McCanney, the son of Thomas F. and Annie M. (Storck) McCanney, was born on Jan. 8, 1916 in Morris. He attended and graduated from St. Mary's High School in Morris. Henry grew up on Minnesota's western plains and broke horses for a living on ranches in the Dakota's. He worked in a relative's dry cleaning business in Morris until he

joined the service. Henry joined the U.S. Army Air Corps in December 1940 and served until October 1945. As a tech sergeant he taught aviation cadets the theory of flight instrumentation, operation and maintenance. While stationed in England, Henry and a colleague developed and implemented the first nose gun on B-17 Bombers thereby remedying a short coming in the aircraft's design that had caused the aircraft to be taken advantage of during the war. Also while in England, Henry received a citation for developing a method of calibrating drift meters to facilitate keeping bombers on course. Henry was also recognized as a sharp shooter. In his service career, Henry was stationed in Texas, Illinois, Arizona, England and Oklahoma. Very proud to have served his country,

Henry was a member of the 91st Bomb group during WWII and after. After his service career Henry worked for his father in law in Ely until moving to Faribault.

On April 29, 1942 Henry was united in marriage to Lorraine L. Brown at Assumption Church in Morris. They had four children; Thomas, Maureen, James and Maria. Lorraine preceded him in death on Sept. 4, 1998. Always of service to others, Henry was a member of the Knights of Columbus Council 889 in Faribault, served as a past Grand Knight, edited the Knight's Council Newsletter for many years and volunteered at many K.C. activities. He was an active member of NARFE. Henry was a familiar face around town and recognized by many through his years of work at the Model Cleaners (1950 to 1958) and then for many years at the U.S. Postal Service in Faribault, retiring in 1981. He was active in the Faribault community and within the Catholic community often volunteering his time and talents at Immaculate Conception and Bethlehem Academy. Henry enjoyed woodworking, stained glass work, gardening and reading. His favorite activity was socializing, visiting with people and sharing life experiences and stories. Most recently Henry lived at the Regina Assisted Living in Hastings where he made many new friends, reconnected with friends from his past and shared life stories with everyone.

Henry is survived by his four children, Thomas (and Terra), Maureen (and David) Marshall, James and Maria; by eight grandchildren and nieces, nephews and other relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his wife and all of his siblings.

❖ **Vernon H. Pochardt 324th Age 85**

Barrett, MN, March 2, 2008

Reported by the Marshall Independent

He was born May 3, 1922, in Dumont to Berthold and Louise (Reiman) Pochardt.

He was drafted into the U.S. Army Air Force as part of the 91st Bomb Group, 324th Bomb Squadron. Vern flew in 11 combat missions as an airplane armor gunner before being taken prisoner while bombing over Germany. He was held prisoner for one and one-half years before being released from prison camp on April 16, 1945. He was honorably discharged on Oct. 5, 1945, as a staff sergeant and was awarded the EAME Silver Star, Purple Heart, Air Medal and Bronze Cluster.

Survivors include his wife Mae Pochardt of Barrett; sons Roger Rosby of Coon Rapids, and Jim Rosby of Blaine; daughters Gloria McLaughlin of Broomfield, Colo., JoAnn Erickson of Kensington, Janice Tietz of Kensington, Judy Dehne of Holloway, and Audrey Spillman of Kensington; 14 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; five sisters; and four brothers.

☼ **Robert C. "Bob" Dalley 323rd Age 86**

Riverton, WY, January 6, 2008



Reported by Willis "Bill" Schilly
Robert Curtis Dalley was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, on April 21, 1921, to O.M. and Hazel (Curtis) Dalley. His boyhood years were spent in the Driggs, Idaho area. The family moved to Riverton in 1935. He was graduated from Riverton High School with the Class of 1939.

He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II and was a waist gunner on a B-17. Flying out of England, the crew flew missions over Germany. He was discharged from the military in 1946.

He was married in June of 1948 to Bonnie Dietrich in Riverton. Their union was later solemnized in the Idaho Falls Temple. He was an active member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, serving as a High Priest group leader.

Following the war, he purchased a farm in Riverton Valley and was engaged in farming and ranching. He also had water well drilling business and developed wells for a large number of homes in Fremont County. He, along with his brother, Jim Dalley, owned and operated a sheep shearing operation for many years.

Survivors include his wife of 59 years, Bonnie, of Riverton; children, Debbie McClure and husband Richard, Brad Dalley and wife Beverly, all of Riverton; grandsons, Matt Dalley of Missoula Mont., Nate Dalley and wife Mikal of Riverton, Jake and Mike McClure of Laramie; a brother, James Dalley and his wife, Joanne of Riverton; sister, Colleen Fuller and husband Ivan of Provo, Utah; great grandchildren Niko, Chase and Brianna Dalley of Riverton; numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, O.M. and Hazel Dalley; a brother, Lester, and sister, Shelley.

☼ **Robert H. Moore 324th Age 85**

St. Petersburg, FL, December 14, 2007

Reported by Marvin Goldberg
Robert Hutchens Moore was born in Mellette County on May 22, 1922 to Allis and Pearl Moore. He was adopted and raised by his grandparents George and Cora Moore in Wood, South Dakota. He graduated from high school in Wood and was a graduate of Black Hills State College. He completed 34 missions as a B17 pilot during WWII. Mr. Moore was the Registrar and Director of Admissions at the South Dakota State School of Mines and Technology for 39 years. Robert was a member of the Masonic Lodge in White River, South Dakota and he was a Shriner and member of the Provost Unit in Rapid City, South Dakota. He was a charter member of the Canyon Lake Methodist Church in Rapid City, South Dakota and most recently a

member at Oakhurst Methodist Church in Seminole, Florida. He was an avid Black Hills fisherman and hunter. Upon his retirement, he and his wife spent summers in South Dakota and winters in Florida.

He is survived by his wife Phyllis, and son Bob of Seminole, Florida, his daughter Janet (Roger) Roderick of Little Rock, Arkansas, and his granddaughter Rebecca (Robert) Smeets of Bad Wimpfen, Germany. He is also survived by 2 brothers Jack and Larry, and two sisters Betty and Twila, his brothers in law Edward and Warren Lindbloom, sister in law Lois Allan and nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his sister Lois Deck.

☼ **Kenneth E. Breckenridge 982nd Age 84**

Grove City, OH, June 7, 2007

Reported by his wife Marian Breckenridge
Kenneth E. Breckenridge was born, March 6, 1923, to the late Clyde and Merle (Shover) Breckenridge. He was preceded in death by his son Kenneth "Pete" Breckenridge, and sisters Janice Ray and Marian Mitchell. He graduated from Grove City High School, "Class of 1941", was a veteran of WWII, and was retired from the U.S. Postal Service. He is survived by his wife, Marian; daughter and son-in-law, Cheryl and Michael Normoyle; daughter-in-law, Viki Breckenridge; grandchildren, Jerry (Rachel) Normoyle, Tony Normoyle, Michele Kanode; great-grandsons, Jonathan, Nolan, Dalton Normoyle, Zachary Kanode; sister and brother-in-law, Irma and Keith Furniss; brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Stanley and Deanna Ray; brother-in-law, Lee Mitchell; cousins, nieces and nephews.

☼ **Robert A. Smith 401st Age 83**

Bath, NY, January 2, 2008

Reported by his son Rick Tierney
Robert A. Smith, 83, beloved husband, father and grandfather passed away peacefully on January 2, 2008.

Bob was in the Army Air Corps and flew 28½ combat missions as a radio gunner in WWII. He was one of two crewmembers who bailed out of *Times A-Wastin'* when it was shot down over Stendal, Germany. He was a POW and received the Purple Heart, Air Medal and Conspicuous Service Award.

After returning home, he earned his B.A. from SUNY Geneseo. He retired after 35 years with INA/CIGNA as a professional claims adjuster.

His family always came first. He was an avid outdoorsman, golfer and animal lover. He is survived by his wife, Nancy, daughters Amy W. Smith Wilcox and Jill Tierney Fay, son Rick Tierney and their families.

Folded Wings (continued from page 13)☛ **Raymond E. Jones 401st Age 86**

Lake Charles, LA, December 22, 2007

Reported by www.americanpress.com

Raymond E. Jones was the son of Audrey DeGreene Jones Horton of Lake Charles and Clyde W. Jones of Kansas City, Mo. He was raised by his stepfather, Herbert Stanton Horton of Lake Charles, whom he loved dearly.

Eric graduated from LaGrange and eventually married Lucille Bono in 1942, with whom he had two children, Gayle Jones Kash and Raymond E. "Ric" Jones Jr. In 1973, he married Lucille "Mimi" Foster. Both wives preceded him in death this year.

After Eric entered the U.S. Army Air Corps, he graduated from Pilot School in 1943 and was assigned to the 8th Air Force, where he eventually flew as a pilot/copilot with the 91st Bomb Group out of Bassingbourn, England. On his final mission in his B-17, "Winnie, Frank and Joe," he was shot down, wounded, captured and imprisoned as a prisoner of war in Stalag Luft 1 near Barth, Germany. Because of his heroic actions helping his wounded men put on their parachutes and getting them out of the plane as it was going down, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. Some of his many other military honors include the Air Medal with six Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Purple Heart.

After the war, he stayed on active duty in the Air Force for a few years before he settled down in Lake Charles and went to work for Cities Service Oil Company, where he was an operating engineer for P.C.I. and member of the Operating Engineers Local 407. During this time, he also stayed active in the Air Force Reserve. He was commander of the Air Reserve Squadron until 1953 and was the first Air Force Academy liaison officer in the Lake Charles area. He was assigned as a personnel officer at Chennault, served under Gen. Winn and the late Gen. John K. Hester as personnel staff officer, M Day assignee. Eric was also very active in civic matters, having served as vice president of the Young Men's Business Club and was a member of the Organization and Extension Committee of the Bayou Council Boy Scouts of America. He was a former state vice president of the Air Force Association of which he was a chapter member and state representative to three national conventions of the Air Force Association, and was active in the Civil Air Patrol for several years.

Eric and Mimi moved to Toledo Bend, where they stayed active in various civic and religious activities. They spent many years there until they returned to Lake Charles to be near Mimi's family during her last few years.

While with Cities Services, he was sent to Canada to help start up the Syncrude Project in Fort McMurray, Alberta,

Canada, in the Athabathsca Oil Fields, where Eric and Mimi lived for a time.

Eric was also in DeMolay and later attained the status of 32nd degree Master Mason in the Scottish Rites. Until he died, he was an active member of the Military Order of Purple Hearts, American Legion Post 1, VFW and the LaGrange Lunch Bunch.

Survivors include two children, Patricia Gayle Kash and husband Tom of Beaumont, Texas and Raymond E. "Ric" Jones and wife Jeannette of Kingwood, W.Va. He had four grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren, Scott Kash and wife Renee, with children Allison, Rachel and Anna, all of League City, Texas; Sarah Bell and husband Justan, with children Christopher and Susanna, of Fannett, Texas; Stephen Kash and wife Hannah, with children Chandler, Weston, Wyatt and William, also of Fannett; Samuel Kash and wife Courtnie, with children Greyson and Gavin of Beaumont.

Survivors also include Mimi's children, Peggy Trahan and husband Norris, with four children, Stuart Trahan and son Paul of Lake Charles; Missy Canik and husband Rafe, with children Cameron, Colton and Collin of Negreet; Jerald Trahan and children Devyn and Eric of Lake Charles; and Fred L. Foster of Panama City; a sister, Nelvia Jean George and husband Billy, and their children and grandchildren.

☛ **Francis W. "Sock" Rogers 401st Age 81**

Columbus, IN, January 27, 2007

Reported by his son Jeff Rogers



"Sock" Rogers passed on January 27th, 2007 in Columbus, IN. Sock was born August 25, 1925 in Penn Yann, NY. He married Gloria Jean Monje in 1950 and started work in the materials packaging industry. He moved to Georgia in the early 60's, Missouri in the early 70's and finally to Indiana in 1975 where he lived a wonderful life with his family. He

retired in 1993 and went on to consulting and even went back to school at age 78 to continue learning.

He is survived by his wife Gloria, daughter Susan Rogers, sons Scott, Jeff and Lance Rogers, grandchildren David, Kaila and Jonathan Rogers, and twelve step-grandchildren all of Columbus, IN. Sadly missed by all who truly knew him.

Francis served as a radar mechanic and Flight Operations maintenance in the 401st Bomb Squadron from November 1942 to April 1945 on the B17.

☛ **Walter W. Reich 323rd Age 83**

Rio Rancho, NM, November 13, 2007

Reported by www.abqjournal.com

Walter William Reich was born to Ernest Walter Reich and Mary Louise Reich (Kristoff) March 23, 1924 in Yonkers, NY. He was predeceased by his parents; brothers, William and Edward; and sons, Raymond and William. Walter is survived by his wife, Mary Elizabeth (Molly) Reich (Cooley); daughter, Christine; grandchildren, Jeoge, Sean, James, Abigail, and great-grandchildren. He was a World War II Purple Heart Veteran, serving as a B-17 tail-gunner with the E.T.A. 8th Air Force, 91st Bomb Group. After retiring from the New Castle Police Force in Chappaqua, NY, he relocated to Rio Rancho in 1977. Formerly an avid fisherman, a great hardball, softball and basketball player, he continued golfing at Paradise Hills Country Club, as well as membership of American Legion Post 118 and Elks Lodge 2500.

☛ **Irwin Fishman 324th Age 87**

Frederick, MD, December 27, 2007

Reported by www.fredericknewspost.com



Mr. Irwin Fishman, born May 4, 1920 in Brooklyn, was the son of the late Louis and Rose Silverman Fishman. He was preceded in death by two brothers, Henny Fishman, of Brooklyn and Sidney Fishman of Coral Gables, Fla.

He was a graduate of the City College of New York. Mr. Fishman was retired from the Internal Revenue Service after more than 40 years of service. He was also a decorated veteran of first the Army Corps during World War II, and then the Air Force reserve for 26 years, retiring as a major. During World War II, he flew with the 91st bomb group as a bombardier. He was decorated with several honors, including the Distinguished Flying Cross, the European Theater Ribbon, and Presidential Unit Citation. After active service, he joined the Air Force Reserves as a mathematics instructor. He was an active member of the Beth Shalom synagogue in Frederick. He also participated in the congregation's social club. Mr. Fishman enjoyed walking, gardening, fishing, reading, crossword puzzles, watching football and baseball, and spending time with his children and grandchildren.

Surviving in addition to his wife are two sons, Larry Fishman and wife, Lynn and their children Eric and Michelle, all of Derwood and Robert Fishman and wife, Tina and their children, Melissa, Jeremy, Barry, Clementyne, Kristyne and Myriam, all of Damascus; and a daughter, Janice Bridge and husband, Ronald and their children, Joseph, Jonathan and Joshua, all of Gaithersburg. He is also survived by a great-granddaughter, Hannah.

☛ **George B. Gaines Jr. 324th Age 84**

Corpus Christ, TX, March 9, 2005

Reported by Hugh Howard

George Bernard Gaines, Jr. passed away March 9, 2005, surrounded by his family after a long and courageous battle with cancer. He was 84.

George was born in Wichita Falls, Texas on February 1, 1921. While awaiting his draft notice during World War II, he was staying in Lake Charles, Louisiana, where he happened to meet Frances Broussard. They married in 1942 and had a very happy marriage of 55 years before her death in 1997. Shortly after their marriage, George entered the Army Air Corps and flew the B17 in the World War II European Theater. He obtained his BS degree in Engineering at the University of Houston in 1950 on the GI Bill. Frances and George moved to Corpus Christi in 1951 and George began working for Western Steel Company as a salesman. In 54 years there, he worked his way up to President, CEO and majority Stockholder. In addition, he established Southview Corporation and served as its President.

George was a retired Lt. Col. in the United States Air Force. He was Past President of several organizations including Corpus Christi Jaycees, Downtown Lions Club, Buccaneer Commission and the Corpus Christi Knife and Fork Club. He was a Past National Director for the Jaycees and an Advisory Director for Frost Bank. He was a member of the First Baptist Church, Friday Morning Group, Masonic Lodge, Shrine, Board of Directors for Good Will, and Salvation Army Advisory Board. He was a member of the Corpus Christi Rotary Club and the Texas Society of Professional Engineers. For many years, he was a part time rancher and he enjoyed his many hours in the fields with his horses and cows.

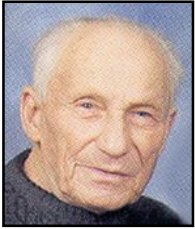
George was a man of his word and he was a generous donor to several community groups. He will be remembered for his integrity, honesty and his soft heart. He loved the lord, his church and the Maco Sunday School class. He was dedicated to his business and he took pride in the many successful achievements of Western Steel Company. He was a gentleman in all respects, a loving and loyal husband, a dedicated and generous father, a supportive grandfather who believed in the abilities of his grandchildren, and he enjoyed his great grandchildren. He also enjoyed and appreciated his many friends and business associates. He will be greatly missed by all.

He is survived by his wife of 6 years, Helen Joiner Dobbs; two daughters, Marilynn (Mike) Yankee and Betsy Sandidge, each of Corpus Christi, Texas; five grandchildren: Marcia (Mike) Fields of Round Rock, Matthew Yankee and Markus Yankee of Corpus Christi, Stacey (Clay) Stuckey and Clint (Nancy) Sandidge of Missouri. He had three great grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

Folded Wings:**☉ Norbert Dryja 322nd Age 88**

Krakow, WI, January 16, 2008

Reported by Marnocha Funeral Home, Pulaski, WI



Norbert Dryja was born February 22, 1919 in Cudahy, the son of the late Harry and Mary (Mowachowski) Dryja. The family moved to a farm in Shawano County when he was a boy. Norb was a U.S. Army-Air Force veteran of WWII. He was a Master Sgt. And a maintenance crew chief for the B17 Bomber, Chief Sly, in the 91st Bomb Group "H," 322nd Bomb Squadron stationed in Bassingbourne, England. Norb was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, a Presidential Distinguished Unit Citation Badge, and the Bronze Star with a medal.

On July 24, 1948 he married Irene A. McDermid at St. Casimir Church in Krakow. He farmed most of his life, and had also worked for Boulanger Construction, Denmark and Better Built Wood Products, Anston. He was a member of the PLAV Post #178, Krakow and the American Legion, Post #337, Pulaski. He was also a member of the Knights of Columbus, Bishop Bona Council #4439, Pulaski. Norb was an avid deer hunter. He enjoyed fishing and the outdoors.

In addition to his wife Irene, he is survived by four sons and three daughters-in-law; Daniel (Barbara) Dryja, Morgan, David (Cindy) Dryja, Krakow, Mark (Diane) Dryja, Hernando, Mississippi, and Greg (special friend Marilyn) Dryja, Krakow; 10 grandchildren; Scott (friend Melissa) Dryja, Angela (Pat) Ignarski, Craig (Carrie) Dryja, and Kristina (Ryan) Klapatch, Damian (friend Liz) Dryja,

Andrew(Jennifer) Dryja and Alison (Jason) Garcia, Christopher Dryja, and Jason(fiancée Asha) Dryja and Kyle Dryja; two great-granddaughters, Autumn and Morgan; two step-grandsons, David and Shawn; one sister-in-law, Irene J. Dryja, Krakow. He was preceded in death by one brother, Henry and one sister, Carole.

☉ Walter Carpenter 324th Age 85

Holbrook, AZ, January 7, 2008

Reported by his wife Addine Carpenter



Walter was born on August 25, 1922 and passed away on Monday, January 7, 2008.

He is survived by his wife Addine.

He graduated from Holbrook High School in 1940, and attended Arizona State Teachers College in Flagstaff. He then attended Greeley State Teachers College in Colorado to finish work on his degree and obtain his teaching credentials. He received his master's degree in 1954.

He enlisted in the U.S Army Air Corps. He flew 35 missions during World War II as a bombardier with the 324th bomb squad stationed at the Royal Air Force Base in Bassingbourn, England. He was honorably discharged in October 1945, then joined the Air Forces Reserves, retiring as a captain in 1953.

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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