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## Ben Vlassick (continued)

From Bill Schmied

Ben was taken on his final ride through the streets of Denver on Friday, 28 Dec 2001, to his resting place at Ft Logan National Cemetery. It was a long procession of cars and trucks filled with family and friends paying tribute to him and ended with a 21-gun salute and taps provided by the Buckley AFB Honor Guard. Although he is no longer with us, this alumni association is a living tribute to him. Ben started it with the first alumni national reunion here at the DoubleTree Hotel in 1989. In February 1991 we had our first official alumni breakfast meeting and started collecting dues from the membership. We followed that with the first alumni picnic in the summer of 1991, and since then we hosted another national reunion here in 1996 and a third last year in June 2001. The picnic has become an annual event and we have also had an annual fall evening social since 1998. We would not be a group of AFTAC alumni here in Colorado without Ben's efforts over the last 12 years and in November 2001 we recognized his contributions by presenting him a plaque at his home in Aurora with his family. Now we will continue on without him, but he will not be forgotten. May he rest in peace.

From Ben's Service:

*In Loving Memory Of*  
*Benjamin Paul Vlassick*  
*Entered Into Life May 27, 1936*  
*Entered Into Eternal Life December 25, 2001*

God saw he was getting tired, And a cure was not to be. So He put His arms around him, And whispered, "Come with me."  
With tearful eyes we watched him suffer And saw him fade away. Although we loved him dearly, We could not make him stay.  
A golden heart stopped beating, He is now at peaceful rest. God broke our hearts to prove to us, He only takes the best.

Horan & McConahy

