



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN  
NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



Wed - 16 May 84

Dear Russ

Will be pleased to produce such a piece -- it was a memorable occasion

I was on TV that evening (WMAZ) + radio (WAMU) the next morning. I have tapes of both.

UPI also ran something which was picked up in a Quincy, Mass paper.

Pix are being developed now showing me in front of the B-17.

I'll be starting my 7<sup>th</sup> year with the CFC in the Pentagon soon. I work for Sec Weinberger

Ken

The Washington Times article was better  
than the Post -- I'll send a Xerox

What's my dead line?

703 356 1123

## Flight of the Fortress

For the record, the B-17 bomber from Arizona whose cross-country flight we reported earlier this week arrived for future display at a Smithsonian Institution Air and Space Museum facility at Dulles International Airport.

Ken Blackshaw, 66, of McLean, was among those who watched it arrive, according to Daniel F. Gilmore of the Associated Press. Blackshaw, who flew 35 missions in a similar Flying Fortress, called it "the greatest warplane ever built."

Arnold Kolb of Alamogordo, N.M., who piloted the plane from Tucson to Dulles, gave the plane's log book and key to Walter Boyne, director of the Air and Space Museum. One of the last of the 12,700 B-17s that were built, it was seen by Kolb on forest

---

fire duty in Canada. Kolb bought and restored it for ultimate presentation to the Smithsonian.

2 May 1984

Mr. Ken Blackshaw  
1122 Waverly Way  
McLean, VA 22101

Dear Ken:

I saw the piece from the Washington Post about your "meeting" with the B-17 recently at Dulles.

I wondered immediately if you might like to write a piece for Echoes on how you felt about seeing the 17 again, the emotions that it aroused in you, etc. Or, if this doesn't appeal to you, a more factual account about the event.

If you have a picture of the plane, that would be good, as well.

The July issue of Echoes needs copy, and I am sure that this would fit in well.

I'll be interested in hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN  
NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA



July 31, 1987

Dear Russ

Pls add these <sup>four</sup> ~~three~~ names to your mailing list. They are all members of my crew that I have just this week located

I've sent them Reservation Forms, but they need to know more about our wonderful organization to encourage them to attend the Reunion. If they do, there will be ten of us (7 already committed)

David Gorrell (Bomb - DFC for hitting RR Tunnels - 1945)

7405 Whispering Pines

Dallas, TX 75248

Ernest YORGANSON (Bob Turrett - Pipped a dangling 1000 pound

190 N 700 East

Provo, Utah 84601

with a screwdriver while hanging by 1 hand out the Bomb Bay, over English Channel)

Duane BRUNNER (Ball Turrett)

3930 18<sup>th</sup> Ave

Bettendorf, Iowa 52722

Charlie MORGAN (CREW Chief)

2619 Ave G

Nederland, TX 77627

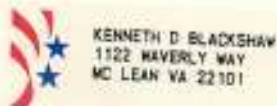
Puro, could you send thru the last two copies of the Echoes? The first drink is on me, if you can.

look forward to seeing you.

The Council is doing a super job of organizing everything. Still hope to hit the 700 figure, but I have my fingers crossed

All the Best

K



KENNETH D. BLACKSHAW  
1122 HAVERLY WAY  
MC LEAN VA 22101

703 956 1123

PS Here's \$25 to get them started

PPS Morgan is definitely coming to Reunion



## OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

Feb 22, 1988

Dear Russ

Thanks for your note on last year's Reunion. It was a lot of work, but a lot of fun, too. I'm looking forward to this year's as a SPECTATOR.

Enclosed is an HAIKU written by the daughter of my Navigator, Wes Gunkel. Her note explains on Haiku and the Haiku is self-explanatory. I found it very touching. Hope you can print it in the "Echoes" so that others may enjoy.

This is my final day in the Pentagon for a while. I've just completed my 10<sup>th</sup> Combined Federal Campaign (the Annual Charity Drive with the United Way) for the Secretary of Defense. We've gone from under \$3 million to over \$7 this campaign. I've been asked to come back, but who knows?

See you in Vegas.

Ken

MR KENNETH BLACKSHAW  
1122 WAVERLY WAY  
MCLEAN, VA.  
22101

I am enclosing the Haiku which I wrote after our excursion to Arlington. I found the ceremony very moving.

I thought you might enjoy seeing these. The Japanese Haiku consists of a total of 5-7-5 syllables. "...the haiku should contain some reference to nature; it should deal with a particular occurrence; and what is going on in the poem should be in the act of happening." The Americans have taken some freedom with the above. Although many Haiku journals still stick to the 5-7-5 line count others go with less or slightly more as I do.

Best wishes for the holidays,

Sharon

ARLINGTON

Another man's grave  
the lonely sound of Taps  
in the sunlight

Flashback...  
listening to my father  
telling war stories

The silence  
rows and rows of white headstones  
stand at attention

Autumn wind  
rustling through the cemetery  
sunlight and shadows

Trying to remember  
from the black and white snapshots  
my father as a young man

World War II reunion  
the crowd gathers to place  
a wreath on Smitty's grave

Flag unfurled  
the Honor Guard salutes  
the click of a camera

---Sharon Gunkel  
9/87



2 February 1989

Kenneth D. Blackshaw  
1122 Waverly Way  
McLean, VA 22101

Dear Ken:

Writing for myself, and for Don Ross and Reg Robinson,  
let me express our thanks and appreciation for your  
recent gift to the 306th BG Project Fund.

Your concern for the Association as evidenced by your  
gift is much appreciated, and you will be hearing further  
from us on the matter.

Sincerely yours,

William F. Houlihan  
President

Amount received: \$15.00

## OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Feb 14, 1992

MEMO FOR

Russ

You have most of the info you  
requested

Wife:- Betty - Exec Asst to Cong Matt  
Ronaldo (R-NJ)

Birthdate - 3/5/18

Sec Sec - 010-16-8457

AO-823528 (# with the 306th)

Retire: - Air Force May 1963

Dir of AF Feb 1981

Consultant, OSD - still on Payroll

Phone :- 703-356-1123

Kerr

Mr. Kenneth D. Blackshaw  
1122 Weaver Way  
McLean VA 22101





43-58376

Kenneth D. Blackshaw  
1122 Waverly Way  
McLean, Virginia 22101

Feb 14, 1992

Dear Russ

Just finished reading another great edition of the "Echoes." It reminded me that the "Gray Lady" was still unclaimed.

It was my ship, final 3 for the B-17 G was 376. Pic shows me in the driver's seat. It was named after the Island of Nantucket, MA, my "Home of Record" -- incidentally we gave the island a pretty good "Buzz" jolt on the crew's way to Thurleigh.

John McCollum, Bill Carlisle and I have organized a local (inc Baltimore) for 19 Feb. THANK to your latest Echoes we have contacted Jack Arise + the Mechanicsville duo to attend. Jack was the original weatherman at ~~the~~ Utah + remembers Major Rappe (sic) Bill Rader says he's looking forward to seeing him.

We are making plans to use Paul Steele's model at one of our meetings -- possibly including it at one of our 8<sup>th</sup> AF Historical meetings -- John McC is instrumental in this organization -- We met last month at Andrews, and would meet at Belvoir should the beautiful (and large) B17 model be included

Incidentally, Gen Rader, accompanied by his lovely wife Stephanie, were the guests of honor at Andrews & Bill gave a stirring report on just a few of the highlights of his career. This included a modest summary of how he won the Silver Star in the Pacific prior to Wendover.

Am sending a small contribution to Dale to keep me and my crew in good standing.

Keep up the good work

Ken

CREW OF THE GRAY LADY



*Duane  
Brunner*

*Frank Yorgason  
Crack  
Roy Moberg  
Roy Maphis*

*Ern Blockshaw  
Ed Tuttle  
John Wilson  
Dave Correll  
Leland Lusk*

It's been a great year for me -- and I hope it has been one for you, too. I'm finishing my 14th PENTAGON Charity stint as I write this -- another great year, \$9.2 million for the 1500 Agencies to which the money can be designated -- almost 10% more than last year.

The prices for the Group Reunion next year in England seem very high -- almost prohibitively high. One of the people in my office just returned from London with the comment that the prices there are the same as they are here in Washington and New York except that they are in pounds, not dollars, and the exchange is roughly 2 to 1. A \$50 evening here is 50 pounds there in "jolly old."

I may go, but only if several of you go, also -- and we can improve on the prices quoted in the 306th Echoes.

Again Best Wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Great Year for You and Yours.

*Ken & Betty*

Russ - This was my final message to the surviving members - Ray Maphis (3rd from right, back row) is deceased.

Front Row - Blackshaw, GUNKEL, Wilson, + Gorrell (l.to r.)

Back Row - NOKES, TORUN, BRUNNER, Maphis, Yorgason + Chuck Yeager, our only Purple Heart recipient

Meow

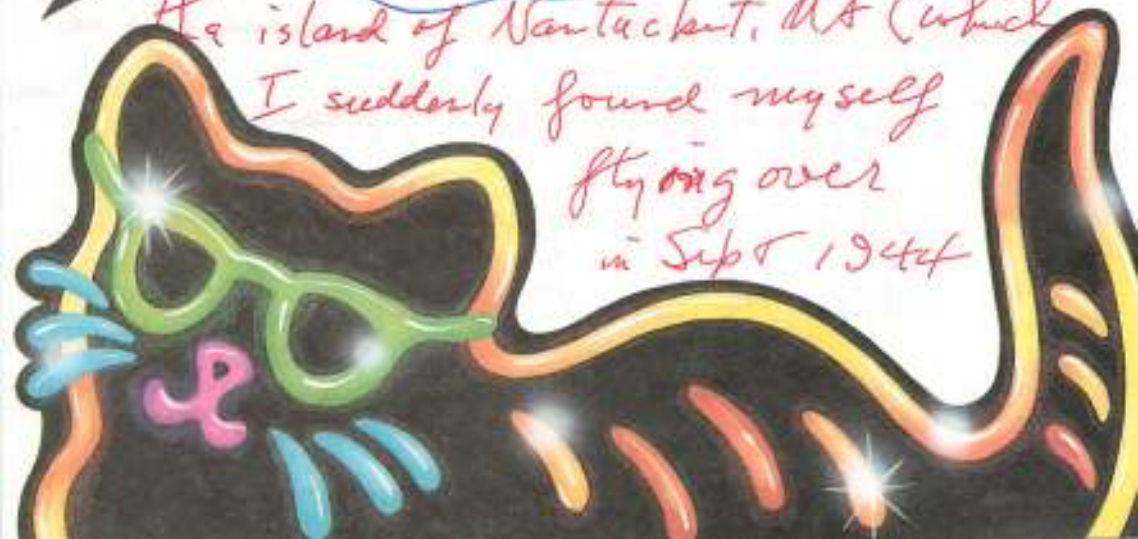
July 28, 1992

Dear C.F.

Keep up the good work!!

Wish I could be joining you  
in England, but it's A little  
expensive for me.

In response to the question  
on the "Gray lady," it was my  
airplane (#376?) The name represents  
the island of Nantucket, MA (which  
I suddenly found myself  
flying over  
in Sept 1944)





on my way to Valley, Wales with  
a bright & shiny, Brand-New B-17.  
Gave it (to the island) a respectable  
Buzz job -- My wife & son & many  
friends felt a little closer to the  
winning war effort as a result.

Following eye surgery I'll be back  
next month for my 15<sup>th</sup> year running  
the Annual Charity Drive for the Secretary  
of Defense (inc 125,000 military & civilian  
personnel in the the Washington area). <sup>[over \$1/2 million raised last year]</sup> I do  
get paid, but only the difference of  
regular pay with my retirement deducted.

All the Best

Ken Blackshaw

Kenneth D. Blackshaw  
1122 Waverly Way  
McLean, Virginia 22101

Dear Russ

Please include in the next "Echoes"

Roy E. Nokes, 423rd waist and tail gunner (Ken Blackshaw crew), 70, died August 12, 1993 in Springfield, Missouri. He flew his combat tour from October 1944 to April 1945 and attained the grade of Technical Sergeant. He assisted radioman Ed Tutun in saving the life of Chuck Yeager who had sustained critical flak injury. He worked for Thomas J. Lipton Co. for 34 years before retiring in 1985. He attended the Group Reunion in Washington, D.C. in 1987, one of seven in Blackshaw crew to do so.

Enclosed is a check for \$20<sup>00</sup> in Roy's name.

I am <sup>DOING</sup> ~~doing~~ my final days in the Sec Def's (DoD - West area) annual Charity Drive. We solicit 125,000 personnel with 70% participation & an average gift of over \$125.

Quite a shock when Aspin resigned. My boss was the one who swore him in. In-man should be a big improvement.

Best to you & yours for the Holidays

Sincerely  
Ken

Dear Bob - Thought you might like to see  
my annual Xmas letter Ken Blackshaw, Pilot, "Grey Lady"

It is that time of year again. Time to review how our illustrious crew members are doing. Johnnie Wilson is doing well, is doing a fair amount of travelling, and enjoying the good California sunshine -- the floods seemed to have missed Santa Barbara somehow.

Wes Gunkel is still retired, but continues to do his "expert" witness operation -- I thought all Professors were rich, but Wes says, 'no', but is enjoying life in Ithica. Dave Gorrell is still among the missing, but we know where he is in Texas.. -- a great bombardier!!!

Ed Tutun stills summers on the Long Island Sound, house in Connecticut, with winters in the Florida sun near Sarasota. His lovely wife still needs private air transport. He earned a DFC for his efforts to save our Chuck Yeager from bleeding to death.

And speaking of Chuck, he has been through very serious surgery at Walter Reed Army Hospital on two occasions. His forceful wife, Carol, has seen to it that he gets the best of treatment wherever he is. His intestines are gone but there's still a lot of fight left.

Dewey Brunner is still holding the Mississippi back and was one of the two to make the Iowa Reunion -- Wes was the other.

In this connection -- Annual Convention -- John and your faithful pilot are planning on attending the 1996 Conventon in Las Vegas. We went to the last one there and it was great. But this one could be even better if we could ALL ATTEND. As your oldest member I have traveling problems these days, but will make this one !!! My high school class is holding our 60th reunion in May and I am committed to that one in Boston. As for yours truly, I am typing this in my Pentagon Office on my new IBM Computer -- Microsoft Word 6.0.

This is my 18th year with the Combined Federal Campaign, the first three at the Administrator -- we solicit 125,000 military and civilian personnel in the National Capital Area. We support 2500 agencies from the Red Cross to Ducks Unlimited. I am now the Adjutant of my American Legion Post, [redacted] Commander last year. Have now found out that I had the easy job last year. Dewey, I'm still active my Knights of Columbus Council and Assembly.

Betty is fine, and altho retired with 32 years from the US Congress, still works 2 days a week for her former Congressman who retired when she did.

For Thanksgiving my grandson Kenneth Scott, his wife and his mother-in-law, their children Jessica, 3, and Kenneth Jacob, 1, spread a little joy in the Blackshaw household. Incidentally, there are now four Ken Blackshaws -- just what the country needs!!!!

Our two Crew Chiefs, Yorgason and Morgan, are still hanging in there, but neither seems to be quite as peppy as they were 50 years ago -- but who is? ?

Well, fellas, we had it great in our day. Lets just enjoy the time left on this good earth with a grand reunion in Las Vegas!!!!

Sincerest BEST WISHES TO All of You for the Holidays and the years ahead....

Rec'd 25/12

RMT

Friday, April 18, 1997

From: Ken Blackshaw, Pilot

To: Russ Strong

Subject: Final Flight of my Navigator, Dave Gorrell

David Henry Gorrell died on March 3, 1995 at his home in Lake Placid, Florida of throat cancer. He was buried in the Columbarium at Arlington National Cemetery. He was 71.

Captain Gorrell flew his Combat Tour with L/Col. Blackshaw's crew, 423rd Squadron, from October 1944 to March of 1945. He was selected as lead bombardier for a particularly difficult mission on Feb 16, 1945 to bomb the Minister Stein Coking plant in Dortmund, Germany. Lt Gorrell placed the bombs in the center of the coking plant so well that he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his remarkable effort (see Pg 139, 423rd Sq. Combat Diary).

He later went on to complete his degree at Notre Dame. His marriage to Gloria Gorrell ended in divorce. There were four children, David, Jr., Olathe, Kansas, Paula Holtman, Des Moines, Iowa, Becky Young, Lexington, KY, and Marianne Mudgett, Denver, CO., and ten grandchildren. He worked for 40 years for Appliance and Hardware Companies, including Admiral Corporation.

He is also survived by his wife, Pat Gorrell, Denver, Colorado.

Russ, Dave, Jr., has indicated that there are military records available, and "the girls" have indicated they would like to donate them to the 8th Air Force Museum. Can you advise, please?

All the Best to you, Russ. Hope to be able to make it to Orlando. I finally retired from the Pentagon last January -- over 50 years there -- first reported in Feb. 1946. . . .

cc: David Gorrell, Jr.  
14021 Rain Tree Drive  
Olathe, Kansas 66062

24 April 1997

Dear Ken:

Many thanks for the information on Dave Gorrell.

As to donating Dave's military records to the 8th AF Heritage Center, send them to Mary Kay Bernard, Mighty Eighth AF Heritage Museum, PO Box 1992, Savannah, GA 31402.

She will take proper care of them. I have had many dealings with her in making 306th records available to the Center.

Glad to know that you have finally slowed down a bit. It must seem strange to stay home!

I will change the Echoes mailing from Dave to his son, who probably will continue to enjoy reading it. At least I hope he will.

All the best,

2/21/00

Good Morning, Russ,

Thanks much for the quick response on the picture - it is even more clear on the "Grey Lady," name. I have been slow on sending you a check, so I am penalizing myself \$10 to account for the \$50 enclosed. You do good work!

I would like to think that it is I in the pilot's seat, but I realize it could have been another pilot in the squadron.

As a matter of fact when I discussed the PIC with my old copilot, John Wilson, he reported that he had flown 5 missions as 'pilot' after my departure - my last mission was on 17 March 45 - so he would like to think that the pilot on this mission was he. We are both retired L.c.'s which you probably know - mine was with 21 years of active duty, nine in the Pentagon, four in England and Germany, and four & 1/2 in SAC (three at SAC HQ and the rest as KC-97 Aircraft Commander and Administrative Officer of the 301st Air Refueling Sqd at Barksdale AFB, reflexing often at Goose Bay, Labrador.)

I plan to send you a captioned picture of my crew in front of the "Grey Lady", with full identification of all ten of the crew - three are deceased. I keep in touch with others, three of which are not in good shape.

Hope you enjoy the West Coast

Best

Ken

May 22, 2000

Dear Russ,

Sorry to be so slow in getting the Pic and the Caption for same.

Suggested caption for Ken Blackshaw's crew photo in front of the B-17, Gray Lady.

This is the crew of the B-17, F Freddie #8376, Gray Lady, Pictured on the front page of the January 2000 issue of the 306<sup>th</sup> Echoes.

The crew assembled at Rapid City, S. D. in July of 1944, and in September flew a new B-17 to England to join the Eighth Air Force. After several missions a 423<sup>rd</sup> Sqd B-17 was named the "Gray Lady," a nickname for Nantucket Island in Massachusetts, former home of Ken Blackshaw, Pilot.

Shown in the picture from the left, standing, are; Waist Gunner Roy Nokes,\* Radio Operator Ed Tutun, Ball Turret Operator Duane Brunner, Tail Gunner Robert Maphis,\* Top Turret and Crew Chief Forrest Yorgason, and Waist Gunner Charles Yeager (crew's only Purple Heart winner).

Kneeling are crew officers; Pilot Ken Blackshaw, Navigator Wes Gunkel (Wes led the entire 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force on 2 missions to Germany), Copilot John Wilson (later pilot of his own crew), and Bombardier David Gorrell \* (earned a Special DFC for bombing accuracy.)

Hope you will be able to use as is – if there is any question, pls call: 703.356.1123

Will not be able to attend this year's convention – travel is not one of my options these days.

Best Wishes to you and all who do such a great job with The Echoes.

Sincerely,

Ken Blackshaw

Obits

Special for Russell Strong, Editor

Regret to inform you of the last flights of three members of the Ken Blackshaw Crew:

1. Wesley W. Gunkel, Navigator, 78, 12 May, Cancer - He volunteered for a second tour after leading the entire Eighth Air Force on two missions, one to Berlin. Gunkel became an internationally known Professor of Agronomy at Cornell University specializing in growing pineapples - he was listed in several Who's Who's.

2. Forrest Yorgason, Flight Engineer, 80, 16 Oct, He returned to Provo, Utah following the War. His daring effort to release a dangling bomb that had failed to drop on the target possibly saved the lives of the entire crew. He credits the safe return of the entire crew to a 'blessing' he received from the Mormon Church prior to our departure overseas.

3. Duane Brunner, Ball Turret, 76 - 20 Oct, Outstanding airman who handled the ball turret extremely well, Cancer. He returned to Iowa following service, settling in Bettendorf and a successful business career.

With these three deaths there are four surviving members of the Blackshaw crew. Pilot Ken Blackshaw, Copilot (and later Pilot) John Wilson, Radio Operator Edward H. Tutun, and Charles N. Yeager, Waist Gunner extraordinaire.

We were all very dedicated airmen, dedicated to our country and dedicated to winning the war - and all proud to be members of the 306th Bomb Group of the Mighty Eighth Air Force.

Source: Ken Blackshaw -- 703.356.1123, and fax

Personal for Russ: I will be sending a Check to the Group, but only after the above is printed. Will appreciate having it in toto, as is. Thanks and

"A Merry Christmas to You and Yours"







Russell Strong &lt;rstrong87@gmail.com&gt;

## Blackshaw's Military Record @ Recon Magazine

1 message

BOSTONKEN@aol.com &lt;BOSTONKEN@aol.com&gt;

Mon, Apr 9, 2007 at 10:37 AM

To: EdTea1@msn.com, victor77@cox.net, donna.weiss@comcast.net, sgtshaft@verizon.net, Morgan <streetman@nederland.k12.tx.us>, thuja8@comcast.net

Cc: colwengel@msn.com, clay@cw.com, Brian.Wilson@biw.com, YipYipGirl@aol.com, bigband.2@comcast.net, Sharon.Kibiloski@pentagon.af.mil, Ernestmclea@aol.com, Rstrong87@gmail.com

Recon interview

WORLD WAR II B-17 PILOT SURVIVED

35 MISSIONS OVER GERMANY

By Kevin Dennehy

Ken Blackshaw flew 35 combat missions over Germany during World War II and rubbed elbows with some of the biggest names in Air Force history—the stuff that movies are made about. In fact, the movie and television series “12 O’Clock High” were based on Blackshaw’s unit, the Eighth Air Force’s 306th Bomb Group.

Blackshaw stayed in the Air Force for 21 years, retiring in 1963 as a lieutenant colonel. While he served in the Blackshaw’s other assignments included Strategic Air Command headquarters in Omaha, Neb.; commander of Chicksands Priory Air Base north of London; U.S. Air Force Europe Headquarters, Weisbaden, Germany; 301st Air Refueling Squadron, Barksdale AFB, La.; and Goose Air Base, Labrador. He served with or knew famous Air Force generals Archie Olds, Curtis LeMay and Carl “Tooe” Spaatz.

After military service, he served for 18 years as the Director and Public Affairs Officer for the Combined Fed-Pentagon, he maintained his pilot proficiency by flying out of Bolling Air Force Base. Following six years in the Pentagon, Blackshaw was assigned in January 1952 to the Third Air Force in London as Special Assistant to the Commander for Protocol. He maintained his pilot

skills during this period with assigned flights throughout Europe and Africa.

It was during this time that U.S. Strategic Air Command was rotating bombers to bases in England. The 10-engine (6 props and 4 jets) B-36 was an important bomber in 1953, Blackshaw said. England's Prince Phillip had expressed an interest in seeing one. A press tour was arranged that included the prince. Blackshaw was the pilot of the press plane for the mission. While the prince was in the cockpit of the B-36, Blackshaw decided he would take a look at the tail section, which was separated from the cockpit by long tube that one could use to slide from one end to the other. After viewing the tail section, Blackshaw went to step down the ladder to get back to the ground. There was an object in the way--Prince Phillip's head.

Blackshaw said that prince looked up and said, "Hello, I'm Phillip" with a strong British accent. Blackshaw, who quickly got out of the way, proceeded to bang his head on the aircraft while the prince entered.

eral Campaign for the Secretary of Defense until 1997. He served as the National Press Club's American Legion Post 20 commander in 1994 and 1995 and continues as financial secretary today.

Blackshaw, who turns 89 this year, lives in McLean, Va. Married 35 years to Elizabeth McNally Blackshaw, he has one son, three grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, and two great-great grandsons.

Recon: When did you join the Air Corps?

Blackshaw: "I was working for Nantucket Inquirer and Mirror in 1942, when I went to the Navy Yard in Boston.

I passed my physical, but the doctor asked me if I had any allergies. I said no, just hay fever. The Army Air Corps

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Apparently, I was the only pilot who had tested this type of equipment before. He said that I could not go overseas unless I paid back the government \$18.73 for the flares I dropped. I had to pay the bill to go overseas.

"Somehow, we got 'lost' flying to New Hampshire and found ourselves over Nantucket, population 5,000 to 7,000 at the time. We gave the town the greatest fly over! My

wife and son waved at me, I was told later. We went on to Goose Bay, Labrador, spending a few days there getting airplane parts. Then we went to Iceland, where we spent one night in a tent, with 34 blankets between us."

Recon: What happened when your B-17 landed in England?

Blackshaw: "We landed and had to take a train from London to Bedford, England which was the closest to our base, Thurleigh, home of the 306th Bomb Group, 423rd Squadron. We were told to bring bourbon—and we had several bottles with us. Scotch was scarce."

Recon: What was your first mission like?

Blackshaw: "We flew our first mission in October 1944. For the first 2 missions, I was required to fly as copilot before taking my own crew on a mission. On the first one, I noticed all the little squares on the B-17 and asked what they were for. I was informed that they covered up the holes made by flak from previous missions. When the mission was over, they counted 76 new holes. That's where we had been hit."

Recon: The 306th had a distinguished career. Where did you bomb?

Blackshaw: "We bombed all over Germany. We bombed Berlin twice. Hitler swore we would never bomb Berlin. We hit Wurzburg three times. The flak was so thick that you could almost walk on it. Berlin's flak was not that heavy, but very accurate. We bombed the Nazi scientific center at Peenemünde. After the war, I told the head of the center that we had bombed them. He had no hard feelings, and said, 'you did a good job.' I was lunching with him at the New York's World Fair in 1964.

"We flew as the no. 2 ship during many missions, had the Norden bombsight and had radar. On many raids, we would get up at 3 a.m. for the lead crew briefing, and rejected me on the spot. I went back 2 months later and passed everything again, but this time, when asked about allergies, I said, 'no, sir.' They swore me in 'on the spot.'"

Recon: Where did you do your training?

Blackshaw: "In January of 1943, they called me to active duty. I reported to Atlantic City, N.J. While the Army wasn't ready for us, we did eat in a chow hall to the sound of a live orchestra headed by Capt. Glen Miller. I got to meet him later when he got to England. He wasn't

very talkative, but played a decent game of snooker (billiards).

"They didn't send me to pilot training right away. I was sent to attend college at the University of Pittsburgh. I spent 4 months there living, learning and sleeping in the 39-story main university building. I was then sent to a Classification Center in Tennessee, where I was selected to be a pilot, in lieu of navigator and bombardier.

"In Orangeville, S.C., I learned to fly solo in a Stearman bi-plane. I used to get air sick, which was a good way to get kicked out of the cadet program. To get around this, I learned to fly upside down and let it go whenever I had to upchuck. Only a leg strap was holding me in the airplane."

Recon: Did you go overseas after pilot training?

Blackshaw: "At 26, they told me I was too old (for combat), so they made me an instructor. One day, in the orderly room, I saw a flyer for a requisition for B-17 pilot transition. I scribbled in 'Blackshaw' and the next thing I knew I had applied for it and was selected."

Recon: Where was B-17 training?

Blackshaw: "They sent me to Columbus, Ohio, for pilot transition training. After that, I went to Rapid City, S.D., to assemble a crew and go through 10 weeks of difficult training. It was tough as I made them cope with every imaginable scenario for combat. The crew was sent to Lincoln, Neb., to pick up our brand new B-17 to fly to England.

One our crew members was from western Iowa, not too far from Lincoln. We flew over his farm and dropped flares and smoke bombs. The folks on the ground waved back. When we prepared to go overseas, a superior officer asked me if I, Lt. Blackshaw, had dropped the flares. I said yes.

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Recon interview

then to the crew briefing at 4 a.m., to prepare to take off at 7 a.m."

Recon: Any missions stand out as harrowing?

Blackshaw: "During the Battle of Bulge, among many others, we flew on three missions, 1-2-3 January 1945. We took off in the dark and landed in the dark. Nearly 2,000 airplanes also did the same thing. There was a very short daylight span.

"Sometimes we were sitting game. I recall flying over

Holland, where the Germans isolated anti-aircraft batteries. A bomber on our flank was hit by flak in its bomb bay. The plane completely disintegrated."

Recon: How were the relationships among the crew?

Blackshaw: "The crew was very dedicated. We had a crew member from Utah, two Catholics, one Jewish airman and protestants. Our bombardier was a freshman at Notre Dame and married. Our radio operator, Ed Tutton, should have gotten the Silver Star as he saved the life of one of our gunners who were shot and bleeding furiously during one mission. He administered first aid with a tourniquet. The member he saved was Chuck Yeager, not that Chuck Yeager, though I met the famous one later. My Chuck Yeager just passed away recently

"We also loved the fighter pilots--they protected us. Occasionally, we would lose an engine and when we shot a red flare, would very quickly see a fighter pilot flying close to protect us."

Recon: Do you still keep in touch with the crew?

Blackshaw: "I didn't right away. Out of the 10 crew members, eight are now deceased. I kept in close contact with them over the years. We were the 306th Bomb Group--first to bomb Germany, first to win the Medal of Honor. We flew many of our missions together."

Recon: What are your thoughts about Gen. Curtis LeMay?

Blackshaw: "I knew him personally. In retrospect, I am a great admirer. The people of Omaha loved him. He used to fly into London when I was there. My general was a race car enthusiast who would go to France for big races like Le Mans. They both bought English basic cars with no engines. LeMay was a good friend of the general and would occasionally attend the races. One time, we were told that LeMay had a top, top secret guest who turned out to be Arthur Godfrey."

Recon: Did you end up staying in Europe after the war?

Blackshaw: "We flew a lot in all three corridors into Berlin. In general, Russian MiG pilots would closely monitor us. Flying conditions were poor. A lot of fog and zero visibility.

"After being a member of an elite (General Tunner's

Pink Card & they were the only ones allowed to carry passengers) crew for four years in Europe, I was reassigned to a unit of Strategic Air Command. I was sent to Barksdale, La., where I was an Aircraft commander of a crew. They did make me the Administrative Officer of the 301st Air Refueling Squadron, which allowed me to wear a 35 mm gun when we refueled to Goose Bay, Labrador -- which was often.

"The 7 a.m. roll call every morning didn't suit me much. I did refuel Jimmy Stewart's B-47 during his reserve training. Later, my wife Betty and I met him and his wife Gloria in Hollywood at an event. They were very nice and we had a great conversation with them."

Editor's Note: Blackshaw is currently a member of these organizations: The National Press Club (Silver Owl); American Legion, Post 20, NPC; Knights of Columbus (PGK); Touchdown Club; Military Officers Association; Order of the Daedalians; Disabled American Veterans; Tuesday Musical; Aviation/Space Writers Association; National Aviation Club; Eighth Air Force Historical Society, local and national; and the Aero Club of Washington.

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