

Charles R. Bond, Jr., Major General (Ret.), died at his home at the Presbyterian Village North of Dallas on August 18, 2009. Charlie, a USAF fighter pilot ace, was one of the remaining pilots of the famous American Volunteer Group (AVG) in China, better known as the Flying Tigers. He was preceded in death by his cherished wife, Doris Inez Walker Bond in 1987.

Charlie was born on April 22, 1915 in Dallas, TX. He graduated from Forest High School as Cadet Colonel of the ROTC and as a member of the National Honor Society. In his junior HS year, 1932, he began his military career by enlisting in the Texas National Guard. In March 1938 he entered the Army Air Corps (AAC) Aviation Cadet Program and Randolph Field, and graduated in February 1939 earning his commission and pilot wings.

His first assignment was pilot in the Y1B-17 Flying Fortress and Assistant Ops Officer to 1st Lt. Curtis E. LeMay of the 2nd Bomb Group, 49th Bomb Squadron, Langley Field, VA. While in this unit, he was selected to fly one of the six B-17s that made the historically unprecedented long range Good Will Flight to South America – a mission in reality ordered by the President to demonstrate to Asian and European aggressor nations our possession of the overwhelming, retaliatory air power.

In June 1941 Charlie resigned from the AAC to volunteer as one of the 100 pilots in Colonel Clair Chennault's AVG in China to help stop the invading Japanese forces. Serving under Chennault, the legendary pioneer of advanced fighter tactics, Charlie learned new air tactics that got amazing results. In 8 months, from Dec. 1941 to July 1942, the Flying Tigers destroyed an estimated 640 enemy aircraft, but lost only 12 P-40s in aerial combat and 61 P-40s on the ground. The odds in the air were usually 20 enemy aircraft to one P-40.

In one aerial engagement, Charlie, alone, attacked 40 enemy bombers, destroyed one and damaged two others but was shot down in his landing pattern. The AVG never had more than 49 P-40s ready for combat during the 8 month period. The AVG Flying Tigers was one of the most effective military forces in history. Charlie was credited with 9 enemy aircraft destroyed and survived being shot down twice. The AVG disbanded in July 1942. Charlie returned to the US and personally briefed the AAC Chief of Staff, General H. "Hap" Arnold, and his staff on the air tactics and accomplishments of the AVG.

On Sept. 14, 1942 he married Doris Walker in Dallas and they left for their Honeymoon in Washington, DC. He reentered the AAC on Oct. 14, 1942 as 2nd Lt. A week later he was promoted to 1st Lt., a week later to Captain, and a week after that, to Major. Having recent air combat experience, Charlie was given command of the 81st Fighter Squadron at Orlando, Florida. It was a unit in the Air Corps School of Applied Tactics where realistic combat tactics were taught pilots of the newly activated fighter groups of the rapidly expanding, war time, AAC. In this assignment Charlie was promoted to Lt. Col.

In July 1943 he was chosen to be Chief of the Air Division, US Military Mission to the USSR in Moscow, Aide to Ambassador Averell Harriman and the Ambassador's personal pilot in a B-24. While in this assignment he was promoted to Colonel at the age of 28. He was reassigned in Oct. 1944 as Asst. Special Study Group, AC/S, Plans, Hqtrs., AAF, Wash., DC; then, from Oct. 1945 to Dec. 1945 he served as Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, 2nd Air Force, Ent AFB, Co. Having experience in both Asian and European Theatres of Operations made him especially well qualified to help develop a strong air defense force for the US, and for many years to come he served in key positions in the Air Defense command (ADC).

In January 1947 he was assigned as a student to Texas A&M University, and graduated in 1949 with a BA degree in Management Engineering. He next served as Chief of the current Operations Division Hqtrs, Air ADC, Mitchell AFB, NY. He continued assignments in the ADC until 1957 when he was promoted to Brigadier General while serving as Asst. Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, Hqtrs, ADC, Ent AFB, Co. He received his second star in July 1963, while serving as Deputy Commander, Hqtrs, 5th

Allied Tactical Air Force, a component of Supreme Hqtrs Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), in Vicenza, Italy. He was assigned in Aug. 1963 as Deputy Commander, 9th Air Force, Tactical Air Command, Shaw AFB, South Carolina. Charlie now had to reorient his specialty from air defense to tactical air operations.

In 1966 he was assigned as Deputy Commander of the Seventh/Thirteenth Air Force, Hqtrs, Udorn, Thailand. In this assignment he was responsible for tactical operations for coordination and diplomatic relations between neighboring nations and his Hqtrs. In June 1967 he returned to the US, was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal (DSM), and given command of the 12th Air Force with Hqtrs at James Connally AFB, Waco, TX.

Charlie retired from the USAF on August 1, 1968. Besides the DSM, his decorations include the Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, Distinguished Flying Cross, Purple Heart, Army commendation Medal, Distinguished Flying Cross (British), Order of the Southern Cross (Brazilian), Fifth Order of the Cloud Banner (China), Seven Star Wing Medal (China), and numerous service and campaign medals.

After retirement, he worked several years for Texas Instruments, Inc; participated in numerous Air Shows at Cavanaugh Flight Museum in Addison, TX; took part in several TV History Channel Flying Tiger documentaries; and made speeches for various organizations. Charlie kept very busy for the rest of his life. He maintained a strenuous daily physical exercise program, and for many years regularly attended Sunday church services and participated in Bible studies. He was strongly committed to his Christian religious beliefs. Charlie was well known for his warm and friendly smile, confident demeanor, and resilient attitude. He will be greatly missed by his family and many friends.

Survivors include: daughter and son-in-law, Rebecca and Donald Stewart of Pensacola Beach, FL; daughter and son-in-law, Cynthia and Charles Gilmer and grandsons Gary and John Paul Gilmer of Richardson, TX; daughter, Mary Jean Bond of Garland, TX; son and daughter-in-law, Charles and Patty Bond and granddaughters Jamie and Julie Bond of Tulsa, OK; and brother and sister-in-law, Jack and Ina Bond and nephews David and Daniel of De Soto, TX and nephew Charles Bond and nieces Magnolia and Cheyenne Bond of Maypearl, TX.

Services are currently pending. Memorial donations may be made in Charlie's name to the Alzheimer's Association ([www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)) 225 N. Michigan Ave., Fl. 17, Chicago, Ill. 60601-7633.

