

RECORD UPDATE

306th Bomb Group Association

(Please complete as much of this form as you wish, and give)
(to Russ Strong at the Las Vegas reunion, or mail to his ad-
(dress: 5323 cheval Pl., Charlotte, NC 28205)

Date completed

LAST NAME: Kreamelmeyer FIRST NAME: Robert Title: Sgt.

Street address: 2850 Star Ridge Ct. Telephone: (303) 249-1535

City, state, zip: Montrose, Colorado 81401

Date of birth: Nov. 25, 1918 Wife's name: Sally

College(s) attended: Hanover College
Colorado School of Mines Degree(s): none Year(s):

Last employment & job title: owner/manager San Juan Inn

Year joined 306th Association: ~~1945~~ 1983(?)

Reunions attended: (by year or location) 1988 -- Las Vegas

Serial #: 15374107 Sqdn: 423 Speciality: Supercharger Overhaul
Mechanic

Date joined 306th: January 42 -- 'til Oct. 43 If combat, what crew?

Special duties or assignments w/306th:
Line mechanic with Dale Straughan, Crew Chief

If commissioned w/306th, date & specialty:

Date departed: October 43 Highest rank/grade w/306th:
Sgt.

Other 8thAF units served with:

Top service assignments after 306th:

USAF retirement date: June 30, 1945 Rank/grade:
Sgt.

Most memorable experience w/306th: (use back of sheet, too)

As a line mechanic, my experiences were the conditions of the bombers as they returned.

Whenever I come upon a horrendous highway accident --it is not my nature to stop and observe the wreckage and gore --thus it was as a line mechanic.

In the continuing search for 306th people, please inform the secretary as to any persons you know from the 306th who are not listed in the 1988 directory; consult your WWII address book as to hometowns of anyone not listed in the 1988 directory; inform the secretary as to anyone from the 306th whom you know now to be deceased.

The secretary is constantly seeking copies of orders issued at Thurleigh, either by the 306th Bombardment Group, Station 111, the combat squadrons, or other units assigned there. If you have any such orders, please send copies to the secretary.

If your immediate family or other heirs are not interested in your 306th memorabilia, you may wish to place with such materials directions and an address so that it can be mailed to the secretary. Such materials will be included in the 306th collection that will eventually be placed in the Library of the U. S. Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs, CO.

The bomber I serviced had remarkable good luck. We had one fatality on the plane --that was a Lt. Green, Navigator. At the time I left the 423rd, the plane was still flying missions, but I learned later that it was lost in battle. It's number was 231897 with "Teasin' Terry" painted on the side. Terry was the girl friend of the M/Sgt. Straughan.

I remember a navigator in the 423rd that was reported as a former candy salesman from Louisiana. He made it a habit of dropping the astra-dome and sticking his head out the hole when they were approaching landing after a mission. You could always know when they made it home safely. I think it was Alabama instead of Louisiana.

I remember a bomber that was so badly shot up that it only had one good engine and the second engine had a hole in the oil sump and had wavering oil pressure yet, the pilot managed to keep in formation by running with full supercharger power. As I recall, they junked the plane.

I remember a bomber taking off on a mission and blowing a cyclinder head. He signaled the tower for permission to land immediately --and as he approached the landing strip, the co-pilot flipped the wrong switch and the landing gear was in retraction when they reached the run way. My hard stand was very near the runway, and we watched the ball turret drag on the runway and the sparks were flying for a 100 yards. It slid to a stop off the runway and completely burned up. All crew members escaped, as I recall.

I remember a 423rd bomber that somehow got out of position and a 500 pound bomb fell completely through the right wing without exploding, and leaving a hole about the size of a man-hole.

I remember that the bomber on the adjacent hardstand took along a Yank Magazine photographer on a combat mission. A burst of anti-aircraft exploded just outside of waist window and obliterated the photographer. The crew chief had a difficult few days cleaning up the bone and blood.

I remember an incident where a tail gunner was riding in the tail, with the usual white box of English hard candy between his knees --and a shell came up through the floor and hit the box of candy --causing the gunner quite a bit of "damage" although he was not hit by any bullet. Try explaining that to your girl friend or wife!

May I make a comment? I just attended my first bomber reunion and I had a "problem". I never met a man that I remembered, nor anyone that remembered me. Everyone I talked to was "flying crew". I found one ground crewman from a different squadron. Would it be possible to somehow designate a ground crew man at future reunions. At least it would narrow down the number of people and name tags --in your search for a buddy. At least you would find someone that you could relate with.

One final comment:-

I was trained to overhaul superchargers. They were supposed to last 500 hours before overhaul. I doubt that any combat plane lasted 500 hours. Any damaged turbo was replaced --and probably the bad ones were carried to the dump. As a result in 32 months in the Air Force, as I recall I was in 28 or 29 different outfits. Three in one day! I was at Thurleigh the longest of any place and that was for 9 months. I think they lost my service records --that was the reason I was there the longest! Talk about serving your country?!?!

May 16, 1988

Dear Mr. Strong,

Your latest edition of 306th Echoes arrived with a list of the Master Sargeants --it is amazing how that list of names brought back memories. It has been 45 years and I don't think anyone should remember EVERYTHING and everyone they worked with.

I was sent to the 423rd as a replacement mechanic in 1943. I was first assigned to "Willie" Hawthorne. As I recall, he lost "his plane" on a raid and I was sent over to (Franklin) Dale Straughan.

I was given some highly specialized training by the Air Force and it wasn't "proper" for you to work at a level below your training. For some reason, they must have lost my service records because I stayed with the 423rd for 9 months. That was the longest period I stayed in any one air corps unit. One day, I was assigned to 3 different units!

My 9 months of actually doing something for the war effort were rewarding. It was if I had a job --I got up at 4 in the morning and serviced the B-17, after the flight took off --we went back to breakfast --and then we stayed on the field until the planes returned. Back to work again repairing battle damage or servicing the engines. We carried a permanent pass and once your work was done --you could leave the base. I was the "old man" in the group. I was about 24 years^{OR 25} old, married and had a daughter when I enlisted. I didn't do much prowling in town.

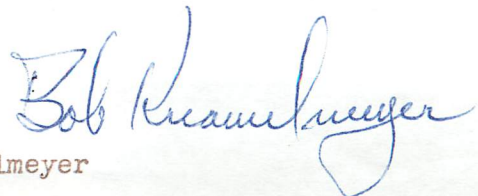
I have never attended a 306th reunion --and I sort of "gather" that most of the men who come were combat personnel. As I have looked down through the directory I have --there are very few of those names that ring a bell. I am sure you have not contacted many of those people who came and went with your 306th group, such as myself. I intend to come to Las Vegas and hope to find a familiar name or face.

I tried to find my old crew chief, Dale Straughan, and learned that he died back in the late 50's or early 60's. A sergeant (buck) that was a popular guy was Clarence "Cuz" Cranmer from Wyoming. He died in the late 70's and was living in Hood River, Oregon at the time.

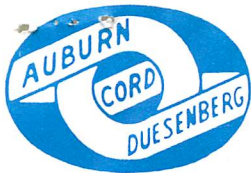
That is about all the people that I have had contact with since that winter of 1943 and 44.

I was tranfered out of the 306th to a group of guys that were destined to be sent to Russia --to service planes that would "shuttle" back and forth from England to Russia. About that time, Patton made his breakthrough in France and the whole ideas was "scratched".

Sincerely,



Bob Kreamelmeyer



For Those Who Have Never Relished The Commonplace

October 8, 1986

Dear Sirs,

I wish to thank "someone" for their efforts to track me down, and send me information on the 306th Bomb Group.

My correct address is different from the one in the 1986 Directory --and I guess it is my fault that I did not inform anyone. The post office seems reluctant to forward mail from one site to another --even though Montrose is not all that large and I am pretty well known in the community.

My address is:- Robert (Bob) Kreamelmeyer
2850 Star Ridge Court
Montrose, Colorado 81401

I have distinct recollections of the christening the Rose of York. I don't think that my story would be all that interesting --but I will write it never the less.

My crew chief was Dale Straughan of the 423rd, and our bomber (Teasing Terry) had suffered a piece of flak in one of the oil coolers in the wing. This sort of repair work was done by a separate crew of mechanics in the hangar --so our plane was towed to a hanger for a cooler replacement.

A problem in those days was, that if your ship was disabled, other crews would steal parts from it to keep their own bombers flying. So I was delegated to stay with our bomber to prevent theft.

As I sat in the cockpit, reading a magazine, I noticed a parade of splendid cars moving as a parade up to a B-17 sitting along the perimeter strip and a rather large group of people gathered around the nose end of the plane for perhaps 30 minutes, and then they all got back in their cars and drove away. As I recall, a small group of British fighters flew over in formation and disappeared.

When I was relieve from my "guard duty", I was riding my bike back to the barracks and there were white gloved MP's everywhere. I found out a little later,



For Those Who Have Never Relished The Commonplace

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that what I had observed was the christening of the Rose of York by the princess herself.

Observing all the pomp and splendor from a distance of about 300 feet --and me being a grundgy buck sargent in work clothes --I guess I didn't feel that they would appreciate me approaching any closer than I was. Had I known then what I know now --I probably would have approached as close as the MP's would have allowed. But I guess I wasn't all that impressed by royalty in those days.

Sincerely,


Bob Kreamelmeier

PS

If you think that story is "dumb" --I spent the afternoon at the Red Cross rest center in Bedford with Glenn Miller and didn't recognize ^{HIM} ~~me~~ and realize who he was until that evening when I went out to dinner.



HIWAY 550 SOUTH

PHONE 303-249-6644

MONTROSE, COLORADO 81401

Dear Mr. Strong

Nov. 5th

My wife of 8 years is a little bit disappointed that you have moved. She was Dean of Women at Hillsdale College in Michigan --and everytime a newsletter came to me --her eyes would light up at your return address.

I have often wondered if I should try to contact the relative of Lt. Green that was killed on the plane that I serviced. A piece of flak hit him just behind the left ear and under the steel helmet. He never knew what hit him --and he simply was laid out on the floor boards as you entered the cockpit area of the plane and died. If you have to die --that was quick and painless.

I have no idea where he was from.

Sincerely,

Bob Kreamelemeyer



Bob Kreamelmeyer 423 squadron

Beaver Run Resort
And Conference Center
Breckenridge, Colorado

Sirs,

It is a pleasure to get all the information about the 306th.

I was trained to overhaul turbo superchargers after being in flight for 500 hours. I doubt that any combat craft lasted 500 hours. Out of frustration, the Air Corps sent me to Thurleigh as a line mechanic. At least for 9 months I did SOME good toward the war effort. I never saw a "turbo" that could be overhauled.

After about 9 months --I was "called" to report to a Quartermaster Truck Company at an air base in northern England. There, were 96 airmen with 48 specialists, such as superchargers, prop, radio, tower operators (48 specialists). Almost like Noahs Ark!

At about that time, Patton made his "breakthrough" and the group was disbanded and deserted at that base. The rumor was, that we were to have been sent to Russia as the "other end" of shuttle flights from England. I think back and believe I was fortunate that I WAS NOT sent to Russia!

As a mechanic, my circle of friends was small and my short length of service in the 306th makes it difficult to make personall connections with anyone in the directory. Those I knew have since died.

"My B-17" was 231897 S, and it was shot down after I left the group. I have often wondered what history it mkght have?

Bob Kreamelmeyer
P.O. Box 2115 • Breckenridge, Colorado 80424-0115
(303) 453-6000 • Denver Direct: 573-5313 • National Toll Free: 800-525-2253

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AUBURN STORAGE UNITS

Bob & Sally Kreamelmeyer

P.O. Box 1645 · Montrose, CO 81402 · (970) 249-1535

Dear Russell,

I appreciate your time and effort to give me the history of "my airplane". Having been a mechanic, I really don't have many "war stories" to tell my kids or grandkids.

Without my service records, and more than 50 years passing --I am never sure of the nine months that I spent with the 423rd. I DO remember standing in line for Xmas dinner and that must have been 1943. I was assigned to a mechanic named Willy Hawthorne, and when 231897 came to Dale Straughan --I was sent over to be on this new arrival. Records show that was February 25th. I was there during D-day, and I recall seeing the King and Queen of Britain, and having Glen Miller at the base. In fact one of my biggest bloopers in the service was --that I spent the afternoon at the Red Cross site in Bedford and sitting next to a major for at least 2 hours --and NEVER recognizing that it was Glen Miller!

I must have left in late ~~August~~ ^{JULY} because "my plane" was lost July 28th. I will be in Knoxville in a couple of weeks for the reunion.

As ever,


Bob Kreamelmeyer

December 8, 1995

Dear Russell,


All B-17's look alike, right? WRONG! When my latest 306th Echos came recently, I immediatly picked up the B-17 at the top of the lead page as "my" bomber!

As a mechanic, my relationship with the crews (flight) was minimal. They were always changing, training and getting shot down --but there was one member of the flight crew that I had a short relationship with, and that was Eddie Dillinger. Lo and behold, there was a picture of Eddie in the lower left corner of page 6. Eddie was from St. Louis and worked ~~from~~^{FOR} my uncle in that city. Both of us have often wondered what happened to Eddie.

I assume that you have some list of those killed or missing in action. If Eddie is on that list --then there is no more need to know where he is. I have never seen his name on the veterans list of the 306th.

Know that it is in the Xmas rush, I don't expect an answer real soon. We DID meet together for a very short moment in the lobby of the hotel, as we wer checking in. It is nice to connect a face with a name, now!

Thanks again,


Bob Kreamelmeyer

Old 231897

Bob & Sally Kreamelmeyer
2850 Star Ridge Ct.
Montrose, CO 81401

July 30, 1997

Dear Russell

Every time I sit down at the typewriter to wriet a "note" --it ends up being a letter.

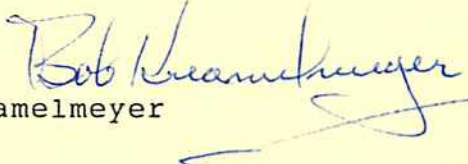
I thank you for all the work that must have been involved with planning and getting that tour of England that we all attended. It was great. During war time, there was little opportunity to travel and see anything. I did go to Coventry and Stratford-on-Avon, and to London once. I did not understand what happened at Coventry when there, Stratfor was fun since I was about the only person there, and I sat in the hearth in Anne Hathaway's cottage and visited with the "guide".

I look at the group picture which Mr. Oakes sent, and the display in the lattest 306th newsletter. I assure you that I am NOT PREGNANT! My daughter gave me that London Fog jacket with multiple pockets about belly high, and it was great jacket to stuff cameras, brochures and other nic-naks. I know that I am about 10 pounds overweight, and about 30 pounds heavier than in 1943. I just say that I am too short for my weight --or in other words, I am vertically deprived!

I have wondered if there is some film converted to VCR tape that might be available? Even if it were just for loan out. I AM sending you a check for \$38 which I assume is for a book.

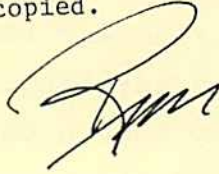
My wife is a delightful gal, that has suffered quite a bit of health problems for the past 10 months. She took part of her educationat the Univesity of London --so she chose not to take the trip to England with me. I am enclosing a post card picture of Montrose, and the view that we have from our home. WE do not live in a balloon, but the view is the same.

Sincerely,


Bob Kreamelmeyer

Dear Bob:

I have some video on the trip, but I found that I could not recharge my batteries, even with a converter in England, so I soon ran out of juice. I'll take a look at it shortly, and send along to you what I have, and perhaps you can get it copied.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jim', written in a cursive style.

AUBURN STORAGE UNITS

Bob & Sally Kreamelmeyer

P.O. Box 1645 • Montrose, CO 81402 • (970) 249-1535

June 3, 1996

306th Echoes

This is a business letterhead. My home address HAS NOT CHANGED --but the telephone company HAS CHANGED the area code. That number is my home and my business.

I note that you are considering special notice to the ground crew at the next convention. FINALLY! and thank you.

As ever,

Bob Kreamelmeyer

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bob K." with a long, sweeping underline.

September 4, 1997

Dear Russell,

Just a short note --I hope.

I have read through about half of the book, and I am amazed at the detaildepth of the information. I knew almost none of the flight crews --but I recognized the name Rangitata. I returned to the states as "walking wounded" under first class treatment and conditions. Fresh eggs and bacon for breakfast, table clothes, etc. Back to the US in January on the North Sea of 1945. ON THE RANGITATA!

"My plane", 231897 shows up at all the 306th reunions, and in your book also. This B-17 went over France on D-day, and was flying directly behind the pathfinder plane, that dropped smoke bombs (?), to mark the drop zone. The smoke turned the green color to a mixture of gold variations according to the air stream. Some might have called it artistic. The plexi-glass dome was frosted as bad any light bulb you ever saw! The crew chief and I worked all night changing that nose dome with a million little bolts --assuming that the bombers were going out on D-dau +1. No one flew that I recall on day 2.

My wife, Sally, was Dean of Women at Hillsdale College for about 17 years before I "resqued" her in 1980 by marriage and bringing her west with me. We had been high school classmate in Auburn, Indiana, where we both graduated in 1936. Just a personal note!

Sally and I attended the reunion in Las Vegas around 1984. During the meal on the final night --there was a large screen showing B-17s flying in formation and landing. I was far from the screen --but I assumed that someone had taken movie pictures from and on the 306th activities. THAT is the thought, that it might be transered to video tape. I have seen the movies that were made at the time such as 12 O'clock High, and Memphis Belle. They are hoked-up a bit, but for those that lived through it --is was just a movie.

Any video that you might send --I will promptly return it.

As ever,



Bob Kreamelmeyer

Mailed 4 tapes
9/23/97

Robert Kresmelmeyer

12-18-03

Dear Russell I am sorry to tell you that Bob died on April 16 2003 in Engren, Colorado. His death was the result of an accident 14 months earlier. He fell on the ice by our home in Mintos and sustained a severe blow to the back of his head. This caused brain damage which could not be treated. He had some rational moments but was never himself again. The 306th Bomb Group meant a great deal to him and he often spoke of his experiences with the Program members.

Thank you for your note

Bob's Son
Kresmelmeyer



Russell A. Strong, Secretary
306th Bomb Group Association
5323 Cheval Place
Charlotte, NC 28205

