

Obituaries

Maj. Gen. Louis E. Coira

POSTED: October 14, 2009

Major General Louis E. Coira died peacefully at home surrounded by his family on Sunday, Oct. 11, 2009.

He was 93 years old and was born in Bloomsburg, April 25, 1916.

He graduated from Lock Haven High School in 1933, and from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1938.

Lou first came to San Antonio, Texas, for Army Air Corps flight training at Randolph Field and received his pilot wings at Kelly Field, Texas, in 1939, and served as an instructor there until April 1941.

At the outbreak of World War II, he commanded a squadron of B-17 bombers sent to create an airstrip at Salinas, Ecuador, and to protect the Panama Canal Zone. There he met Ellen Holst, his loving wife of 64 years.

Later he became commander of the 40th Bomb Group, the first B-29 unit overseas during World War II and flew the hump over the Himalayas from India to China in order to fly missions over Japan.

From 1947 to May 1958, Lou Coira was stationed in New York; Alabama; Randolph AFB, Texas; McConnell AFB, Kansas; and Elmendorf AFB, Alaska, as base commander, commander of 5039th Air Base Wing and also commander of the 10th Air Division, and served as deputy chief of staff for operations of the Alaskan Air Command.

Lou served twice at the Pentagon, being assigned to the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff Operations, and in 1959, as a deputy director, Office of the Secretary of Defense. In 1962, Lou was reassigned to Kelly AFB, Texas, as deputy commander of the Air Force Security Service becoming commander in 1965.

In 1969 he was assigned as vice commander of the 5th Air Force at Fuchu Air Station, Japan.

He retired on July 1, 1971, and became a vice president of Alamo National Bank from September 1971 to July 1979.

Lou was preceded in death by his wife, Ellen, and grandson, Ted Dinwoodie.

He is survived by his daughter, Christine Dinwoodie (Peter); three sons, Peter (Rebecca), Paul (Charlene) and Mark (Maria) Coira; six grandchildren, Anne-Marie (Tim), Alec, Elizabeth (Dan), Jeannie, Stephen and Lauren.

He was a life-long hunter, expert bird dog trainer and founding member of St. John Neumann Catholic Church (6680 Crestway Drive, San Antonio, Texas).

Rosary and public reception will be held Thursday, Oct. 15, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. at St. John Neumann Catholic Church, 6680 Crestway Drive, San Antonio, Texas. Funeral mass will be Friday, Oct. 16, 2009 at 11:30 a.m. at St. John Neumann Catholic Church. Entombment in Holy Cross Cemetery.

You are invited to sign the guestbook at www.porterlorinq.com

Arrangements are with Porter Loring Porter Loring Funeral Home, 1101 McCullough Ave., San Antonio, Texas.

