

STACEY GRIFFITH



367th, 368th, 369th, 423rd Squadrons, and service organizations  
Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England – September 1942-April 1945

# 306TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION

See the Thurleigh Airfield Museum

*President*

Albert McMahan  
273 N Peachtree St.  
Norcross, GA 30071

21 December 2004

*Vice President*

Herman Kaye, JD, MD  
1905 Carla Ridge  
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Dear Robert:

*Secretary*

Russell A. Strong  
5323 Cheval Place  
Charlotte, NC 28205

Despite what you may have heard from Stacy concerning his combat experience, my supposition is that it was pretty normal. He arrived a couple of weeks after I did and left a week before I departed.

*Treasurer*

Royce Hopkins  
35427 Pontiac Dr.  
Brookshire, TX 77423

Perhaps the most exciting event in that period was the collision over our base of two planes from another group. Also, the Princess Elizabeth was there to christen a plane as "The Rose of York". And 12 Sept 44 we lost nine planes of a mission to Germany. I saw both of the 1 & 2 events and flew on the 3rd.

*Directors*

William Carnicom  
112 Columbia Ct.  
Pagosa Springs, CO 81147

Stacy did not fly on that mission my records show. It featured a fighter attack, which was the only one I was in during 35 missions.

William Houlihan  
35449 Heritage Ct.  
Farmington, MI 48335

Very likely he flew only in silver B-17Gs.

Hugh Phelan  
556 N. Hwy 67  
Donaldson, AR 71941

His crew included Herbert Greenberg, pilot, Joe Willoughby navigator, Frank Lyman copilot and Jim McMahan bombardier. Paul Hortemiller engineer, Stacy Griffith ball turret gunner, George Schlageter tail gunner, Edward Riley waist gunner, Edmund Manieri radio operator, and Harold McNinch waist gunner.

Robert Rockwell  
229 Beverley  
Munster, IN 46321

The only person for whom I have an address is Paul Hortemiller, 412 S. Mulberry St., Batesville, IN 47006 (812)934-3726.

*Past President*  
Royce Hopkins

For his efforts Stacy received an Air Medal with 3 oak leaf clusters in lieu of additional medals and a Distinguished Flying Cross, the same decorations as I received. Foreign Medals only went to a few top ranking officers and probably came to very early participants.

*British Representative*  
Ralph Franklin  
Mill Hill  
Keysoe, Beds MK44 2HP  
United Kingdom

His picture does appear in a crew picture in our new book, "Combat Crews" (\$35, and send a check to me for same. ). His name did not appear in "First Over Germany", a narrative history of the 306th, nor in "306th Echoes, 1974-2000, a collection of our quarterly newspaper for 25 years. History is \$35, and Echoes is \$40.

We have available data sheets from the missions flown by the 306th, which may be from one page to 50 pages, which are stored at National Archives. These are detailed tabulations of each mission and include a copy of each crew's interrogation by intelligence officers, and lists the men on the crew each day. We sell these at 3 missions for \$5, and for Stacy this would mean a payment of \$60 to the 306th Association.

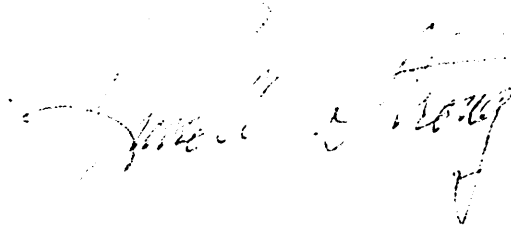
Such requests, with checks, should be sent to me. Delivery comes only as I have time to process them.

I enclose a copy of the patch. They should be available sometime in the next two or three months.

Determining what planes Stacy flew in and what their names may have been would take considerable searching. Most crews flew in a variety of aircraft, depending on what planes were available for a given mission, and crews changed frequently, also depending on availability.

Stacy arrived with his crew 20 June 1944 and he departed for a Replacement Depot on his way home 18 November 1944.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James H. Stacy". The signature is written in dark ink and is somewhat faded and slanted to the right.

Robert E. Smith  
515 McDonald Ave.  
Wilmington, CA 90744-5327  
(310) 549-9819  
E-mail: [regriffith6828@aol.com](mailto:regriffith6828@aol.com)

December 13, 2004

306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group Association  
Secretary/Historian  
Russell A. Strong  
5323 Cheval Place  
Charlotte, NC 28205  
(704) 568-3803  
E-mail: [russell.a.strong306@worldnet.att.net](mailto:russell.a.strong306@worldnet.att.net)

Reference: Stacy W. Griffith, 39022807

I am enclosing a copy of a photo of a patch that I had located amongst Stacy's documents and items that have been maintained by his sister, Leona Griffith. The leather and painting faded, titled, "Fiery Phantoms," the color should be red (correct colors are off), with black and yellow or gold, and leather or brown face. The background was leather about the same color as the face on the picture. What I am asking, is or was it about the same color, the name on the B-17 (F/G ?) that Stacy flew on, and any information on the aircrafts that he flew on in 1944-5? Do you have a list of the crew members and how many survived? Stacy W. Griffith died in November 1975, Torrance, Los Angeles, California, while I was in Korea. The last time that I had seen him, he was at the VA Medical Center in Long Beach, in October 1975, while I was on medical leave. My mother, Rosamond E. Griffith was with him, his mother and sister when he died. He was buried at the Roosevelt Memorial Park (Cemetery), in Gardena, California, near where his father and later his mother was buried.

Additionally, I would like to know what medals and awards that you may have on record that he had received, I have his basic discharge papers, but they are not very clear and do not include any possible foreign medals that he and the unit may have received during his time with the unit.

Any assistance would be appreciated, and even though wars never really helped, I would like to thank you all for what you did in WWII. I had Vietnam and other problems while serving in the Army from 1968 to 1989.

Sincerely,

  
Robert E. Smith

# FIERY PHANTOMS



**Russell Strong**

---

**From:** <Regriffith6828@aol.com>  
**To:** <russell.a.strong306@worldnet.att.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 27, 2003 1:29 AM  
**Subject:** TSGT Stacy Woodward Griffith

My name is Robert E. Smith, Stacy was my mothers third husband and before he died in 1975, I knew him well, but never asked too many questions about what he did in England, besides being a private on the ground, a Tech Sergeant in the air and if you could not find him on base, where you could find him in London.

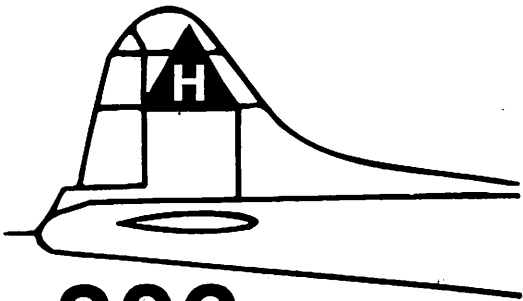
I would like to know if anyone remembers Stacy W. Griffith, of the 306th BG, England. It took him a bit longer to get his Good Conduct Medal, as he was always in a bit of trouble, was given a military parade on the day he received his medal. Commander - Colonel James S. Sutton awarded his 2nd Air Medal in 1944, date unknown for now. On his 34th mission over Germany, he received the Distinguished Flying Cross as well as the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, by Colonel George L. Robinson. I know of the 21 medals that he had received, to include 3 purple hearts, and others, but always wondered what else he may have received prior to being discharged in 1946.

I know some of his history and the trouble he got into with his twin brother, both dead now, and some of the other things that occurred while both were in the Army in Europe, but there are still a few blank spots to fill in his personal history. Stacy died in November 1975, in Torrance, Los Angeles, CA. after I returned to Korea for my extended tour there. If anyone knows or remembers anything about him, please contact me if possible. He was my mothers third husband, his older sister, Leona Griffith is still alive and living in Lomita, CA. His twin, Tracy W. Griffith and mother Ada Griffith both died in 1979, Torrance.

thank you for any help in this matter, Bob Smith (Vietnam War Vet - 1969-1970)

Robert E. Smith  
515 McDonald Ave.  
Wilmington, LA, California 90744  
(310) 549-9819

5/27/03



367th, 368th, 369th, 423rd Squadrons, and service organizations  
 Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England – September 1942-April 1945

# 306TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION

*Secretary/Historian*

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 704/568/3803  
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*Author Books*

First Over Germany

Command and Staff  
 Officers, 8th Air  
 Force, 1942-45

306th Echoes 1975-2000

*Editor*

306th Echoes (quarterly)  
 306th Directory  
 306th Squadron Diaries  
 367, 368, 369, 423

GRIFFITH, Stacey W.

39022807  
 423rd (eng)

Rpt. 20 Jun 44  
 Herbert Greenberg crew

AM 8-20-44  
 olc 9-6-44, 10-8-44  
 DFC 10-22-44

748

Dpt: 70th Repl Depot, 18 Nov 44

*1975 Torrance, CA(?)*

*S.O.#*

M/Sgt.	T/Sgt.	S/Sgt.	<del>W</del> gt	Cpl	Pfc	Pvt
		Z 9-1-44				X

I checked out his crew, and did not find any information that would be useful for you.

This is all (above) that I have about Griffith. I suspect some of the stories he was feeding you were "blowing smoke" and not verifiable.

Sorry I can't do any better for you,



**Russell Strong**

---

**From:** "Albert McMahan" <amcmahan@mindspring.com>  
**To:** <Russell.a.strong306@worldnet.att.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 18, 2004 2:44 PM  
**Subject:** FW: [WORLD WAR II] Verification of TSGT Stacy W. Griffith Military

This seems a bit hyped. Thought you might have a comment.  
 Albert

> [Original Message]

> From: <[Regriffith6828@aol.com](mailto:Regriffith6828@aol.com)>

> To: <[WORLDWAR2-L@rootsweb.com](mailto:WORLDWAR2-L@rootsweb.com)>

> Date: 7/18/2004 2:01:16 AM

> Subject: [WORLD WAR II] Verification of TSGT Stacy W. Griffith Military Record

>

> Trying to verify military record of Stacy W. Griffith, assigned to the 306th

> Bomber Group, England in 1944-1945. Information was provided from Newspaper

> articles and by both my mother (Rosamond E. Griffith - Giffin) and his sister,

> Leona Griffith of Lomita, California. The twins were names after Woodrow

> Wilson, Stacy W. and Tracy Wilson Griffith.

>

> TSGT Stacy Woodrow Griffith (older Twin)

> Born: May 14, 1918, Muskigee, Oklahoma

> Died: November 9, 1975, Home on Carson Street, Torrance, California

> Buried: November 1975, Roosevelt Memorial Park, Gardena, California

>

> Stacy W. Griffith died on November 9, 1975, Torrance, Los Angeles, California. He died after leaving the Veterans Administration Medical Center, Long

> Beach, California. Stacy was a veteran of World War II, he served in the U.S.

> Army Aviation Corps, in Great Britain and flew over western and eastern

> Europe with the Eight U.S. Army Air Corps. He turned down the Medal of Honor for

> actions above and beyond the call of duty, while flying a crippled B-17 from a

> bombing mission over Germany, he accepted/received the Silver Star, the

> Distinguished Flying Cross, the Silver Flying Cross, several Purple Hearts and in

> all twenty-one medals for actions over Germany. The reason he turned down the

> Metal of Honor, according to him, was that he didn't want to be paraded around

> the states like Ira Hayes was. In his own words, "He was a Lieutenant in the

> air, but a private on the ground, while assigned to England", he drank a

lot

> and sometimes he got into a lot of trouble in the process, but was happy while

> *doing it*. According to Rosamond E. Griffith, "she loved Stacy W. Griffith,

> but she couldn't continue supporting his drinking habit". So they were > divorced, and she continued to help him anyway that she could.

>

> Stacy Woodrow Griffith was the first of twins and was born on 14 May > 1918, in Muskigee, Oklahoma. In the 1920's he and his family traveled to the Los

> Angeles area of California where he attended school and entered the army with

> the rank of private.

>

> During World War II, he served in the U.S. Army Air Corps from about 1942

> until he was released in 1946. Staff Sergeant Stacy W. Griffith, won his > second Air Medal at the age of 26 in 1944, England while flying over

Western

> Europe, with the 306th Bombardment Group as a waist gunner, has been awarded 2nd

> Air Medal for "Exceptionally meritorious achievement" as awarded by his

> commanding officer, Colonel James S. Sutton of Findlay, Ohio. As a waist > gunner of a

> B-17 Flying Fortress, the duties of Staff Sergeant Stacy W. Griffith were to

> protect the waist, or center section of his aircraft and in an emergency to be

> ready to take the place of the Top Turret Gunner and Flight Engineer. He can

> handle two guns, one on each side of the waist section and had on more than

> one occasion. The efforts of men like Technical Sergeant Griffith in the 306th

> Bomber Group of the First Bomber Division, European Theater of Operations,

> were awarded the "Presidential Unit Citation" for Extraordinary Heroism,

> displayed in carrying out the highly successful attack on the enemy (German) aircraft

> plants at Oschersleben and Halberstadt, Germany, despite extremely heavy

> fighter opposition. On his 34th mission over Germany, he received the

> "Distinguished Flying Cross" for extraordinary achievement, as well as the "Air Medal

> with three Oak Leaf Clusters", by Colonel George L. Robinson of Los Angeles, for

> "Meritorious Achievement in combat during six heavy bombardment missions over

> Germany and German-Occupied Europe".

> He also received 3 Purple Hearts, and a total of 21 medals while



serving

> in the military. It took him 4 years to get the Good Conduct Medal, here it

> normally took an individual only 3 years, he was known as a Staff Sergeant

> (Technical Sergeant) in the air, and a Private on the ground, he turned down the

> "Medal of Honor", because he refused to go to Washington, D.C. and to go on war

> bonds circuit like "Ira Hays," for saving the lives of his crewmen, crash

> landing a crippled B-17 (he did not want to freeze again while waiting to be

> picked-up by a British ship, and flew the ship to England. When he died in

> November 1975, with the following medical problems: he still had a bullet next his

> spine, a steel plate in his head, burn marks from a crash landing in England,

> and no visible scar from an eye operation to restore his eye into its socket,

> received from one of his injuries and missions over Germany. He joked about

> being able to see in front and back at the same time, and how he crash landed a

> B-17 and they (the Emergency Crew) had to cut his feet out the floor board

> after crashing another B-17, rather than to jump into the English Channel.

> Prior to the Korean War, Stacy W. Griffith had enlisted in the U.S.

Navy

> as was stationed in Texas where he sometimes got into trouble, was placed on

> details, one such event included painting all the rocks that he could not

> pickup, he was to paint them white. It was in the month of July, that he had

> painted the commander of the bases home white, he was never given a paint brush

> again. He had requested duty in the Korean War, but because of his mother, she

> had him released from service and sent home instead of additional service in a

> war zone. Between him and his twin brother, they had 40 medals for service to

> their county, one from the air and the other from the ground in Europe.

> Prior to entry into the U.S. Army Air Corps in WWII, Stacy was employed

> at the Bethlehem Shipyard in San Pedro. During the week that Stacy died, some

> of the television programs and movies that were on the air were: Green Acres,

> Hogan's Heros, Captain Kangaroo, Jack La Lanne, Major Adams Trail Master,

Away

> All Boats, Match Game, Get Smart, Maverick, The Monkees, Fun in Acapulco,  
> Blue Hawaii, The Devil's Brigade, The Rowan and Martin Laughlin, The  
Bobby Vinton

> Show, Ironside, The FBI, and Mission Impossible.

>

> Robert E. Smith

> Wilmington, California

>

> I turned down two Purple Hearts in Vietnam for minor injuries and  
friendly

> fire.

>

>

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>

> ===== WORLDWAR2 Mailing List =====

> <http://lists.rootsweb.com/index/other/Military/WORLDWAR2.html>

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Please remember to tell us what country your ancestor was from and what  
country you are in now if different. This helps us help you. If you give  
dates please help us understand the date you are referring to. For  
example: 4 Nov 1944 or Nov 4, 1944.

>

> =====

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