

2815 N. 70th St
Milwaukee, Wis 53210-1224
August 5, 1992

Russell A. Shuny
5323 Cheval Place
Charlotte, N.C. 28205

Dear Mr. Shuny,

I thank you for responding to my inquiry if my Uncle Donald's Fortress had a name (Macomber Crew). As I promised I am sending you a copy of the crew photo.

Let me tell you a story about my Uncle.

Feb 22, 1984 I couldn't sleep so I took an earlier bus to work. In the predawn cold & snow I met a woman. As we waited for the bus we began talking. It turned out she was a classmate of my older sister and a co-editor of the Letters to the editor section of the Milwaukee Journal.

In the months that followed I would see her from time to time. Then one spring day she asked me if I was related to a Donald Shinnow who had died in World War II!

Needless to say I was deeply surprised. I told her that he was my Uncle. I should mention I am a history teacher and I think one reason I got into that field was my continual research to learn more about my namesake.

So I asked the boys & why of her questions. It turned out that a letter had been written to the Milwaukee Journal and it had come across her desk.

The letter was from a retired 8th A.F. Colonel named Clayton C. David of Clairsville Ohio. It seems that David had been in London on a 20th Anniversary trip. At one of the functions he had met a Belgium man named Eddie Kempeneers.

The tie in was this, Kempeneers's father had seen my Uncle's plane crash on his farmland. He had gone to the wreck and had taken a few items including my Uncle's dog tags.

Eddie was born in 1949 and for reasons I never could really grasp he made it a quest to find out more about the B-17 & its good crew. He wrote to my grandparents address, after it was sent him by A.F. records. By that time they were long since dead. All other efforts to contact the Shinners family failed. So Eddie asked Clayton if he could do something once he went back to the States

Col. David went home & checked a library copy of the Milwaukee ^{Book} phone and had no luck so he wrote the Journal and went to my friend Mary's desk.

With the information that Mary gave me I called Col. David in Ohio. He was pleased to help me and gave me Eddie's address in Belgium.

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I promptly wrote Belgium. Eddie later wrote me what a shock it was to get a letter from a "Donald Skinner";

The Journal loved the story and then ran a front page story May 13, 1984. It was even picked up by the Wire services and was carried in several different papers across the country.

Before the story ran the writer made an attempt to find Emile Bohanty. (far right top). West Allis is a suburb of Milwaukee but there were no Bohanty's to be found.

When the story ran the married sister of Bohanty was woken up by a deluge of phone calls by old family friends. She called me (running through all the Skinners in the phone book) and I gave her Eddie's Belgium address.

I think I sent you, or someone else in the 306th Bombardment group Association, a clipping of the story. That is how I mostly likely got on the mailing list. By the way I have had a change of address. From 8103 W. Chestnut Wauwatosa to 2815 N 70th St Milwaukee 53210 7224.

One final note. Remember the day I couldn't sleep and took the early bus? It was Feb 22, 1984 - 40 years to the day my Uncle Donald died! I used to like watching the Twilight Zone but being in an episode----

Thanks for your help

Ronald Skinner