

Basil Eugene "Gene" Patton

6-1-1997
Funeral services for Basil Eugene "Gene" Patton, 68, were held Tuesday, June 4, at 2 p.m., at the Memorial Baptist Church in Wheatland, with Pastor John Branch and Pastor Fred Tuberville officiating. Interment followed in the Wheatland Cemetery.

Mr. Patton died Saturday, June 1 at his home in Hanna, Wyo., following a lengthy illness.

He was born Feb. 28, 1923 in Nebraska, the son of Clarence and Alice (Brown) Patton. He moved to Wyoming as a young boy, and attended various schools, graduating from Lusk High School in January, 1942.

He immediately enlisted in the Army Air Corps, graduating from Cadet school in Valdosta, Ga., receiving his wings and commission in August, 1943. He was married to Rachel Geike of Harrison, Neb., on Aug. 30, 1943 in Valdosta, Ga., and they made their home in Dodge City, Kans., where he received his training as a combat cargo pilot.

His overseas tour of duty was spent in the China-Burma-India Theatre, with 436 combat missions over the Himalaya Mountains, flying supplies, troops and wounded personnel in and out of China.

He received the Distinguished Flying Cross with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Air Medal with two Oak Leaf clusters, Asiatic/Pacific Service Medal, American service medal, World War II Victory medal, and, 40 years later, the Victory Service medal from China.

He was discharged in November, 1945. He worked for a service station, ranched and worked road construction until 1969. He then went to work for Peter Kiewit as a heavy equipment mechanic until his retirement at the Rosebud Coal Company of Hanna. He was an avid fisherman and hunter.

He is survived by his wife, Rachel, of Hanna, his mother, Alice Patton of Torrington, two sons, Robert Patton of Hanna and Richard Patton of Lander, and one daughter, Glenda Duff of Wheatland. A sister, Barbara Ferris of Torrington and 14 grandchildren also remain.

He was preceded in death by his father, Clarence, one son, Gary, and one grandson, Kelly Patton.

Serving as pallbearers were Lawrence Ferris, Harry Serres, Howard Morse, George Birge, Neil Neuman and Dan Mahnke.

Serving as honorary pallbearers were Floyd Rathbun, Noal Larson, Cecil Cox, Leonard Gladson, Shorty Lamb and Walter Dobkins.