



San Diego Chapter 1 Member Biography

Ralph Kling

Grew up on a small farm of cows and chickens in central California.

After high school graduation in 1942 he and his twin brother joined Army Air Corps. Ralph graduated as 2nd Lt Dec. 5th '43. RTU in P-47, went to England April 8; (his brother went to Italy).

He joined 388th Fighter Squadron May 1st, flew two missions before D Day and 66 after; had one Victory. Most missions were in support of General George S. Patton.

Ralph bailed out of his flaming P47 Thunderbolt on September 21, 1944 over Luxemburg.



He then spent 3 weeks in a German hospital for "displaced" people working in German war industry. Was then 3 months in Stalag Luft III (of Great Escape fame). The prisoners spent a week walking in snow and riding in box cars and starved nearly to death. Next, he was held in Mooseborg's Wehrmacht (Army) Camp for 2 1/2 months.

Ralph was Liberated April 29, 1945.

After the war, he went to San Jose State University, taught and coached high school for 15 years and was an administrator for 15 more (11 as Principal of a large high school).

After retirement he worked at HP for 7 years, National U for three and then built "Boulders" and has worked diligently with the POW Group.