

Rolfe L. Chickering (Lt. Colonel, Ret.)

Rolfe Lawrence Chickering (Lt. Colonel, Ret.) of Hinesburg died Friday, November 11, 2005, in Fletcher Allen Health Care, at the age of 87.

Rolfe 'Chic' was the fifth of six children of A. Carlton and Agnes E. (Dodge) Chickering and was born at home in North Danville on August 17, 1918. Rolfe's mother died in 1925 when he was 6 years old and brother Robert followed her a few months later. The family then went to live with grandmother Alice Finley Chickering who, at 70 years of age, took on the care of five youngsters ranging in age from 13 to 4.

Following completion of the 10 grades of school offered in North Danville, Rolfe worked at farming and lumbering until 1941 when he moved to East Hartford, Conn., to work for Pratt & Whitney.

In 1942, Chic joined the Army Air Corps, became a fighter pilot serving with the 359th Fighter Squadron based at Martlesham Heath in south-east England, and flew 75 missions over German-occupied Europe. For this service, he was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross and an Air Medal with five Oak Leaf Clusters.

Upon his return to the U.S., he married Grace Lucille Cahoon of Danville in Selma, Ala., on April 27, 1945. Returning to Vermont, the couple made their home in Danville and from 1945-1951. Chic was a foreman in manufacturing at Fairbanks Morse Scale Co. in St. Johnsbury.

Also in 1946, he was a charter member of the Vermont Air National Guard. Chic was recalled to active duty in February 1951 during the Korean War, and served as a pilot instructor at the base in Burlington.

He was released from active duty in November 1952, but decided to remain full-time with the Air Guard. He then moved his family to Hinesburg, where he lived ever since. He remained full-time with the Vermont Air National Guard until his retirement in April 1971. During those years he served as air technician, flying training instructor, operations officer, squadron commander, deputy commander of operations and of material, chief of supply, base engineering officer and base detachment commander.

In retirement Chic worked for Simmonds Precision in Vergennes, and IBM in Essex Junction, from which he retired in 1983. In Hinesburg he served on the School Board and the Zoning Board.

Having advanced in the military despite his lack of formal education, Chic encouraged his children to continue on to college, and all six attended the University of Vermont. Throughout his life he was an avid hunter and fisherman, and in retirement years had an abundant vegetable garden. Until he had to give up hunting because of deteriorating eyesight, he always kept one or more beagles to run rabbits.

Chic was predeceased by his parents and siblings. He leaves Grace, his wife of 60 years; and his six children; Sharon, Lorene, Janet, Mark, Mary Ellen, and Heidi. Chic also leaves

four granddaughters; Pilar Moller, Felicia Moller, Seah Chickering-Burchesky, Hibba Sassi; and two grandsons;, Ameen Sassi, Caleb Van Noy; as well as several nieces and nephews