



*Norman M Olson*

Norman Merle Olson, a native of Armstrong, Iowa and a long-time resident of Stockton, died on September 5, 2010. He was 91 years old. One of six children, he grew up on the family farm in Iowa where he learned to work the land and drive a tractor. He also distinguished himself as a pitcher on the baseball team at Armstrong High School. After graduation in 1937, he worked on the farm before heading to California with a friend to look for a job. Upon his arrival, he walked into a Post Office and volunteered for the Army Air Corps six months before World War II broke out.

After a stint at Stockton Field, he trained in sheet metal work and was dispatched to Freckleton, England as part of the Mighty Eighth Air Force, BAD 2 Association. He was among the witnesses to the Freckleton Disaster of August 23, 1944, a tragedy occurring when an air craft crashed onto Freckleton's Holy Trinity School in stormy weather. He was discharged in 1945 with medals for courage, duty and honor, and his name is on the WWII Memorial in Washington, D.C. Norman was a T SGT. 902 AIR ENG. SQUADRON 484 AIR SV GP.

After the war, he worked for Holt Bros. in Stockton as a tire service rep. He also earned his barber's license from the National Educational Council of the Associated Master Barbers & Beauticians of America and worked

as a barber in Stockton. But the major portion of his career was as a long shoreman with Local #54 ILWU for The Port of Stockton, where he retired after 30 years. Around the union hall, Norman was known as "OLE" Olson. His friends from the local became his golf and bowling buddies.

In addition to sports, Norman enjoyed traveling around the world with his wife Margaret. A favorite trip was to Blackpool, England for his WWII Reunion with the BAD 2 Association.

Norman is survived by his loving wife of 64 years Margaret Mary Olson. Also surviving are his daughters Karen Olson of Stockton and Sharon Vandewark of San Diego, three grandchildren Kristi Houston of Poway, Kevin Vandewark of Hilmar and Robyn Mosier of Tarzana and two great-grandchildren Andy Houston and Hannah Vandewark, two brothers, William and wife Donna Olson and Alvin and wife Maryann Olson, all of Armstrong, many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents Leonard and Louise, infant sister Marjory Bell, sister Lorene Gangstad and brother Willis Olson.