

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 S M SGT HASTINGS S. KEY JR.
Address PSC-Box 1598, SCOTT AFBASE, ILL
Telephone 618-256-3200 Date 30 JAN 76
Occupation SMSGT USAF Employer USAF
Address AFC5-IG PSCBox1598 Telephone 618-256-3200
SCOTT AFB, ILL

Service Record:

Before joining the 306th:

ENLISTED ARMY AIR CORPS DEC 31, 1941 DODD FLD., SAN ANTONIO, TX

JAN 42 SHERMAN AFB, TX

FEB-JULY 1942 PAINE FLD, WASH.

JULY, AUG, SEP SAN ANTONIO AVIATION CADET CENTER (SAAC) SA, TX

NOV 1942 WASHED OUT PRIMARY TNG. Transferred to End AFB Okla.

JAN 1943 JT Dodge City AAFld, Kansas APR 1943 Colorado School of Mines, Golden

OVER ~~SECRET~~ ~~SECRET~~ After leaving the 306th; NEW 1944 LAS VEGAS AAFld, GUNNERY AFTER Colo.

AERIAL GUNNERY TNG to SALT LAKE CITY for crew, Combat crew, TNG at ALEXANDER

ARMY AIR FLD, LA 19, STAGING AT KEARNEY, NEB., TRAIN TO N.Y. A AMERICAN

AIRLINE CONTRACT TO PRESTWICK, SCOTLAND.

306th Record:

Arrival Date 20 JUN 1944 Squadron or other unit 423 Bom Sp.

MOS ARMORER GUNNER (TAIL) ⁶⁰²³ Combat Status ARMORER GUNNER (TAIL)

Missions Completed 18

Promotions ARRIVED CPL PROMOTED TO S SGT IN 306 B.GP

Decorations 1 AM 2 olcs 0 DFC 0 olcs 0 SS 0 DSM 0 DSC 0 MH 0 SM

1 PH 3 Battle Stars - Normandy, RHINE AND 4 No FRANCE other

① WAS TOLD I WOULD BE PUT IN FOR DFC AFTER SURVIVAL ON MISSION 17 BUT WAS SHOT DOWN AGAIN ON MISSION 18 + POW, REST OF WAR (OVER)

Other personal data:

POW FROM 21 Nov 44 to 5 May 45. Captured at QUAKENBRUCK, GER on 21 Nov 44, Overstich City Jail, Train to Frankfurt for Interrogation; Train to Berlin and STALAG LUFT #4; DEPARTED LUFT 4 in Mar 45 road-march from Luft #4 to southwest Germany via Pennmunde, Hannover. Marched 650 Kilometers. Liberated May 9, 1945 by British, 1st Royal Dragoon. Spent 5 ^{VE DAY} Months in Brussels, Belgium; then to Camp Duchy, ~~at the~~ ⁱⁿ England and back to states by Navy LSI. ^{see attached sheet.}

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?)

			FLY TIME	
JULY	16	MISSION #1	9:45	MUNICH, GER (1000 planes 12 losses)
	21	" #2	8:50	REVENSBURG OR SCHWEINFURT, GER. (1100 planes 35 losses)
	24	" #3	5:35	ST. MALO, FR.
	25	" #4	8:55	FRONT LINES, CAEN, FR. (1500 planes)
	28	" #5	8:55	MERSEBURG, GER. SYNTHETIC OIL REFINERY. (1000 planes 7 losses)
	31	" #6	9:25	MUNICH, GER. (1200 planes)
AUG	3	" #7	7:45	SAARBRUCKEN, GER.
	5	" #8	7:50	BERLIN, GER.
	8	" #9	6:00	CAEN, FR.
	11	" #9	5:10	
	13	" #10	5:10	ST. MALO, FR. (.250 planes) 2 losses
	25	" #11	9:50	PENEMUNDE, GER. SUB-PENS.
	26	" #12	7:00	RUHR VALLEY, SYNTHETIC OIL PLANTS.
SEP	12	" #13	10:00	RUHLAND, GER., SYNTHETIC OIL PLANTS
	17	" #14	6:15	SATURATION DUMBING IN SUPPORT OF AIRBORNE OPERATION ON HOLLAND, GER. BORDER
OCT	5	" #15	6:50	COLOGNE, GER (1000 PLANES, 13 LOST)
	6	" #16	10:00	BERLIN, GER (1250 planes, 19 lost)
	22	" #17	8:10	TARGET -

MID-AIR COLLISION over Channel - SOLE SURVIVOR OF 2-423RD B, Sq. planes. WE WERE FLYING A LEAD AND THE 1ST LOT PLANE CUT OUR TAIL OFF. I WAS IN TAIL, FELL OUT, GOT MY CHUTE ON AND WAS PICKED UP 45 MINUTES LATER BY BRITISH AIR SEA RESCUE BOAT AND RETURNED TO NORFOLK, ENG. TO BRITISH HOSP. MY RADIO OPERATOR, S SCOBBER, AND MICKEY OPERATOR BODICE WERE RECOVERED BUT THEY DID NOT SURVIVE AND ALL 17 OTHERS WENT DOWN WITH THE PLANE. MY PILOT WAS CAPT. HARRY ALYSON, THE FINEST PILOT LIVING AND I'M SURE HE WENT DOWN AT THE STICK WITH NO CONTROL.

2 NOV #18 TARGET - MERSBURG SYNTHETIC OIL REFINERY

Returned by train to Texas after docking at Newport News,
Va; then to Santa Monica, Calif. for R+R. Discharged to
Enl. Reserve in Oct 1945. Returned to active duty for one
year in 1951-2 (Korean War). Returned to active duty in
1957. 1958-60 - ADANA, TURKEY, 1960-1963 Richards-Gebaur
AFB, Mo. ^(CENUR, Comm Region) 1963-1966 Ramstein, Ger. 1966-1968 Kelly AFB, TX.
^(FECR Comm Region) 1968-1970 FUCHU, AS Japan. ^(SMCB Com Op) 1970-1971 Robins AFB, GA.
1971-1972 Korat AB, Thailand. 1972 Keesler AFB, LA.
1972-1974 1882 Com Op, Bergstrom AFB, TX. MAY 1975
to present - SCOTT AFB, Ill as a member of
the AIR FORCE COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE as a member
of the INSPECTOR GENERAL'S TEAM.

I have copies of the stars & stripes for each mission
I went on, the first 16 that is. also have a copy of
S+S with an interview by S+S of a 306 B Op. (423 BS) crew
which went on the OCT 17 Cologne raid, Lt.
Bob Mox & crew. If you need them I will mail
them to you.

A. May
SMS USAF.

3 May 1976

Dear Hastings:

Many thanks for your response to my inquiry. Slowly I am assembling the information I need, but it takes a lot of patience on my end, I find.

I am interested in the clipping you have on Max's crew and their mission to Cologne. If you would send it, I'll copy it and get it right back to you. I note that we flew several of the same raids. I especially remember that Sept. 12 run to Röhland. We lost a wingman, and the 367th got hit pretty hard that day.

Can you remember the names of any of your fellow crewmen, either on the 17th or 18th missions?

Also, have you ever seen any kind of listing of men who were in Stalag #4? I have a roster of all of Stalag #1.

Do you know of the whereabouts of any of your 306th acquaintances?

There will be a 306th reunion, along with an 8th AF reunion in Dayton, Oct. 15-17. Hope to see you there.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong

4900 Appleridge Ct.
Dayton, Ohio 45424

28 January 1976

Mr. Hastings S. Key
PSC #1598
Scott, AFB, Illinois

Dear Hastings:

Yesterday I received a revised address list for 306th personnel from Bill Collins, and for some reason noted your name. Then, in the evening, while working on my bomb group history I saw the big event in your life (or certainly one of the biggest) and thus am writing you.

The enclosed material explains what I am about, and I certainly want to include material about your unique experience.

Please tell me anything you can, and has anything been published about it that you are aware of? Do you have copies of articles, or can you direct me to them?

I would very much appreciate any assistance you can give me.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong

4900 Appleridge Court

Dayton, Ohio 45424

November 26, 1988

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

Dear Russ:

Your item on page 2 of the October '88 ECHOES with regard to George Clements being an evadee from a mission of 17 June 1944 was very interesting to me.

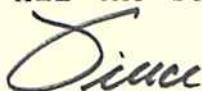
When we ditched on 13 May, George Clements was with us! Although he was a navigator, he had been assigned to our flight as a "toggleer".

This fellow could write a book about his experiences!

Also in the listing of navigators I do not see the name of Neal Ringvall. Neal had come to the 367th with his crew as some sort of a transfer crew (I forget the details now), but he finished his tour.

I was sorry not to have made the reunion in Las Vegas but heavy business pressure kept us away - but we will see you in Little Rock.

All the best-



Vincent J. Kiely

71 South Drive
Rochelle Park, NJ 07662

5 December 1988

Dear Vince:

It was good to hear from you, and I must reply to your complaint about Ringvall. That's what gets the records straightened out!

The Special Order they came in on was typed to indicate t-hat Ringvall was the bombardier. Tonight I talked with him and got it all straightened out, so that will be taken care of in the next issue when I publish bombardiers.

Sorry you missed the doings in Las Vegas. It was quite an affair, that is if you didn't mind stumbling through the casion any time you wanted to get anyplace.

The hotel in Little Rock next year is really tailored for our type reunion, and I look forward to seeing you there.

I will get in touch with Clements. Had a brief talk with him several months ago, but with your lead I'll dig into him a bit more and hope to get a good story for Echoes out of him.

All the best,

