

PERSONNEL RECORD UPDATE

306th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

Complete as much of this form as you wish, and return to Russell A. Strong, Secretary, 306th BG Association, 5323 Cheval Place, Charlotte, NC 28205.

Date completed June 11, 1994

LAST NAME: McGuire FIRST NAME: Arthur MI: C TITLE: S/Sgt

Street address: 62 Huntington Drive Telephone: (609) 859-1291

City, State, Zip: Southampton N. J. zip + 4:08088 - 1209

Date of birth: 3-31-25

Wife's name: .

College(s) attended: Temple University Phila Pa Degree(s): B.S. Year(s): 1949

Last employment & job title & retirement date:

Local Office Manager, Department of Labor State of New Jersey
Retired December 31, 1988

Reunions attended: None

Serial #: 329 532 21 Squadron: 423rd Specialty: ROM Gunner

Date joined 306th: DEcember 1944 If combat, what crew:
Joe Clark Pilot

Special duties or assignments w/306th:

Number of missions flown: 33 Date of last mission: 4-30-45

Date left 306th: 6-15-45 Highest rank/grade w/306th: S/Sgt

Other 8th AF units served with:

Top service assignment after 306th:

USAF retirement date: Discharged 11-5-45 Rank/grade: S/Sgt

Copies of old 306th orders, either from the Group or Station 111, or any of the squadrons or other units serving with the 306th, are sought by the secretary, as many of these do not appear in any collections of materials in Federal files:

If you know of others who served with the 306th who do not appear in the current directory, please add their names and current/WWII hometowns/or other addresses to the back of this sheet so that searches may be implemented to add them to our present 306th roster.

over----->

Ralph W. Dryden
160 Pennywise Lane
Glastonbury Ct. 06033

Tail Gunner on Clarks crew

DEBRIEFING

Although many believe the term military intelligence is an oxymoron, these worthies did perform useful services, among which were the so called debriefing of combat crews. Following operational missions these crews wild eyed, disheveled, and exhausted were questioned immediately after landing so that, hopefully, the preceding events would be recalled as accurately as possible.

All of these interviewers naturally assumed that the interviewees were constantly alert and observant of every enemy activity encountered during the operation. I wasn't. Having determined early on that the views on a bombing mission ran the gamut, from merely alarming to terrifying, I concluded that the less I saw the better. And further what I didn't see wouldn't hurt me---maybe !

Time seemed to be of great import to the interrogators. What time did you observe enemy action; flack, fighters, rockets, ground activity and the like. When it appeared we were entering the maw of oblivion, the time of day was the last thing on my mind. Also I never did get the hang of the 24 hour military time. If questioned, which was seldom, I usually picked a number about half way like 11 or 12 and mumbled 11:15 or 12:10 and tried to look wise. Estimates both quantitative and qualitative were stressed. How was the flack heavy, light, accurate, inaccurate ? Were the enemy fighters Me 109s or FW 190s, how many, where when, etc. etc. At the first glimpse of flack, however inaccurate, I was personally convinced that the entire Anti-Aircraft arm of the Wermacht was zeroed in on our squadron and annihilation was only minutes away. To one who had trouble identifying a B-17 from a P-51 to be able to pick out a small plane zooming by at 400 MPH was highly optimistic. Many nervous gunners had the same trouble, blazing away at anything nearby, occasionally a B-17. The few fighters I did see only looked like big trouble to my glazed eye. So you can see my reports on enemy action were not objective much less accurate.

During the British RAFs interminable air battle with Germany their bombers began to drop a Christmas tree-like decoration of ^{metallic strips} metal shards intending to deflect the German radar. The efficacy of this has been debated pro and con and remains doubtful. Nevertheless, our commanders seized the idea and adopted it for our bombers. So, to a plane already bursting with tons of bombs, 2700 gallons of hi-octane gas, thousands of 50 cal rounds, pistols, bayonets, knives, rocks, bricks, brass knuckles, enough in total, to conquer a small nation, was added a dozen or so boxes of ~~bulky~~ but light tinsel, called chaff.

As the Radio Room was approximately mid-ships and the Radio Operator usually a lad of limited imagination, he was designated as the purveyor. So at a signal from the cockpit ~~into~~ I began furiously tearing open boxes and flinging chaff through a newly constructed chute in the fuselage. Soon at 40 below zero I was sweating like a dollar slot player in a crooked casino, and sometimes had a vision of an old dutchman below looking up at the descending shower of silver and muttering "Now what are those crazies up to." The effect, I believe, was mainly psychological. It was at least some defensive action for a group who appeared to themselves as moving targets with a bulls eye painted on the seat of their pants, hoping for the best.

Again, since being located adjacent to the bomb bay, The radio operator was designated to quickly open the connecting door, on hearing the bombs away call, and determine if all bombs were successfully released, and the doors could be closed. In the absence of any bomb or bombs being hung up and not released, another mind numbing occurrence, a quick look into the empty bay 5 miles straight down with flack bursting all around, isn't exactly a day at the beach.

The accuracy of the bombing, of course, was paramount, since that was the name of the game. These results were best obtained from photos which were developed later and often revealed some uncertain results. Many reports of bomb damage and fighters destroyed were, like accounts of Mark Twain's alleged early demise, greatly exaggerated. Often I monitored the communications between aircraft and occasionally, with heavy cloud cover present, the city below was in doubt, indeed sometimes the country as well ! One thing was certain. Someone was going to be the recipient of our missiles since there was no way we could lug several tons back across a continent while under enemy attack. So from time to time it was look out below and another tiny village received some premature urban renewal !

Certainly a great deal of valuable intelligence was gleaned from these sessions, but not from me.

Retired Radio Operator

A.C. McGUIRE
306TH B.G. 423RD B.S.
THURLEIGH, ENGLAND
JOE CLARKS CREW