

THE RAGGED IRREGULAR



322nd BS



323rd BS



Supporting Units



324th BS



401st BS

Vol. 45 No. 3

91st Bombardment Group (H)

July 2012

91st BG (H) Reunion 2012 – New Orleans

The August 13th deadline is quickly approaching for hotel reservations at the Wyndham Riverfront New Orleans. To reserve your room, please call **504-524-8200** and state you are with the **91st Bomb Group Reunion**. See the reunion application on page 9 for more information.

Anyone attending the reunion will need to complete the application on page 9 and return to Jody Kelly as soon as possible. Jody's address is listed on the application. If you need additional copies of the application, please contact Jim Shepherd or Gary Hall.

Your 2012 91st BGMA officers will be instated at the reunion's membership meeting. Please take the time to vote for the 2012 91st BGMA Officers using the ballot on page 10. We are running short on volunteers, so we have five uncontested candidates for six open positions. Although these candidates are uncontested, it is important to hold a vote as the bylaws state the 91st BGMA needs to have a minimum of four elected officers in order to remain an organization. Your ballot will need to be cut out of the newsletter and returned to Jody Kelly for receipt on or before August 31, 2012. Please note the ballot is on the back of the reunion form so you may return both at the same time.

Jim and Suzi have done an excellent job lining up activities for the group!

Wednesday, we'll step back in time at the Oak Valley Plantation. Referred to as the "Grande Dame of the Great River Road", the plantation sits on the Mississippi River west of New Orleans. Enjoy many breathtaking views on the walking tour, including the quarter mile canopy of giant live oak trees. The oaks are believed to be 300 years old!

From the beaches of Normandy to the sands of Iwo Jima, The National WWII Museum's exhibits are a

blend of personal accounts, artifacts, documents, photographs and original footage. Our group will spend Thursday at the museum which includes a viewing of *Beyond All Boundaries* (see page 2).

Experience the wildlife of the moss-draped bayous up close on Friday morning's swamp tour. Feral pigs, deer, snakes and alligators. Did I mention a cajun lunch is included? You may not want to ask what's in the soup.

A relaxed Friday evening river cruise is in order. Enjoy fine New Orleans cuisine mixed with the sounds of Dixieland Jazz and sights from the Mississippi River.

Saturday morning we'll hold our business meeting and lunch. There is a French Quarter walk and city bus tour available if you are not attending the meeting. We'll end the week with our banquet at the hotel that evening.

As always we'll be able to congregate in the hospitality suite with friends old and new! We hope to see you in New Orleans!

What is your B-17 training worth?

The Experimental Aircraft Association is auctioning a B-17 type rating for a fundraiser. The auction includes 8 hours of dual instruction, 8 hours of ground school and 1½ hours of flight time for a check ride.

Reserve price - \$50,000! If you need more training time in their B-17 *Aluminum Overcast*, it is \$4,500 per flight hour. Just think, the government paid you to train in the big bird. Of course, today the type rating would be used for an air show photo pass and not flying into fighter and flak infested skies.

President's Corner**Jim Shepherd**

Everything is set for the 2012 Reunion for the 91st Bomb Group Memorial Association in New Orleans. Our activities are set for a visit to the Oak Plantation, Swamp Tour, the United States World War II Museum and the river boat ride with dinner and music. It will be exciting to see old friends, the veterans and new members who are ready for this adventure.

This is my last writing for the "Ragged Irregular" and the end of my 3rd term as President of the 91st Bomb Group Memorial Association. It has been exciting to be so involved with planning 3 reunions and 4 Rally Rounds.

There was talk in 1998 to disband the association and join forces with the 8th Air Force Association, but in the last 14 years, the associate members have been actively involved and helped the 91st Bomb Group Memorial Association thrive.

The association will continue as long as the members stay active and we do everything we can to help the veterans in any way we can. All I've done is for the veterans. When making decision for the 91st, I would always call several veterans and ask for their opinion. The "Friends of the 91st" have been very helpful to the 91st for many years, all the way back to the 1960's. Their support with Prop Memorial and placing the Wreath at Madingley every year has been a constant support to the 91st and has always been there for the veterans and the association.

I believe the more people involved the more we get accomplished. The proof is "The Ring" operated by Mike Banta. With over 100 members on the ring, they help with research and have given many families important requested information about their veteran family member.

If you are interested in supporting the 91st BGMA, they need a PX Manager to run the operation. If you are interested, please contact Mick Hanou.

Suzi and I have our room and airline ticket reserved for New Orleans. I've only been there once, but the food is fantastic and the entertainment on Bourbon Street is exciting and sometime very different. Hope to see you there.

Reunion Event - *Beyond All Boundaries*

Beyond All Boundaries is a powerful 4D cinematic experience created for the National WWII museum. The movie covers Pearl Harbor through the Allies victory using archival footage and special effects to tell the story. Phil Hettema, the show's producer and creative director, is the son of 91st Veteran Dave Hettema. Just one of many reasons to attend the September reunion!

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

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Please send Folded Wings information to Jody Kelly.

October R/I submissions must be received by *September 15th*.

91st BG E-mail Ring

b17banta@aol.com

91st on the Web

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

Veeps Views

Mick Hanou

I look forward to seeing you at the 2012 reunion in New Orleans. Not only my veteran friends, but also the "NextGen" folks, who are more in attendance each time. I will be handling the Hospitality Suite again this year and any suggestions are welcomed. (Assistance is always welcome too).

As I mentioned in the last R/I, May/June was very busy for me, with three of my major air events of the year in a short time. First was the Chino air show. One really interesting occurrence was meeting the oldest living female WWII veteran. She is 102 years old and started as a riveter on C-47 Dakotas with Douglas. Later she became a nurse at Normandy, transporting wounded soldiers back to England on C-47s. She shared quite interesting stories about avoiding enemy fire. Then she told of being strafed by the Germans as a young child. I soon realized she meant in WWI (she was born in Romania). Imagine hearing a first-hand account of WWI! What a life she has had.

I am happy to report that the 91st BG display at Chino is still in good condition. While we have not yet added the display cases (waiting to know how much and what material is available), the project is still on their radar. Recently my donation to Planes of Fame generated a company gift-match, which has been directed to the 91st display as well.



91st Veteran Neil Haeckl accompanied by Fred Chopping

The next event was Memorial Day with the Collings Foundation *Nine-O-Nine* and others visiting. The planes always draw a crowd, often many veterans, and it is a great representative of the 91st. We share many facts and stories and the crowd leaves with a rich understanding of what all you veterans did, especially the 91st. At Napa, I met a fellow who noticed the Triangle A on my jacket. Neil Haeckl served with the 91st but had lost touch with the BGMA years ago. He

was very pleased to hear an update and I have subsequently sent him the past few R/Is.

My annual trek to England for the Duxford air show went very well again. England has been having very foul weather; but my California sun gods accompanied me and we had some brilliant days for the air show.



Battle of Britain Memorial Flight's Avro Lancaster

Unfortunately, I did not get to Bassingbourn this time, but did get a briefing from Chris Murphy on the state of the Tower Museum. I confirmed they have secured the 323rd Memorial and the 441st Sub Depot marker to preserve them from people who would steal them for the metal. At the air show itself, I met a number of Bomber Command veterans (British) and was able to gain insight to their trials in the air over Nazi Germany. We also got to see a Lancaster fly over - it is always interesting to me to compare it to the B-17 flying at the show.



Sally B

So, exciting last two months - primarily because of who I got to meet and get "living history" from: The 102-year old female veteran, the 91st BG veteran, and the RAF Bomber veterans. I'm so glad they shared their stories with me. I honor you all.

Regards, Mick.



Dear 91st BGMA Friends,

It's a pleasure to be able to address you all again through our submission to the Ragged Irregular.

Since our last RI submission we have been extremely busy; the main focus of our spring activities was the event we held in May **"SOMEWHERE IN ENGLAND"** was a WW2 themed event which was many months in the planning. The aim of the event was two-fold; to raise money for **"OPERATION RESTORATION"** (more of which I will come onto later), and secondly, to publicise the Tower Museum.

Unfortunately, the event only achieved one of its two goals, namely to raise the public profile of the Museum. The costs for staging such events are high; the Museum broke even on this event, but did not raise the anticipated funds. The event itself was hailed by all those who attended as an exceptionally well put together event, with great attention to detail; indeed many of our exhibitors commented how other, more well established shows, could learn a thing or two from how this event was organised. Sadly events like this, rely heavily on public attendance and with so much choice of so many competing events being staged on any given weekend during the summer months, the hoped for numbers to break into profit, did not materialise.



The Ops 39-45 RAF "boys" during the act of remembrance and the playing of Taps



England's war-time Prime Minister "Sir Winston Churchill"



The Highland Pipes and Drums play "Amazing Grace" during the Service of Remembrance

Soon after the May event, the Tower Museum was again visited by the Greatest Generations Foundation from the USA; the Foundation's main goal is to bring veterans back to their former war-time areas of service, and we were very pleased to see and welcome back to Bassingbourn, Mr Conrad Lohoefer amongst the group. Conrad last visited Bassingbourn, with one of Paul Chryst's tours back in 2002. On the day that the Foundation visited, Conrad was surprised with a birthday cake celebrating his 88th birthday on that day.

Conrad Lohoefer (3rd from left) laying floral tribute at the 441st Sub Depot memorial marker in its new location in the grounds of the Tower





Conrad Lohoefer; at the commemorative parachute drop 03rd June 2012 La Fiere Bridge, Normandy

The Foundation then moved onto Normandy, France for the D-Day commemorations, and by coincidence Amy and I were making one of our many annual trips to Normandy at the same time; so we were able to meet up with the Foundation, and Conrad on Sunday 03rd June for the mass parachute drop at La Fiere Bridge – the scene of fierce fighting on D-Day and beyond, by the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division.

During our recent tour of Normandy, we again visited the cemetery at Omaha Beach and paid our respects to 91st BG crew who are buried there.

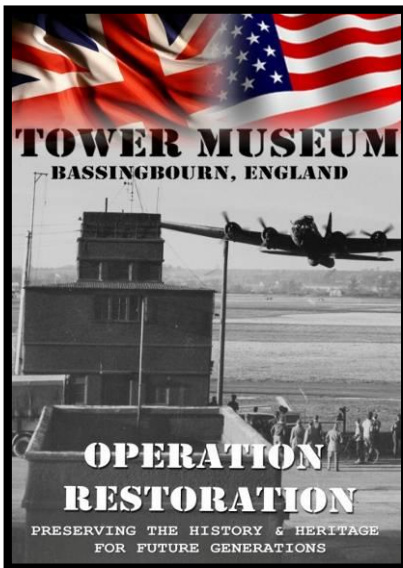


Omaha Beach Cemetery, Normandy



Chris with Sgt. Major (Rtd.) Ryan, who on D-Day was a Private soldier - the original "Private Ryan" - who landed on Omaha Beach

BGMA members may recall from earlier issues of the RI that in May – June of last year, 91st veterans and family members joined us on a tour of the UK and Normandy. If any BGMA members are interested in a similar tour in 2013, we would be more than happy to arrange this. Please contact us at towermuseum.121@btinternet.com



In regards to "OPERATION RESTORATION" (mentioned above) and having now secured the long-term tenure of the Museum, the campaign to raise the required funds to fully restore the Control Tower back to her former war-time condition has been launched. A fundraising information pack is available from the Museum which contains the full details of this project, the funds needed, and how it will be spent. But in brief, the building is now in a very poor state and to continue the valuable remembrance and educational work of the Museum, the building needs a full restoration. If you would like further information and are interested in supporting this vitally important project, please contact the Museum at the following email address: towermuseum.121@btinternet.com

Over the last several months we have been working closely with the 91st BGMA Board Members, and are happy to report that two of the 91st BG memorials, the 401st Sub Depot marker and the 323rd BS Plaque have been relocated from their former locations and re-sited in the grounds in the shadow of the Tower. The decision to move these was based on the fact that they were vulnerable to metal thieves in their former locations. (The UK is and has been suffering a large amount of thefts of metal work from war memorials). We have purchased a new tree which has been planted next to the 441st Sub Depot marker.

441st Sub Depot memorial in its former location



441st Sub Depot memorial in its new location – refurbished and carefully cleaned and set next to new memorial tree

In our quest to make the grounds in which the Tower sits in, a quiet place for reflection, we have decided that it would be a nice idea to have memorial benches located within the grounds around the Tower. We are hoping that members of the BGMA, families or friends may wish to purchase a bench, which can be inscribed with a personal message for all to see. This will give visitors to the Museum the opportunity to sit in quiet contemplation and to think about what happened here and the price paid by so many, at this site, during the War years. If this project is of interest to you, please contact the Museum at the following email address: towermuseum.121@btinternet.com

The Team at the Tower are very busy; we continue to receive good numbers of visitors on our open days and on our evening Twilight Tours which are run during the summer months. We have much work ahead of us, but you can all be assured of our continued dedication to **“KEEPING THE MEMORY ALIVE FOR THOSE WHO COME AFTER”**.

If you want to keep up with what's happening at the Tower Museum please visit our website at www.towermuseumbassingbourn.co.uk or follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/pages/Tower-Museum-Bassingbourn/190452534310694

Until next time..... Keep safe and take care,

Chris

Chris Murphy
Director – Tower Museum Bassingbourn



Memorial Day Service 28th May 2012 American Military Cemetery

I have often started my report by commenting about the weather, and I make no apologies for doing so again. Over the many years I have been going to the Memorial Service I find it hard to remember a day when the weather was so good. In fact it reminded me of the weather I experienced when I was working at Hughes, in El Segundo on the Intelsat V project. Clear blue skies and temperature around 27° c (81° f).

Arriving at the Cemetery, I checked to see if the 91st BG(H) Memorial Association wreath was in place behind the Chapel, it was. I then looked for programme and I was unable to find one. I saw a member of the Museum staff and he told me there was a shortage. I eventually found one in the Cemeteries reception. It was only an A4 sheet folded in half to give four pages. A list of those laying wreaths was absent. I made contact with Mr Mrs David Crow and Squadron Leader Ray Leach and because of the seating arrangements Margaret and I found ourselves at the rear. Did not matter.

The Master of Ceremonies was Lt Col David Harris, 100th Security Forces Squadron, RAF Mildenhall. The band of the United States Air Force in Europe played the British and American National Anthem's. Mr Michael Green, Superintendent, Cambridge American Cemetery then gave a short address.

The Invocation was given by Major Kristina Coppinger, 100th Air Refueling Wing, RAF Mildenhall.

Next was Mr. Hugh Duberly, Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire who gave an excellent speech. He remarked that he had been recently visiting junior school children in Alconbury and they had drawn pictures of the Queen and the Jubilee Celebrations that will be taking place over the weekend of the 2nd through to 5th June. He then stated that the Jubilee Celebrations would not be taking place had the Americans Service men and women had not come over to the United Kingdom to help us beat tyranny during World War II. That is very true.

Rear Admiral Mark C. Montgomery, Deputy Director of Plans, Policy and Strategy, US European Command was our next speaker. With the greatest respect to the Admiral may I say that it is always wise to check facts with the Cemetery staff regarding personnel who are either buried there or have their names on the Wall of the Missing. Mr Green then enlightened the congregation with the history of the Cemetery.

That moment I always enjoy the Recognition of the Veterans and was pleasing to see them still coming, few in numbers but still there.

On marched the wreath bearers and it is most impressive sight of seeing over one hundred American service personnel arriving on to the Wall of the Missing all carrying wreaths. Then the Moment of Silence.

Squadron Leader (Ret'd) Ray. Leach, MBE, laid the Association wreath. Ray did mention how heavy the

wreath was. It is quite heavy while one is waiting for all the wreath bearers march off. The Fly-By Tributes was led by a Lockheed MC-130H from the 352nd Special Operations Group, followed by a Boeing KC-135R from 100th Air refueling Wing, RAF Mildenhall. Four F-15C from the 48th Fighter Wing RAF Lakenheath preformed the Missing Man Formation.

Later we heard voices over the public address system of Ellinor Sallingboe, Chairman of the Trustee, the B-17 Charitable Trust, the owners of the only flyable Boeing B-17 in Europe informing us the due to financial constraints the Service organisers were unable to afford a Fly-By by the B-17. So the Trustees and its members had financed the Fly-By which was greatly appreciated by those present.

I ought to mention the Memorial Service is normally held on one of our Bank Holidays, but because of the Jubilee Celebrations this coming weekend the Bank holiday was

transferred to the weekend. So this day was a normal working day, but that did not stop people coming because I did not notice any drop in attendance.

It takes quite a while to walk down the Wall of the Missing and reading all the floral tributes, from the single rose, a bunch of flowers, a photograph of a loved one to the large wreaths laid by military and civilian dignitaries.

Finally I must mention the gentleman who wore a red forage hat with the words embroidered on "Commandant, London, England." A red blazer and black trousers. I was unable to see the front of his outfit as he moved, but it was impressive.

Now is this attire normal practice, as I have never seen this before?

Kind regards,

Vince Hemmings.

Operation 91st Bomb Group Yearbook



James McAvoy, KIA 3 Nov 43; James McIlwain, POW; Steve Perry, completed combat tour; Joe Harlick, Photographer

"The characters look as if they were lifted out of a Norman Rockwell lineup." Thus did critic Hal Hinson scoff at the depiction of young American air crews in the 1989 movie *Memphis Belle*.

Yet, look at any handful of the portraits from World War II, and you see fine young men, shining in their dress uniforms, or dauntless in their battle gear.

The 91st Bomb Group Memorial Association would like to collect and preserve these portraits of 91st Bomb Group personnel in an on-line "91st Bomb Group Yearbook."

Among the many obvious benefits to a 91st BG Yearbook:

- 1) Such a collection would provide a database for researchers, now and in the future, and help to preserve and expand the record of the 91st.
- 2) Those who adopt the graves of our fallen comrades could search for photographs of the man whose memory they honor.

3) It might be possible to identify more of the men in our photograph collections.

How to contribute:

If you are willing to add a portrait to the 'Yearbook' database, contact historian Janet Larocco by email: fauno-aventi@usa.net, or any member of the 91st BG Board. If you cannot scan and send the portrait in electronic format (jpeg or similar), your hard-copy picture can be scanned and returned to you. Portrait donations would also be welcome at the 91st BG Reunion in September.

Please note: The photos remain the property of the donors, and will be used on the site with their gracious permission.

Let's roll on this exciting and valuable project!



Two old fliers – 401st co-pilot Harold Johnson with *Nine-O-Nine* during the Wings of Freedom Tour Stop at Bowerman Airport in Hoquiam, WA. Photo by Bob Kegel.

Wings of Freedom Tour Schedule

7/20 - 7/23	Minneapolis, MN Anoka County-Blaine Airport
7/23 - 7/25	La Crosse, WI La Crosse Municipal Airport
7/25 - 7/27	Waukegan, IL Waukegan Regional Airport
7/27 - 7/30	Chicago, IL Chicago Executive Airport
7/30 - 8/1	Valparaiso, IN Porter County Municipal Airport
8/1 - 8/3	Terre Haute, IN Terre Haute Intl Airport
8/3 - 8/6	Evansville, IN Evansville Regional Airport
8/6 - 8/8	Jeffersonville, IN Clark Regional Airport
8/10 - 8/13	Jamestown, NY Chautauqua County/Jamestown Airport
8/17 - 8/22	White Plains, NY Westchester County Airport
8/24 - 8/27	Belmar, NJ Monmouth Executive Airport
8/29 - 8/31	Cape May, NJ Cape May County Airport
8/31 - 9/3	Farmingdale, NY Republic Field

First Quarter Donations Top \$8,500!

Gary Hall	3,000.00
US Bank donation match	3,000.00
Gayle S Hoffman	1,000.00
In Memory of Armando and Norma Sinibaldi	
Mildred Guzek	800.00
In Memory of Lt. Col. Lloyd Guzek 324th	
Robert J Goon	200.00
Charles F Egender	100.00
Sune Engelbrektsen	100.00
Diane McCombs	100.00
Donald R Wilson	100.00
Myron Cohen	50.60
To match Warren W Schulthies Donation	
Loraine Murphy	25.00
In Memory of Richard E. Murphy 323rd (909)	
Kenneth S Smith	25.00
Tom Fratz	20.00
George M Kesselring	15.00
Otis W Farwell	10.00
Matthew G McCabe	10.00
Viola Mitchell	10.00
Richard O Pridemore	10.00
Sharon H White	3.00

91st Bomb Group Memorial Association - New Orleans Louisiana Reunion 11 Sept to 16, 2012

Registration Fee (for each person) Adult/Child _____ x \$35.00 = _____
Registration starts 2:00 PM 11 Sept in the Hotel Lobby.
(Includes \$10 gift certificate for 91st BGMA PX during reunion (no cash back).

Activity: Wednesday 12 Sept 9:00 am to 1:00 pm - Oak Alley Plantation Tour, lunch and Bus included.
Adult/Child _____ x \$72.00 = _____

Activity: Thursday 13 Sept 9:00 am to 4:00 pm - World War 2 Museum - bus, admission, lunch and movie, *Beyond All Boundaries*.
Adult/Child _____ x \$46.00 = _____
Senior _____ x \$40.00 = _____
WWII Veterans _____ x \$24.00 = _____

Activity: Friday 14 Sept 9:00 am to 1:00 pm - Swamp Tour - lunch included.
Adult/Child _____ x \$59.50 = _____

Activity: Friday 14 Sept 5:30 pm to 9:00 pm - Dinner cruise: Dixieland Jazz.
Adult/Child _____ x \$63.00 = _____

Activity: Saturday 15 Sept 9:00 am to 11:00 am - Business Meeting Lunch.
Meeting Attendees _____ x \$20.00 = _____

Activity: Saturday 15 Sept 9:00 am to 11:00 am - French Quarter walk and city bus tour with lunch at Bubba Gump Shrimp (for those not attending the business meeting).
Adult/Child _____ x \$60.00 = _____

Banquet: Saturday 15 Sept 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm - at Hotel.
Chicken Breast Adult/Child _____ x \$50.00 = _____
Filet Mignon Adult/Child _____ x \$55.00 = _____

***** Number of Attendees and Total Paid: # _____ \$ _____

Send application to the Treasurer, **Jody Kelly, 3829 Sunset Lane, Oxnard, CA 93035**
Make check payable to: **91st BGMA**

Hotel reservations at the **Wyndham Riverfront New Orleans**.
701 Convention Center Blvd, New Orleans, LA 70130
Phone **504-524-8200** - Reservation request must state 91st Bomb Group Reunion
The rate is \$99.00 (\$109.00 Fri & Sat) per night.
Reservations must be made before 13 August 2012

91st Bomb Group Memorial Association – Year 2012 – Election of Officers

Full members in good standing are eligible to vote. Although this appears to be a formality, **it is important that a vote be cast.** The 91st Bomb Group Bylaws state it is necessary to have at least four elected officers for the 91st BGMA to remain an organization. **Please indicate a positive vote by circling a candidate's name.** Return by mail to: **Jody Kelly, 3829 Sunset Lane, Oxnard, CA 93035**

Ballots must be received by August 31, 2012 in order to be valid.

There shall be no officer candidate nominations proposed at the General Membership Meeting in New Orleans 2012. Send any write in Nominations to: **Larry Ruth, 2316 Smith Hill Rd, Walworth, NY 14568**

PRESIDENT

Mick Hanou Mick has a history of being an air enthusiast, mostly exhibited by helping at air shows with marshalling aircraft and security. Since 1993, he has organized the annual visit of the Collings Foundation 909 to his home town. George Birdsong sparked his interest in the 91st BG; he joined as an Associate and became a Life Member in 1997. Since 1996 he has annually visited Tower Museum Bassingbourn and has had a good relationship with the various curators. He has helped with myriad tasks at the past six 91st BGMA reunions, notably Hospitality Suite, has been a Full Member since 2003, and served as 2nd and 1st VP since 2006. He does this to honor all 91st veterans for liberating his parents from Hitler-occupied Europe for "If it wasn't for you, I wouldn't be here."

1ST VICE PRESIDENT

Jody Kelly Jody was born in the Base Hospital at McClellan AFB in 1952. Her father Robert "Bob" Dickson was a pilot in the 91st Bomb Group (H) and she is an Associate Life Member of the 91st BGMA. Jody holds a BS Degree in Business Administration and an AA Degree in Managerial Accounting. Over the past 35 years, Jody has worked in the accounting field as Controller, Director of Finance, etc. for companies in the Southern California and Arizona area. In 2006 she started her own business Channel Islands Accounting Services.

Jody and her dad have attended all reunions and rally rounds since 2004 until his death in 2010. "I enjoy being a part of the camaraderie and friendship that goes on at these meetings." In 2008, Jody took over the Secretary/Treasurer position from Ace Johnson.

2ND VICE PRESIDENT

Tom Freer Tom is the son of Donald Freer, 322nd Sq. Pilot of *Easy Does It* – shot down December 5, 1944 and subsequently POW at Stalag Luft I, Barth, Germany. He served as the Nomination Chairman in the 2010 91st BGMA elections and worked closely with Ed Gates and Jim Shepherd on the 2010 Dayton Reunion planning. Tom wishes to assist the living veterans of the 91st Bomb Group as well as honor those who have passed.

SECRETARY / TREASURER

Currently Open – If you are interested in helping out the 91st BGMA with this important position, please contact Larry Ruth at the address above.

HISTORIAN

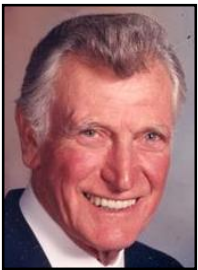
Janet Larocco Janet has served as the 91st BGMA Historian for the past two years. Her impassioned interest in the European Air War has been an asset to the group. Janet's connection to the 91st is her father James McIlwain. James' plane was shot down and crashed into the North Sea November 3, 1944. He bailed out, was rescued by a German boat and became a Prisoner of War.

EDITOR "RAGGED IRREGULAR"

Gary Hall Gary is the grandson of 401st Sq. ball turret gunner Edgar Harrell, who was killed in action April 8, 1945. He is the current editor of the Ragged Irregular. Gary views the position as a way to help keep the history of the 91st Bomb Group alive and honor the memory of his grandfather.

Folded Wings (continued from page 12)✧ **James P Lutz 401st Age 91**

Brandon, FL, February 8, 2012



Jim served his country for over 23 years as a pilot in the United States Air Force, retiring as a Lt. Colonel. He was a POW during World War II and awarded the Purple Heart.

He is survived by his wife, Mona; daughter, Liza Lutz; stepson, William Thomas Nelson; step-daughter, Carolyn Sue Nelson; and two step-grandchildren.

✧ **Robert R Case 322nd Age 91**

Hot Springs Village, AR, April 23, 2012

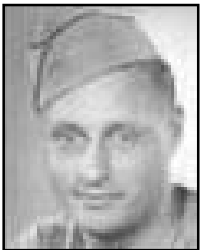
Reported by Howard Mager

Robert joined the Army Air Force in 1942, serving as a bombardier. He was shot down over Germany and held as a prisoner of War for 18 months at Barth. He was awarded the Air Medal and Purple Heart.

Robert was preceded in death by his loving wife of 54 years, Elizabeth; and son Robert R. Case (Ridge) Jr. He is survived by Evelyn, his wife of twelve years; daughters; Cathy (Robert Rodweller) Case; Elizabeth Jane Berault; daughter-n-law Barbara Case; six grandchildren; and three great grandchildren.

✧ **John B "Bert" Reash 322nd Age 91**

Inman, SC, January 3, 2012



Bert was one of the original crew members of *Nine-O-Nine*. He completed 35 missions as flight engineer / top turret gunner and flew on one of the first raids to Berlin. Reash served in the Army Corp from 1942 to 1945, received the Distinguished Flying Cross, 12 air medals and achieved the rank of

Senior Master Sergeant.

✧ **Robert J Grabowski 322nd Age 88**

Ozark, AR, March 25, 2012

Reported by his nephew Robert McLain

Robert was a waist gunner on 1/Lt. Basil Hackleman's crew. Their first eleven missions were flown on *Nine-O-Nine*. Robert was able to recognize his grandfather's hometown in Poland while returning from a mission to Posen at 18,000 feet.

✧ **Joseph Vukovich 322nd Age 85**

Medford, OR, August 31, 2010

Joe served his country in the Army Air Corps as a B-17 pilot. His plane was shot down over occupied France where he was found and hidden by the French underground until he was rescued by advancing U.S. troops. This is chronicled in the book, *Their Deeds of Valor*. Joe was awarded the Purple Heart, the distinguished Air Medal and belonged to the Air Forces Escape and Evasion Society.

Joe is survived by his wife, Georgia.

✧ **Wallace J Harpster 322nd Age 88**

Ormond Beach, FL, March 5, 2012

Reported by his daughter Sally Depra



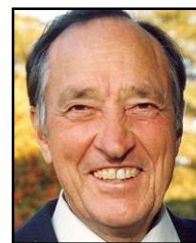
Wally served his country as a pilot aboard the B-17 *Madame Shoo-Shoo*. He retired from the Air Force Reserves at the rank of Major. He began his career as a stockbroker with Thomson & McKinnon on Broadway Ave., in Daytona Beach, Florida, marking the boards, and retired as a Vice President, after a successful 40 year career.

He is survived by his loving wife of 65 years, Joanne; daughter, Sally (Mel) Depra, and son, David Harpster (Liz Incarbone); and 2 granddaughters.

✧ **Anthony W Theis 323rd Age 96**

Idaho Falls, ID, May 13, 2012

Reported by his son Larry



Tony joined the Army Air Corps in March 1942, piloting bombers over European. He completed 35 missions over Germany, including bombing Berlin. After the war, Tony went into business with his father engineering and installing commercial refrigeration. He also furthered his passion for flying by providing private instruction to students as well as recreational flying in his Luscombe and, later, Mooney.

He is survived by his wife of 70 years, Helen; son, Larry; daughter, Linda (Robert Caliva); and 2 grandchildren.

THE RAGGED IRREGULAR is published quarterly in January, April, July and October. The purpose of the newsletter is to keep alive the Spirit of the 91st Bomb Group (H) and to maintain the fellowship of those who fought together in World War II from AF Station 121 in Bassingbourn, England from 1942-1945. Editor Gary Hall

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✪ **Francis J Toccalino 324th Age 86**

Carmichael, CA, April 17, 2012

Reported by his daughter Clare Fletcher

Fran was a proud veteran of WWII, serving in the Army Air Corp in the European Theatre.

Beloved husband of 55 years to Milly. Loving father of Clare and Joseph.

✪ **George W Parks 324th Age 98**

Vallejo, CA, May 18, 2012

Reported by Vince Hemmings



George served in the Navy, Army and Air Force for a total of 25 years. He retired from the Air Force in 1957, and served as a Deputy Sheriff for 18 years.

George's wife of 57 years, Marian, preceded him in death. He is survived by his daughter, Marian

Peled; son, Bill (Nora); one grandson; and four great-grandchildren.

✪ **Bruce D Pardue 324th Age 89**

Carlsbad, NM, June 9, 2012

Reported by his son Larry



Bruce enlisted in the Army Air Force in 1942, flying 35 missions as a bombardier. He received the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross. His last assignment was with the 2619th AAF in Carlsbad as a ground school instructor teaching navigation and bombing techniques to U.S. and Chinese cadets and officers. He witnessed the flash of the first atomic bomb test while commuting to Carlsbad.

Bruce is survived by his wife of 69 years, Hazel; son, Jerald (Debby) Pardue; daughter, Kathryn (Marvin) Van Soest; son, Larry Pardue; daughter, Suzanne (Edward) Boerio; son-in-law, Howard Ours; 10 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.