

Police Officer Charles K. Raabe P590 (1923-2019)

Oldest Living Retired Cincinnati Police Employee

Charles was born February 14, 1923 in Lucas County, Ohio to George A. and Jeanette (Landrigan) Raabe. George, a first generation American with parents from Germany and France, was a blue-collar worker at a manufacturing company. Charles was the last of their four children. Mrs. Raabe died in Toledo four months after giving birth to Charles. George moved his family back to Cincinnati.

Charles attended Withrow High School from 1937 to 1939. By 1940, the family was living at 2124 Madison Road. Charles had three more years of education in graphic arts from 1939 to 1942. He also participated in amateur boxing in the 112-pound junior class during 1940 and basketball in 1941 for the Boys' Athletic Club.

During November 1943, Charles was drafted into the United States Army and was trained in the mastery of weapons and individual reconnoitering. He served in the 43rd Reconnaissance Squadron of the Third Cavalry; also known as Patton's Own Spearheads. He entered combat on August 9, 1944 and, during the next 273 days (until VE Day), spent 260 in combat, helping to lead the 20th Corps and 3rd Army across France, Luxemburg, Belgium, Austria, Germany, and into Austria. Nearing the end of 1944, they took Trier and the Germans made a full-scale bid to recapture Trier; during which they fired more than 4000 artillery shells. An 80mm mortar shell came through a window of a room in which Corporal Raabe was in, through the map he was looking at, and through the floor at his feet. A second, a few days later, while digging a foxhole near Trier, landed two feet from him. A third, the next day, landed in his Jeep and embedded itself in the steel floor. All three were duds. On the 273rd day, VE Day, the 43rd met up with Russian and British troops in the heart of the Alps near the Italian border. Corporal Raabe was honorably discharged during October 1945 with a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star, and a Campaign Ribbon indicated five major campaigns in nine months.



Charles's brother, George C. Raabe, also attended Withrow, also entered the military to fight in World War II, and came back as Sergeant having served in four major campaigns. Before 1948, George joined the Addyston Police Department as a Patrolman. During 1948, George joined the Cincinnati Police Division as a Police Recruit.



Four years later, Charles joined him as a Police Recruit on January 28, 1952, just before his 29th birthday. He was promoted to Patrolman on April 27th, issued Badge Number 590, and assigned to District 1 (1024 York Street). Within two years, he was transferred to the prestigious Highway Safety Bureau (City Hall) and stayed there for eighteen years. On April 7, 1972 he transferred to District 6 (3295 Erie Avenue). On March 4, 1974, Police Officer Raabe transferred to Communications Section (310 Lincoln Park Drive). Three months later, he transferred to the Transportation Section (314 Broadway). Officer Raabe retired on January 5, 1976 with more than 26 years of service to his country and two communities.

On March 4, 2018, at 95 years of age, with the passing of Sergeant Glenn R. "Hot Fire" Meyer, Officer Raabe became the oldest living Cincinnati Police Division retiree.

Officer Raabe passed away 1½ years later on July 10, 2019 at Hospice of Cincinnati at Anderson from complications of pneumonia. He was 96 years old.

He was predeceased by his wife of 57½ years, Edith Kathryn (Dunn) and all of his siblings. He is survived by his daughter Diana Marie Raabe and nieces and nephews including Cincinnati Police Captain Andrew Raabe (Retired).

A memorial mass was celebrated Thursday, July 25, 2019 at St. Rose Church; followed by an FOP service and military honors.