

# The Pagel Family Times

Volume 19

May 2015

## PAGEL FAMILY WWII CASUALTIES

On this eightieth anniversary of the close of World War II, we remember our family's loved ones who gave their lives during the war.

### Joseph "Stanley" Smith

2nd Lt. Joseph Stanley Smith was killed in a training mission on the morning of April 29, 1942 when his bomber and pursuit plane collided in midair about nine miles west of Orlando, Florida. Smith's plane fell into an orange grove and was consumed by flames. He was a member of the 29th Bomb Group and was twenty-three years old.

Stanley was born near Yoakum on April 30, 1918 to Joseph Finlater Smith, a ginner, and Hilda A. Buesing. He had an older sister, Josephine "Earlene", and a younger brother, James, who was known as Tommy. When he was young, his maternal grandparents also lived in their household.

Following a memorial service in Yoakum, Smith's parents left for Florida to get their sons belongings and to view the crash site. There is a memorial for Lt. Joseph Stanley Smith, Pilot, USAAF, next to Joe and Hilda Smith in St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery at Yoakum. The remains of the six soldiers were cremated and there is another memorial for him in the National Cemetery at Marietta, Georgia.

### Charles A. Ragsdale



Staff Sergeant Charles A. Ragsdale died when his plane collided with another near Munich, Germany on September 12, 1944. He was a

twenty-year-old tail gunner with the 98th Bomb Group.

Charles was born on June 7, 1924, the son of Robert Dexter Ragsdale and Augusta (Gussie) Appelt. Although Ragsdale was a rancher, he had built a home in one of the finest residential sections of San Antonio. Charles grew up with a brother, James, who was eleven years older, and a sister, Amele.

Ragsdale graduated from Alamo Heights High School, where he was a member of the football squad. He attended Texas A&M prior to his entry in the air corps in 1943. His father died shortly after he enlisted. He had only been overseas about one month at Lecce, Italy, but had completed eight missions and had been awarded the Air Medal.

Charles was on a mission to bomb an engine factory near Munich when his plane, a B-24J, was involved in a mid-air collision with another aircraft of the

345th Squadron, 98th Bombardment Group. The captain of a third aircraft in their formation had just been heard saying he had feathered an engine and was turning back. A chain of events led to

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## 2015 PAGEL FAMILY REUNION

**The Hallettsville cousins invite you to join them  
on Saturday, July 11<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. at  
the First United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall**

The church is on the corner of East 4th (Hwy 90A) & S. Dowling Streets in Hallettsville (See map on reverse side.)

Our catered lunch will include dessert and is \$12.50 per plate for adults, free for children under 12. Please r.s.v.p. to Bob Zumwalt by Friday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>. Please return the enclosed form along with your check. If you get in a bind at the last moment, you may phone (361) 798-2786 or e-mail [r\\_zumwalt@sbcglobal.net](mailto:r_zumwalt@sbcglobal.net) and pay at the reunion.

The beautiful new Lavaca Historical Museum at 1205 N. Texana (Hwy 77) will be open free of charge just for us from 10 a.m. to Noon.

At the Fellowship Hall, we'll have lots of family heritage displays and a scanner on hand if you'd like to share your old photos or memorabilia.

Please consider bringing something interesting for our silent auction.

Bring the children and teens! Besides our usual balloons, the church has a playground and we will set up a video game area.

We look forward to seeing everyone!

## IN REMEMBRANCE

This issue of *The Pagel Family Times* is dedicated to the memory of those who have passed away since last year's reunion:

Edna Kersten Altmann  
Doris Ehlinger Anderson  
John Douglas Defibaugh  
John Arthur Greer  
Leroy Rugen Johnston  
James Charles Massey  
Jeanne Anne Ward

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several of the planes being out of position and the right wing tip of Ragsdale's airplane struck the fuselage of another before going into a spin. The assistant engineer and the co-pilot were thrown from the plane and parachuted to safety, but the rest perished. After the war, in August 1945, the pilot's brother investigated the crash site to learn what became of the victims. A German farmer at Gunskofen near Landshut stated that the pilot made a last attempt to straighten the plane and, in doing so, had pulled the plane just over the top of his home's roof, for which he was grateful. The plane fell about 1/2 mile from a church. The local priest stated he had buried the airmen in a nearby cemetery and that several people of the community came for the services. The priest had planted flowers on the graves and a farmer had carved a cross with their names inscribed.

Charles was reinterred with military honors in San Antonio's Sunset Memorial Park on July 25, 1950.

## Carl Frederick Pagel



Capt.

Carl F. Pagel was a twenty-five-year-old navigator on a B-24 Liberator bomber when he was killed in action during a raid over the Bonins Islands in the South Pacific on September 25, 1944.

Carl was born to Charles Friedrich and Hilda (Wangemann) Pagel in San Antonio on June 13, 1919. The Pagels had lost their first child, fifteen-month-old

This issue of *The Pagel Family Times* was edited by Rox Ann Johnson, historian of the Pagel Family Reunion, who takes full responsibility for its content. Comments and questions may be directed to her at 6907 East State Hwy 159, Fayetteville, TX 78940, (979) 249-3236, e-mail roxannjohnson@me.com. Please notify us of family births, deaths, and marriages.

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Charles Frederick Pagel, Jr., to pneumonia and dysentery just ten months earlier and gave their second son a very similar name. A third son born in 1923, William Reynolds, died when he was four and one-half months old. So Carl grew up with two sisters, Hilda, and Elfrieda "Fifi". In 1937 he graduated from Hallettsville High School, where he had lettered in football, and entered the University of Texas. He lacked only six weeks of receiving a Business Administration degree when he was called into service.

He entered the Air Corps on October 21, 1941. He received his wings and was an Air Corps instructor in Navigation until he volunteered for overseas duty. On May 23, 1944, he was sent to Hickam Field in the Hawaiian Islands. He took part in raids on Marshal Island, Truk Island, Saipan, and other South Pacific islands. He was in the 27th Bomb Squadron, 30th Bomb Group. His parents received word of his death on October 17.

An obituary stated that he was Lavaca County's highest ranking officer to die in action. He was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart, Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal and an Oak leaf Cluster to the Air Medal. He was reinterred at Mission Burial Park in San Antonio in June 1948.

## Charles Howard "Sam" Pagel

Sgt. Charles Howard Pagel died in the Southwest Pacific on March 23, 1945.

## Like Us on Facebook

We launched a new Facebook page, The Pagel Family in Texas, last March. Check it out to see the latest family news, plus photos—both old and new.

He was a member of the 19th Infantry Regiment, 24th "Victory" Division.

Charles was born on January 22, 1921 in Shiner, shortly before the family moved to Schulenburg where his father was foreman for Pagel Electric and Ice Co. there. He was the fourth of six children born to Carl "Herman" and Dorothy "Donie" Addicks. He had an older brother, Elo, and three sisters, Marie, Ruby Ruth, and Amye. The Pagels had lost an infant daughter in 1917. The Pagels later bought a farm near Shiner and Charles worked on it once he was out of school.

He enlisted in the Army on October 23, 1942. One obituary stated that he was in the service only about four weeks before being sent overseas and that his parents had never seen him in uniform. He was stationed in Hawaii and Australia and participated in campaigns in New Guinea and Leyte. His family received word of his death on April 21st and a memorial service was held at the Lutheran Church in Shiner on April 30th.

Sgt. Pagel was buried in the Manila American Cemetery in the Philippines. He was the 84th Lavaca County man to die in action during WWII.



Our cousin, Clay Maeckel, generously provides space on his server for our family reunion web site which includes many old photos, our family history and family tree, reunion information and photographs from recent reunions. Check it out!

[www.pagelfamily.org](http://www.pagelfamily.org)