

## PERSONNEL RECORD UPDATE

306th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

Date. 9-14-94 . . .

Complete this form and return to Russell A. Strong, Secretary, 306th BG Assoc.,  
5323 Cheval Place, Charlotte, NC 28205, to be filed with 306th records.

LAST NAME: STEIGER FIRST NAME: Clifford MI: L TITLE: LTC

Street Address: 19129 Palo Verde Dr Telephone: (619) 247-5130

City, State Apple Valley, Calif. Zip + 4: 92308 - \_ \_ \_ \_

Winter Address: Same Telephone: ( )

City, State Zip + 4: \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_

Date of birth: 6-20-16

Wife's name: Ada

#c 2

#gc 17

#ggc 17

GGGC 1

College(s) attended: U of Ariz 1 yr  
VV College 2 yrs

Degree(s), & when: None

Last employment & job title & retirement date:

~~Chief~~ Director of Security, Air Force Audio Visual Service. 1970

Serial #(s): 0-782648

Squadron: 423<sup>d</sup> Specialty: Pilot

Date joined 306th: Feb 1945

If combat, what crew? Steiger crew

Special duties or assignments w/306th: Sq Adjutant Air Eng Sq after VE Day  
Flew Casey Jones out of Istres le Tube, France

No of missions flown: 12

Date of last mission: Apr 1945

Date leaving 306th: Nov 1945

Highest rank/grade w/306th: 2 Lt

Other 8AF units served with, and when: None

Top service assignment after 306th: Varied and many - Base Exec  
Norton AFB

USAF retirement date: 6-30-76

Rank/grade: LTC

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 National Archives or the Air University.

If you know of others who served with the 306th and who do not appear in the current 306th 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.

A HISTORY OF THE 306th BOMBARDMENT GROUP - EIGHTH AIR FORCE  
Russell A. Strong, 4900 Appleridge Ct., Dayton, Ohio 45424

I am endeavoring to put together a good history of the 306th Bombardment group, an idea which has been in my mind for some years. I am working diligently on the matter, collecting all kinds of data and working through the official history and records of the group. I served as a navigator with the 367th squadron from June through November, 1944, and currently am director of news and information services at Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio. I solicit your assistance in my project.

I am interested in any special materials which you may have, such as good photographs of personnel, battle damage, plane insignia, etc. I am also interested in commendations (other than the usual Air Medal and DFC) you may have received, special stories which you may have in your possession, letters that are highly descriptive of combat action, or any other documents. I would appreciate receiving xeroxed copies. But, if you do not have such facilities readily available, I would appreciate the loan of materials which I might copy and return to you immediately. I am also interested in manuscripts of memoirs which you may have prepared, particularly if they were done within a couple of years of the events. Again, I would appreciate copies or the opportunity to copy them.

Name STEIGER, Clifford L.

Address 15321 El Centro Street, Hesperia, California, 92345.

Telephone (714) 244-3159

Date December 12, 1975.

Occupation Retired

Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

**Service Record:**

Before joining the 306th: Cadet- Camp Kearns, Utah, Santa Ana, Calif, Lemoore, Calif, Ft Sumner, New Mex. Graduation and commissioning. Hobbs, N.M., Lincoln, Neb, El Paso, Texas, Lincoln Neb., Camp Kilmer, NJ, Scotland, Thurleigh. Flew a war weary home from Sneaderton Heath for relief from AD in Oct 45.

After leaving the 306th: Reserve Commission- 452d, Long Beach, Kirtland AFB, NM, Recalled AD Feb 51 as 9110 (Military Police) at Goodfellow AFB, Tex. Trans to Williams AFB clamoring for flying status. Evaluated and classified as fighter pilot, Instructor School at Craig AFB, Ala. Jet upgraded at Willy. AFSC F-1124Q (Jet Fighter Pilot Instructor) Instructed at Willy, Greenville, Miss, and J Conally AFB, Tex.

306th Record: Pilot B-17, 12 Missions on VE day. Sq Adjutant for 411 AS Gp. Pilot F-11 on Casey Jones Project to Oct 45.

Arrival Date Feb 1945 Squadron or other unit 423

MOS 1054?

Combat Status Pilot- Bomber

Missions Completed 12

Promotions to Lt Colonel at retirement

Decorations 1 AM 2 olcs DFC olcs SS DSM DSC MH SM

ETOPH 3 Battle Stars Commendation, Dist Unit other \_\_\_\_\_

(OVER)

**Other personal data:**

Completed 8 years AD during WWII and the Korean War. Placed in retired reserve after 29 years commissioned service in July, 1973.

Have flown the following aircraft(Military) PT-22, BT-13, AT- 17, UC-78, B-17, AT- 6, AT-11, C-45, C-47, L-1, 2 ,5, 13, 16, 19, T- 28, T-33, T-34, F-80, T-29, and B-25.

**Description of Air Missions:**

(What were the highlights of your combat career? What was your role? What heroics did you witness? What events were there of which you have special knowledge?)

Mid air colission over the Ruhr Valley Mar 7, 1945 followed by bail out over France.Sustained one crew fatality.

6 February 1989

LTC Clifford L. Steiger  
7677 11th Avenue  
Hesperia, CA 92345

Dear Cliff:

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

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

Sincerely yours,

William F. Houlihan  
President

Amount received: \$100.00

Clifford L. Steiger  
7677 Eleventh Avenue,  
Hesperia, CA., 92345.

August 26, 1989.

Russell A. Strong  
5323 Cheval Place,  
Charlotte, NC., 28205.

Dear Russ,

I've jotted down my recollections of the collision over the IP on the bomb run to Giessen. It was a stupid accident that never should have happened, and over the years I've racked my brain to figure how it could have happened, but it did.

Our crew was alert and watchful for enemy fighters because the bomb run was the most hazardous part of the mission. I am sure that they saw Herb Cohns aircraft but they did not consider it a hazard to us, and consequentially, did not mention it. I do not know if the Airman were briefed about the formation change that was to take place at the IP. Also I do not know if the same briefing was given to the pilots of the 368th.

I am sure that tail gunner Rial saw the collision coming, but gave no warning of its iminence. None of the rest of the crew were aware that we had suffered a midair, and we figured it had been a direct hit by HE.

Also after arriving back at Thurleigh later, we discovered that the mission lead was not aware that an aircraft had been lost in a midair until nearly back home.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Cliff".

# Pilot Survey

Name STEIGER

Cadet Class 44-D, E, F

Adv. Trng. Location FT Sommer N Max

# Combat Missions 12

Date leaving 306th 11-45

Rank on leaving 306th 2LT

Did you fly with the Casey Jones  
Project in 1945-46? yes

Send to: Russell Strong  
5232 Cheval Place  
Charlotte, NC 28205

7677 11th Ave.,  
Hesperia, CA., 92345.  
13 Feb 1987.

Mr Bill Collins  
2973 Heatherbrae Dr.,  
Poland, OH., 44514.

Dear Bill,

I sincerely hope that you can keep the "ECHOS" coming, and feel remiss that I have not been as regular with my support as I could have been. there are so many stories that have thusfar gone untold, and yours is the only way that these interesting and sometimes terrifying incidents can become known.

My own participation with the 306th BG was with the 423d Fiery Phantoms, Grim Reapers Etc. My arrival in Thurleigh was late in the war and at VE had not completed a tour. This enabled me to become involved in some very interesting assignments such as the only pilot assigned to the 813th Air Engineering Sq., of the 414th AS gp. Major Sory of the Sq and Lt Col Schmidt of the Gp had the responsibility of equipping the 306th as the AF of Occupation and my job was to visit the closing bases in the UK and Europe and scrounge the different items that were needed, such as Pants pressers, ice cream machines, and Aircraft (L-5s, B-26setc.)

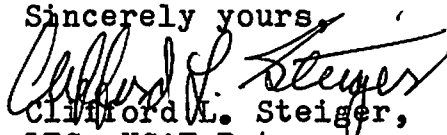
The 423 Sq moved to Istres le Tube, Near Marseilles in the summer of 45 and soon became short of pilots for their "Casey Jones" project. I was transferred back to the 423d and flew many photo missions over Spain, Italy, and the edges of Switzerland and Yugoslavia.

In 1954, while serving as a jet fighter pilot instructor and mission pilot, I ran into my old Sq Commander, Major Bouie, who was then a Light Colonel and Inspector General at James Conally AFB.

While at Williams AFB, I met a Major Schmidt who was the brother of the Commander of the 414th AS GP, and Wg Adjutant at Luke AFB.

Like I say there so many tales to be told and the only way that they can be told is through the Echos and at the re-unions. I am hopeful that a future re-union will be held on the west coast. There are many 306ers out here, and I believe that it would enhance attendance.

Sincerely yours,

  
Clifford L. Steiger,  
LTC, USAF Ret



26 Lam

Although the forwarding order has expired, will you be so kind as to send me the new address for Clifford L. Steiger?

I enclose a check for the \$1 fee for this service.

Paul A. Chung



S.O.#  
COL

LICOL

MAJ

CAPT

LIC

LIC

As of Jan 1 1992 the fees for  
this Service is 3.00 + you need a  
return envelope with postage

19129 Palo Verde Dr #18  
Apple Valley, Ca 92308-8909

Cliff Steiger  
19091 Oak Street,  
Apple Valley, CA. 92308.

8-1-97

Dear Russel,

The picture of Tom Hadleys crew in the April issue of the Echos brought back an interesting memory.

Tom and I picked up a war weary B-17F target tug at Sneaderton Heath, (Jimmie Stewarts outfit) to fly back to the United States. We were also supposed to bring back fifteen passengers, but the airplane only had three fairly good engines, so the passengers were scrubbed.

We took off from Sneaderton Heath on 10-19-45 with a crew of six for Marignone, France. We still had de-icer boots on the wings of this tug. While crossing the English Channel, I flipped the switch to see if they were still working. The one on the right wing worked OK but the one on the left wing blew up, popped, and started flapping on the wing. We removed the boots at Marignone and also learned the the bad engine had used far too much oil for a four hour flight.

We took off the next day for Casa Blanca, Morocco without incident except excessive oil consumption by the number three engine on a five and half hour flight. We were delayed a day in Casa Blanca by bad batteries.

We finally got away from Casa Blanca on on 10-22-45 for Dakar, FWA. The flight took eight and one half hours, and #3 engine had barely enough oil in it to feather it if it became neccessary. ATC would not clear us for the flight to Natal, Brazil unless we had an engine change. They told us that it would take at least 30 days to get an engine in. We were on our way home, so no way did we want a 30 day or longer delay. Tom conned ATC in allowing us to pull the cowls, wash it down, Tighten all clamps and hoses, Test fly it and see if the engine was within limits.

It took a whole day to instal new batteries, and wash down the engine. The next day we took it up for four hours of spotting animals in the jungle and fish in the Atlantic. As soon as we were out of sight of the tower, we feathered #3. Befor landing we unfeathered it, and of course the oil consumption was within limits.

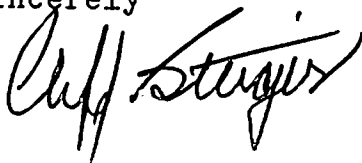
ATC cleared us for Natal, Brazil on the morning of 10-25-45. We had a new SOP for the rest of the way home. Feather #3 after take off and unfeather before landing. This we did all the way to West Palm Beach, Florida.

( The target tugs were very light, the had no armor plating, no turrets, no bomb load. they were fast and home sick angels. They were entirely different from the G models we flew in combat).

In our case #3 was a spare engine the rest of the way home. We knew that we could get six to eight hours out of it if we had to have it. We only used it approximately one hour on each flight to West Palm Beach. From Natal we went to Belem, Brazil, Georgetown, British Guiana, to San Juan, Puerto Rico, and West Palm Beach.

Tom was from Oklahoma, but as I remember, the rest of us were from the West Coast. They put us on a milk train that took six days to get home. They then sent a crew down from Dayton, Ohio to fly our target tug to Kingman, Arizona.

Sincerely



Pilot-423d

Clifford L. Steiger  
1515 W Arrow Hwy Spc 54  
Upland, CA 91786

I Flew the following Missions

- 2-24-45 Hamburg Germany
- 2-26-45 Berlin, Germany
- 2-27-45 Leipzig Germany
- 2-28-45 Hagan Germany
- 3-2-45 Bohlen Germany
- 3-4-45 Ulm Germany
- 3-7-45 Dortmund, Germany
- 4-11-45 Kralbro <sup>Germany</sup> ~~France~~
- 4-14-45 Royan France
- 4-15-45 Coubre Pt France
- 4-16-45 PLATHING Germany
- 4-17-45 Dresden Germany

Please send the official Reports on these Missions, Find enclosed the twenty Bucks.

Clifford L. Steiger

8/23/00

September 20, 1979  
7677 11th Avenue,  
Hesperia, California 92345.

306th Echoes  
2973 Heatherbrae Drive,  
Poland, Ohio, 44514.

Mr Bill Collins,

Received your July issue and am very pleased that you are still in business. Find enclosed another donation to keep things going.

I particularly enjoyed your aircraft listings and may be able to add a bit to the list.

I was attached to the 423 BS from February to ~~NEW~~ October, 1945. My assigned aircraft was "Unavailable Mable" which flew in excess of 300 missions. I also flew "Dear Mom" on two missions and lost her on the second mission at San Quirin, France on March 7, 1945, when we bailed out after being seriously damaged over the Ruhr Valley. I thought that I had her serial number, but have not found it as yet.

I have been advised that F/O Dane K. Roberts of the 423d passed away in November of 1977 after a short tussle with cancer.

Which is the most important of the reunions to attend for 306th members, Colorado Springs or Phoenix, Arizona?

If I possibly can, I will see you at either Colorado Springs or Phoenix.

Sincerely yours,

*Clifford J. Steiger*



Clifford L. Steiger  
19129 Palo Verde Dr.,  
Apple Valley, CA., 92308.

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

Dear Russell,

The Obit Column of the January Issue of the Echos contained the notice of demise of Jerome E. Sears. I believe that it should have read Jerome Fargo Sears unless there were two Jerome Sears' in the 306th.

After VE Day an Air Engineering Squadron was formed. I believe it was the 813th. Major Sory was the CO, J. Fargo Sears was the Exec, and I was the Sq Adjutant. As the only rated officer in the Squadron I made many trips to closing bases to pick up goodies for the 306th to take to France and Germany, such as pants pressers, ice cream machines, and anything else needed by the 306th.

I could take any available B-17 from any of the squadrons and also could borrow a co-pilot wherever I could find one that wanted to go. I flew several times with F/O Dane K. Roberts and Joe D. Lyles. We made several trips to a depot near Compiene, France, and a depot near Brussels, Belgium, as well as many depots in the UK.

I was sorry to hear of the death of J. Fargo Sears. I knew him both at Thurleigh, and also in San Bernardino when I was stationed at Norton in the sixties. He flew with me on a trolley run and on some of the scrounging trips.

All good things come to an end. The 423rd became short of pilots so I was transferred back to the 423rd at Istres le Tube, France and flew Casey Jones missions until eligible to return home on ASR score in Nov 45.

Find enclosed a contribution to help continue the good work of the Echos.

Sincerely

*Clifford L. Steiger*

### MILITARY FLYING EXPERIENCE

1. Recap of flying experience by type:

4 engine - B-17 568 hrs Total 501 1st Pilot - 67 Co Pilot  
(A/C 306 Bomb Gp England 99 hrs Combat Time)

2 engine - B-25 273 hrs Total 149 1st Pilot - 124 Co Pilot

C-45/C-47 116 hrs Total 56 1st Pilot - 60 Co Pilot

1 engine T-6/T-28 531 hrs Total

1 engine Jet F-80/T-33 391 hrs Total

2. Served as Instructor Pilot in ATC pilot training program 1952-1954  
(T-6, T-28, T-33)

3. Served as Fighter Pilot in N. M. ANG 1954-1956.

4. While serving as a mission pilot at James Connally AFB in B-25's, I established a jet upgrading program for 'behind the lines' pilots with 2 T-33's in my spare time. I was assisted in this endeavor by the Base Flying Safety Officer who was also an IP.

5. Flew many other Army and AF types when the opportunity arose. The time is not included in my Form 5. This includes A-26's, C-54, L-2, L-3, L-4, L-5 and L-6, L-16, L-17 and L-21.

### CIVILIAN FLYING EXPERIENCE

1. Active FAA Flight and Instrument Instructor in light aircraft. Total civilian pilot time 3000 plus hours of which approximately 2000 is instructor time. Presently flying as Instructor Pilot and Clearance Officer for the Norton AFB Aero Club. Flying time averages between 200 and 400 hours/yr.

a. Managed and instructed in a Flying School in Santa Fe New Mexico (7 A/C approx 30 students) 1948-1950.

b. Planted fish in all remote mountain lakes in Northern N. Mex for the New Mexico State Fish and Game Commission. (1949)

c. Participated in the development of the pilot forestry spraying program and flew under contract for the U. S. Forestry Service. The program was adopted and is now routine. (1949)

d. Accomplished agriculture spraying under contract to individual farmers and insect abatement for several small towns. (1948-1955)

e. Flew an air patrol intermittently for the Atomic Energy Commission at Los Alamos N. Mexico in L-13 and L-19 aircraft. (1948-1951-1955)

f. Made a Far East cruise aboard a U. S. Aircraft Carrier and observed all flight operations. Made a number of helicopter flights from ship to ship and ship to shore. (Oct 1955 - Mar 1956)

g. Assisted in the establishment of Air Force Aero Clubs at the following Bases and served actively as an instructor pilot:

(1) Castle AFB - Apr 1956 and May 1957

(2) Edwards AFB - June 1957 - Nov 1960

(3) Norton AFB - Dec 1960 - ~~Present~~

1965



10/12 col B. CHIFFORD B. STEIGER

Echoes - Jan 90

~~ACCIDENTS HAPPENED - EVEN IN THE 306th~~

~~Accidents and weather cost the Army Air Force as many casualties as combat.~~ The potential for accidents in combat was enormous; some happened, some did not. Many small things contribute to an accident waiting to happen, and one happened ~~on~~<sup>7</sup> March ~~3~~<sup>45</sup> over the IP on the bomb run to Giessen.

Why did this accident happen? What small things contributed to its possibility? Different radio channels among squadrons? No set Group policy on positioning the flying spare? The 423rd<sup>15</sup> new policy of bringing the #3 man of the low and the #2 man of the high element in trail with the element lead to concentrate the bomb ~~pat~~<sup>t</sup>ern on the ground? Lack of experience on the part of the pilot of Dear Mom? (Second mission as pilot). Failure of crew in reporting position of flying spare? ~~Moerate~~<sup>d</sup> ~~flack~~<sup>flack</sup>?

*8/12  
bf* It should not have happened, but it did. With no warning on the intercom, the first indication of something wrong was a violent vibration with simultaneous nose down and roll to the right. On the way down full left aileron stopped the right roll and the ~~air~~ speed alone brought the nose up. We had no elevator or rudder. As the nose came up we ~~jet~~<sup>t</sup>isoned the bombs and a skidding, level flight could be maintained. I looked up at the ~~squadron~~, which was about ten thousand feet above us, and decided that there was no way that we could rejoin.

~~LT~~ Copilot Dane Roberts notified the crew not to bail out yet and asked for a damage assessment on the intercom. Waist gunner Robert Tucker and ball gunner ~~Herschell~~<sup>Herschell</sup> ~~Hay~~ reported that the tail gunner, Hal Rial, and the whole tail gun position were

*More*

gone, and that Hal's chute was still hanging by the waist door. We ~~then~~ assumed that we had taken a direct hit by HE.

I then asked navigator Ernest Dragoo to get us a heading out of Germany. We were ~~then~~ at 12,000 feet and in the vicinity of Dortmund. By experiment<sup>ation</sup> we discovered that we could turn right very well, but could turn left only with differential power. Skidding level flight could be maintained at 180 MPH. Slower, the nose dropped, and faster, we could climb.

While on a heading to France occas<sup>s</sup>ional small arms fire was reported zinging through the aircraft. Dear Mom had recently gone through an engine change, and we were using up our fuel very fast. We determined that we could not make it back to England, so we tuned in the radio beacon at Y-70 in France and homed in on it.

4 p  
ll  
J  
We advised Y-70 of our predicament and heading as we crossed the station. We advised Y-70 that we were bailing out, and they indicated that an ambulance was dispatched to pick us up. We bailed out at 10,000 feet over a solid overcast, the base of which was reported at 2000 feet.

After the crew were all out, I knew that the A/C would go into an immediate right spiral after releasing the aileron control, and after struggling through the forward hatch, I found that it sure did.

I elected to free-fall until I could be sure that the A/C would not spiral into me on the way down. After breaking out of the overcast, I pulled the rip cord and soon saw Dear Mom crash about 3 or 4 miles from where I came down. She did not burn but was scattered ~~pretty~~ <sup>far and</sup> wide.

~~had~~

Herschell

We all got down in good shape except ~~Herschell~~ <sup>2 ged</sup> Hay, whose parachute ~~dragged~~ <sup>dragged</sup> him through a barbed wire entanglement that lacerated his <sup>Face</sup>

badley. I landed in a plowed field and Roberts landed in a grove of trees about a mile away. I saw him come down and helped him ~~down~~ out of the tree he was hung up in. We were soon surrounded by a group of hostile Frenchmen until Roberts, who spoke French fluently, assured them that we were indeed Americans, and not German paratroops. We were then treated very well, and one soon passed around a wine bottle. The ambulance ~~soon~~ rounded us ~~up~~ up and took us to ~~the~~ <sup>a</sup> B-26 base. They checked us over at the hospital and took care of ~~Hayes~~ lacerations. I had flown that day with a cold, as many of us had in England, and the delayed drop had caused both ear <sup>(</sup>drums to perforate and bleed.

The next day we were taken to Merville and given a war weary B-17 to fly back to England. It was ~~a mess, and very dirty.~~ Emergency equipment, chaff boxes and trash scattered throughout. On take off ~~the~~ number three prop ran away and at 4,000 <sup>feet</sup> the oil pressure dropped on number 4. We went on across the channel on two and landed at ~~the~~ <sup>MANSTON</sup> mile square asphalt field near London because the ~~breaks~~ <sup>brakes</sup> were very bad.

The landing was humorous, as engineer Roth stood between the pilot, ~~and co-pilot~~ calling out the airspeed. He got louder as he called each increment below 100. He was really shouting when he got down to 75, not knowing that we had been on the ground for some time.

Upon arriving back at Thurleigh on the ~~tenth~~ <sup>10th</sup>, we were somewhat chagined to find all of our belongings packed up and turned in to supply. After retri<sup>e</sup>ving them, we were packed off to a week at the "house" flak ~~shack~~ at Southport.

SET LA GUERRE

~~Handwritten mark~~



Dear Russ

## THIS IS HOW I MANAGED TO SPEND 65 YEARS IN THE SERVICE OF MY GOVERNMENT

I went to work in the Los Angeles Post Office in June of 1940. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, I made up my mind to enlist in the Marine Corps as a postal clerk. The best offer that I had from the Marine Corps was a warrant sergeant and I would not have to attend Boot Camp at San Diego.

Before volunteering for the military I had to get permission to volunteer from the Postmaster in Los Angeles, as my job as a postal clerk was not subject to the draft and was deferred. I received this permission in 1941. I was in line for my physical exam for the Marine Corps, when I heard that the Army Air Corps was taking married men in for pilot training. I put my clothes back on and went across the hall, and signed up with the Army Air Corps, as I was married and had two children.

I was called up soon and was sent to Camp Kerns, Utah for preflight training and later transferred to Santa Ana, Ca. for more preflight training. I finished preflight with class 44F. I was sent to Hemet, Ca. for primary flight training. After flying the PT-22 for 65 hours, I was sent to Hanford, Ca. for basic training in the BT13, and the AT17. After finishing up with these, I was sent to Fort Sumner, New Mexico for advanced training and was commissioned as a Lieutenant. I graduated from Fort Sumner as a second Lieutenant on June 30, 1945. I was then sent to Hobbs, New Mexico for B17 training. After finishing at Hobbs I was sent to Lincoln, Nebraska for shipment overseas on the Ile De France. After dodging a torpedo off the coast of France that dumped the bunks and broke the dishes, we had a B24 escort us to Gorick, Scotland, to be replacements for the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group.

My first mission was to Berlin, Germany, followed by trips to Hamburg, and others. My seventh mission was to Geisen, Germany. On a formation change, I was involved in a mid-air collision with our flying spare, who didn't know about the formation change, and did not get out of the way. We lost our elevator, rudder, as well as the Tail Gunner. The bent vertical put us in a one turn spin. After recovering we had lost about a mile of altitude. There was no way that I could get back into formation, so I salvoed, (dropped), the bombs and headed out of Germany.



The extra gasoline I used to keep the airplane flying ran out near Y-70, (which was an American controlled check point), in France. I called up on the radio and told them of our plight. They dispatched an ambulance to pick us up after baling out. We made it out okay except for some scratches and I had broken my ear drums.

My last mission was to Dresden, ~~Germany~~ on April 17, 1945. The Germans surrendered shortly after that and we celebrated ~~Victory in Europe Day (VE Day)~~. After VE Day, I was transferred to the 813<sup>th</sup> Air Engineering squadron. When the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group ran short of pilots, I was transferred back to my bomb squadron to fly Casey Jones missions, (~~which were~~ Top Secret ~~photography~~ mapping missions). About this time I accepted a commission in the Reserves.

In October of 1945, I was sent to <sup>tt</sup> Sneederton Heath, Great Britain to pick up a B17F to fly ~~it~~ home. It had three good engines and one bad one. After nursing it to Africa, we flew across the Atlantic to Brazil, then Palm Beach, <sup>FL</sup> Florida, via Guiana, and Puerto Rico.

I went back to the Post Office on <sup>1</sup> January ~~1<sup>st</sup>~~ of 1946. The work of the Post Office did not appeal to me after the excitement of ~~the~~ service, so I looked around to see what else I could do. The Atomic Energy Commission was hiring inspectors to relieve the Army for the security of Los Alamos, New Mexico. I applied and was given an abbreviated FBI course and was sent to Los Alamos. When North Korea invaded South Korea in 1951, I was recalled to active duty with the Air Force as a security officer, non-flying. I kept applying for flying status and while at Williams AFB I was given a check ride, and the report of the ride was to the effect that I should be returned to flying status and was sent to the pilot instructor school at Craig AFB, <sup>ALABAMA</sup> Atlanta, and should undergo Jet upgrading there at Williams. I was put to work teaching cadets how to fly jet fighters. I did this at Greenville AFB, <sup>MS</sup> Mis, and Waco, <sup>Texas</sup> Texas, and got off active duty again in 1954. I returned to Los Alamos.

In January of 1955, among other things, I delivered atomic weapons to AFBs. During this time I was flying as a fighter pilot for the New Mexico Air National Guard. About this time they exploded a hydrogen bomb at <sup>E</sup> Anawetok, and President Eisenhower refused to turn them over to the military because they were too powerful. They were equivalent to fifteen

million tons of TNT. That's a Big Bang! He was afraid that some rogue commander would hold the world hostage.

Accordingly, these weapons must stay in the custody of civilians. My next AEC assignment was aboard the USS Bennington, an air craft carrier. In my custody were two Thermo nuclear Bombs. I made a Far East cruise on the Big B, visiting Japan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, and Hawaii. In 1956 I was relieved of my assignment and reassigned to Castle AFB in charge of the Thermo nukes. Later that same year President Eisenhower relented, and turned them over to the military. The AEC offered me a choice of Chicopee Falls AFB or I could take a downgrading and return to the pro force. I wanted neither and heard that they were looking for a security officer at Edwards AFB, California. I applied for it and was selected at the GS-9 level. I was promoted to the GS-11 level while there. In 1960 I received an offer of a position at Norton AFB as a GS-12. I took it and was assigned as the Deputy Commander of the Security Police Squadron.

I was promoted to Major and Lieutenant Colonel while in the Reserves at Norton.

In 1970 I retired as a civilian employee with 30 years service and on June 30, 1977, I retired from the reserves with 29 years commissioned service in the Air Force, and in the Army Air Corps with seven years, of which six were commissioned.

*I am now 86 years of age  
and dont know if I can make it 87.*

*Sincerely  
Clifford J. Steyer*

*awhd for 65 yrs. Eghesem*

18 yrs

19 yrs

25 yrs

credit of mil time

40 yrs.