

## OBITUARIES PAID NOTICES

### Robert James "Catfish" Raine

Robert James "Catfish" Raine died March 25, 2005, at St. Mary's Hospital in Reno after a long bout with cancer.

A native Nevadan, Raine, born in Palisade to Robert Franklin Raine and Kathryn Breen Raine on Feb 22, 1918, attended thirteen grammar schools in northeastern Nevada and graduated from Reno High School in 1939. He spent much of his youth buckarooing on his father's ranch in Pine Valley, first homesteaded by his grandfather in the 1850's. He was more at home chasing wild horses than in the classroom.

Raine attended San Francisco City College where he boxed, winning one title, and played football. He learned to fly in the civilian pilot training program in San Mateo. While working in Nevada, he was appointed by Sen. Pat McCarran to Pensacola Naval Officers Training Program and then gained his carrier status flying aboard the U.S.S. Saratoga where he flew torpedo bombers.

During his service with the U.S. Navy, he was recruited by the American Volunteer Group commanded by legendary Claire Lee Chennault to fly P-40 fighters for the Chinese Air Force against the Japanese Empire. The group earned the title, "The Flying Tigers" after Pearl Harbor with heroic air battles over Rangoon, Burma, and Kunming China. Raine, with only six other pilots, stopped the advance of the entire Japanese army at the battle of the "Salween Gorge."

For his World War II service, Raine earned two Distinguished Flying Crosses and numerous other Chinese and American citations. When the "Flying Tigers" were disbanded on July 4, 1942, Raine volunteered for two additional weeks of air combat as the American 14th Army Air Force took over in China. After a brief rest period in India, Raine joined the Chinese National Air Company, (CNAC) and flew unprotected transport planes between Calcutta, India, and Kunming, China, ferrying war supplies



Raine

over the famous "Hump" of the Himalayas completing 443 missions. During the closing days of World War II, Raine rejoined the U.S. Navy where he was scheduled to fly the P-61 night fighter during the planned invasion of the Japanese homeland.

After the war, Raine was one of 10 former AVG pilots to form the Flying Tiger Airline. True to his love of flying, he chose to become chief pilot of the fledgling airline and continued flying until his mandatory retirement at age sixty.

He met Lieutenant Shirley Duckworth, a U.S. Army nurse, in Calcutta, India, and they later married in Los Angeles, Calif. They had three children, two of whom, the twins, were born in Shanghai, China, when Raine was flying supplies and personnel for the Chinese Nationalist government as the Chinese Communist army advanced on them in late 1948.

Raine and his family returned to Nevada in 1957 while he was still flying for Flying Tiger Airline, and he pursued his love for ranching, breeding Polled Herefords, and horses. He owned ranches in Denio and Fallon and was a co-founder of Arabian Horse racing and breeding

in the western United States where he rose to the pinnacle of success. Among his numerous accomplishments was his 1994 induction into the Arabian Racing Association Hall of Fame. Until his death, he maintained an active stable of a dozen Arabian race horses.

Throughout his life he enjoyed the great Nevada outdoors, and of all the countries of the world that his profession took him to, he chose to live and spend his free time roaming the vast Nevada wilderness.

He was an avid sportsman and at 85 years old, he took a desert bighorn sheep from the Muddy Mountains of Nevada. His last deer hunt was in the Pequop Mountains near Wells. A lifelong member of the NRA, he supported numerous wildlife, wilderness, fishing, and hunting organizations.

In 2001, along with fellow AVG veterans, he was invited to and honored by the People's Republic of China in a ceremony in Kunming, China, for his invaluable and valiant defense of China during World War II.

Robert Raine was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Shirley, in 2000 and his daughter, Billie Ann (Raine) Conaway, in 2004.

He is survived by his beloved children, Robert Franklin Raine of Michigan and Kathryn Raine Johnson of Illinois; his beloved grandchildren, Michael Raine of Phoenix, Ariz., Scott Raine of Eureka, Michael Sundahl of Arkansas, Stina Greuter of Illinois, Bill Sundahl of Missouri, Peter Sundahl of Florida; and six great-grandchildren.

At his passing, he was surrounded by his grandson, Scott Raine; his first cousin and best friend, Judge Peter Breen of Reno; lifelong friend, Tony Torson; and longtime caregiver, Pat Penman.

Services are scheduled for 11 a.m. Saturday, May 28, at Walton Funeral Home at 825 W. Second St., Reno. Mr. Raine will be laid to rest at Mountain View Cemetery next to his beloved father.