

OBITUARY (From: Indianapolis Star - March 5, 2007)

Frank E. Meek Jr., 1919-2007

Colonel USAF (DINFOS Commandant - Mar 1971 - January 1972)

While MacArthur was General of the Army during World War II, he and Meek -- an Army Air Forces colonel -- had a difference of opinion over a radio station.

MacArthur wanted it shut down. Col. Meek didn't.

Col. Meek was the senior officer on a speck called Marcus Island in the Pacific Ocean toward the end of the war. With little to do, he sent to Honolulu for equipment to start a radio station.

MacArthur's office sent orders to close the unauthorized station immediately.

"We sent a message back to their headquarters saying: 'We are not a part of your command -- period,' " Mr. Meek said in a 1988 interview.

He never heard again from MacArthur's anti-broadcasters.

"I figured, what the hell, all they can do is take the station away from us," Mr. Meek said.

Mr. Meek died Feb. 11 at age 87. He was born in Caldwell, Idaho, the son of a retired cavalry officer. He became a sportswriter for The (Portland) Oregonian, but his editor said that when Mr. Meek wrote about baseball, he could never tell what sport he was writing about.

A celebration of life will be Friday at the Parklane Seniors Apartments in Salt Lake City.

"Dad declined to have a funeral," said his son Frank E. Meek III. "He hated funerals and didn't like to go to them. He wanted a wake instead."

At his request, Mr. Meek's body was donated to the University of Utah's Medical School.

Mr. Meek and his wife of 59 years, Margaret "Peg" Meek, moved to Salt Lake City 21/2 years ago to be closer to their two sons -- one of whom lives four blocks from his parents.

Col. Meek was assigned in 1969 to the Defense Information School at Fort Benjamin Harrison, where military journalists and public affairs personnel were trained.

When he was commandant of the school, Col. Meek was recruited to WFYI (Channel 20) in 1972, 15 months after the public broadcaster got its start, by Gens. Howard S. Wilcox and Robert Moorhead, both Indiana National Guard generals and Indianapolis civic leaders.

"He was a really capable, take-charge person," said Alan Cloe, WFYI's executive vice president. "He had a military sense about him, but he was warm and thoughtful, too."

Mr. Meek is credited with obtaining an 800-foot transmitting tower that expanded the station's signal past Indianapolis; acquiring WIAN-FM from

Indianapolis Public Schools and changing its call letters to WFYI-FM; and creating local programming on the General Assembly and agriculture. Mr. Meek was at WFYI from 1972 to 1990. He was named a WFYI Life Director in 1995.

Other survivors include a son, Dr. Sanford G. Meek.