

CHAPTER 4 – BOMBER ASSIGNMENTS AND CREW TRAINING

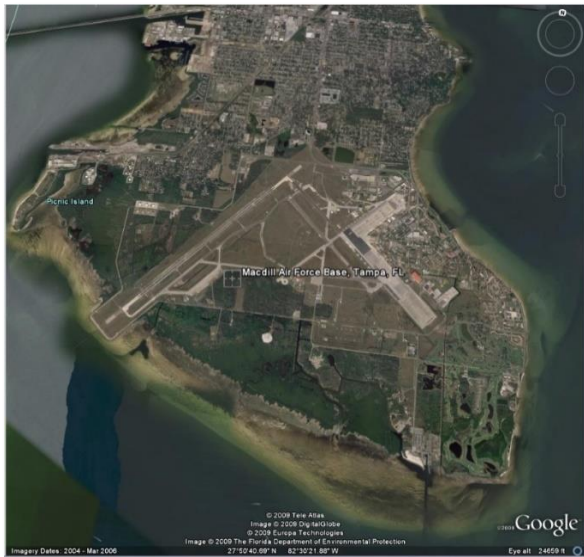
CHAPTER 4

Up until this point, the Cadet in training had some say in where they went by choosing a specific training path. Flight training was flight training – it came in one flavor. Role specialties were another story and pilots, bombardiers and navigators went their own ways. Gibby, George and Mike were on a common calculated path as bombardier/navigators. However, once 'wings' were earned and commissions granted, it was now the War Departments choice of where you were most needed. Finally, the group partially split.

After getting his bombardier wings Gibby, was assigned to a combat crew for final combat training with the 39th and 444th Bombardment Groups. He would now learn the ropes of operating in a long-range B-24J Liberator Bomber as part of highly trained crew. Stateside advanced active training would be completed over the next twenty weeks at Davis-Monthan Army Air Base in Tuscon, Arizona, before deployment to the Asia Pacific Theater of Operation.

Remarkably, Mike, who was three months behind Gibby in his training, would be combat trained and ultimately deployed to the same Bombardment Group and Bomb Squadron as Gibby – they would meet again and perhaps fly together on the front lines in India.

George, however, was assigned to a B-26 Marauder crew for final combat training with the 397th Bombardment Group. As the only married man of the three, the nickname of the B-26 was not appreciated – the "Widowmaker!" He would spend his training time at MacDill Field, Tampa, Florida, surviving a January 1943 crash of his AT11 training aircraft carrying live bombs, before deployment to the European Theater of Operation.



MacDill Field



AT11
Crash
Site



B-26

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These three young men, who had always stayed close even as they went through Army Air Corps Cadet school, and now, Bombardier certification, were ready for combat training. Up to this point, the Inseparable nature of their relationships remained intact, but that was about to change.

When combat training assignments came, Gibby and Mike would find themselves assigned to B-24J Liberator bomber crews, for training, and ultimate deployment to the CBI – China/Burma/India Theater of Operations. There, they would attempt to stop the Japanese advancement towards the West, with the ultimate Japanese objective being, to take over all of India.

My father would be assigned to a B-26 Marauder crew, and would undergo combat training for eventual deployment to the European Theater of Operation. There, they would be involved in a significant number of bombing runs to northern France, in anticipation of the execution of project Overlord, the D-Day invasion, of June of 1944. Being the only married man and father of the three friends, the nickname of the B-26 at the time, the “Widowmaker” was less than appreciated!

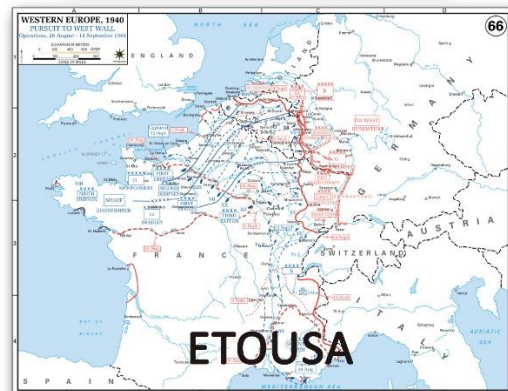
Once assigned to their combat crews for training, there was no further communication between them. The purpose of their individual training assignments was Top Secret and could not even be shared with family. There was a commonality in their letters home, however. They each wanted to know if anyone had heard from Gibby, Mike or George.



B-24J Liberator



B-26 Marauder



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The Consolidated B-24 Liberator

was an American heavy bomber, designed by Consolidated Aircraft Company of San Diego, California. Its mass production was brought into full force by 1943 with the aid of the Ford Motor Company through its newly constructed Willow Run facility, where peak production had reached one B-24



per hour and 650 per month in 1944. Other factories soon followed. The B-24 ended World War II as the most produced Allied heavy bomber in history, and the most produced American military aircraft at over 18,000 units, thanks in large measure to Henry Ford and the harnessing of American industry. It still holds the distinction as the most-produced American military aircraft. The B-24 was used by several Allied air forces and navies, and by every branch of the American armed forces during the war, attaining a distinguished war record with its operations in the Western European, Pacific, Mediterranean, and China-Burma-India Theaters.

Often compared with the better-known B-17 Flying Fortress, the B-24 was a more modern design with a higher top speed, greater range, and a heavier bomb load; however, it was also more difficult to fly, with heavy control forces and poor formation-flying characteristics. Popular opinion among aircrews and general's staffs tended to favor the B-17's rugged qualities above all other considerations in the European Theater. The placement of the B-24's fuel tanks throughout the upper fuselage and its lightweight construction, designed to increase range and optimize assembly line production, made the aircraft vulnerable to battle damage. The B-24 was notorious among American aircrews for its tendency to catch fire. Moreover, its high fuselage-mounted Davis wing also meant it was dangerous to ditch or belly land, since the fuselage tended to break apart. Nevertheless, the B-24 provided excellent service in a variety of roles thanks to its large payload and long range.

The United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) took delivery of its first B-24As in 1941. The sole B-24 in Hawaii was destroyed by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. Like the RAF, the USAAF used them as transports at first. American B-24s entered combat service in 1942 when on 6 June, four B-24s from Hawaii staging through Midway Island attempted an attack on Wake Island, but were unable to find it on 12 June 1942, 13 B-24s flying from Egypt attacked the Axis-controlled oil fields and refineries around Ploiesti, Romania.

Over the next three years, B-24 squadrons deployed to all theaters of the war: African, European, China-Burma-India, the Battle of the Atlantic, the Southwest Pacific Theater and the Pacific Theater. In the Pacific, the B-24 (and its twin, the U.S. Navy PB4Y Privateer) was eventually designated as the standard heavy bomber to simplify logistics and to take advantage of their longer range, replacing the shorter-range B-17 which had served early in the war along the perimeter of the Pacific from the Philippines, Australia, Espiritu Santo, Guadalcanal, Hawaii, and during the Battle of Midway from Midway Island.

The B-24J Liberator was an upgrade of the workhorse B-24D that had been in service in the European and Asia Pacific Theaters of Operation since 1942. The "D" was the first B-24 to be qualified for combat. Under the original Production Pool plan, Consolidated/San Diego was the prime manufacturer, supplying

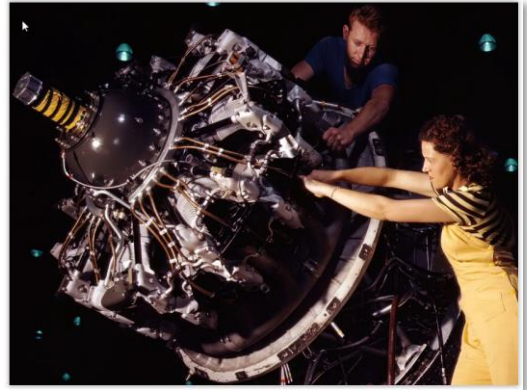
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components to Fort Worth and Douglas/Tulsa for assembly. In May, 1942 the first of 2738 B-24D's rolled off the assembly lines.

Due to rapidly changing needs, especially for defensive machine guns, there were many variations within the B-24D model, these differences identified by "production blocks" (e.g B-24D-70-CO). Various ventral gun systems were tried, including a totally unworkable, Bendix turret theoretically aimed with a periscope. Another, familiar problem was inadequate firepower in the nose. In the "D" two cheek guns were added, but didn't work out so well.

Specs for late model B-24D:

- Four Pratt & Whitney R-1830-43 fourteen-cylinder radial engines, rated at 1200 hp.
- Performance: Maximum speed 303 mph at 25,000 feet.
- Service ceiling: 32,000 feet.
- Range: 2300 miles with 5000 pounds of bombs. Maximum range 3500 miles.
- Fuel capacity: 3614 US gallons.
- Dimensions: Wingspan 110 feet 0 inches, length 66 feet 4 inches, height 17 feet 11 inches, wing area 1048 square feet.
- Weights: 32,605 pounds empty, 55,000 pounds gross, Maximum takeoff weight 64,000 pounds.
- Armament: Bomb bay could accommodate up to eight 1600-pound bombs.
- The late model "D"s included eleven .50 caliber machine guns: three in the nose, two in the belly turret, two in a tail turret, two in a dorsal turret (just aft of the cockpit), and two in the waist



A few non-numerous production variants included: the B-24E - produced at Willow Run, similar to the "D" model; C-109 - a tanker conversion of the B-24E, capable of carrying 2,900 gallons of fuel, used over "the Hump" (the Himalayan Mountain Range) from India to China and the B-24G - North American's model, all equipped with the nose turret.

Trying to increase forward firepower, some 90th Bomb Group field engineers got the bright idea to install a cannibalized B-24 tail turret in the nose. It worked pretty well, and an Emerson A-15 twin-gun nose turret was standardized on B-24H's. The top and tail turrets were improved, and the camouflage paint was omitted late in the "D" series. 3,100 were produced, over half at Willow Run.

The B-24J was essentially the same as the B-24H; but early "J"s were equipped with the Convair (merged Consolidated/Vultee) A-6A nose turret, instead of the Emerson A-15 turret, due to a limited supply of the Emerson turrets. By early 1944, enough Emersons were available for all five factories. The B-24J was also equipped with an improved C-1 automatic pilot, a new M-series bomb sight, an electronic control system for the turbosuperchargers, and a better fuel transfer system. Excessive weight was a real drawback of the B-24J; numerous additions totaling 8,000 pounds had been made since the B-24D, but using the same engine. Performance, fuel efficiency, and flight stability fell off because of this excess weight.

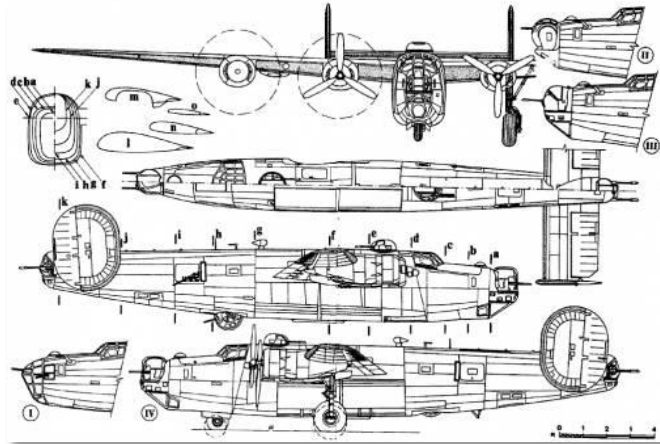
6678 B-24J's were produced. By late 1944, the Army foresaw a lessened demand for Liberators, and ordered that three of the plants be freed up for other purposes. Only Ford-Willow Run and Convair-San

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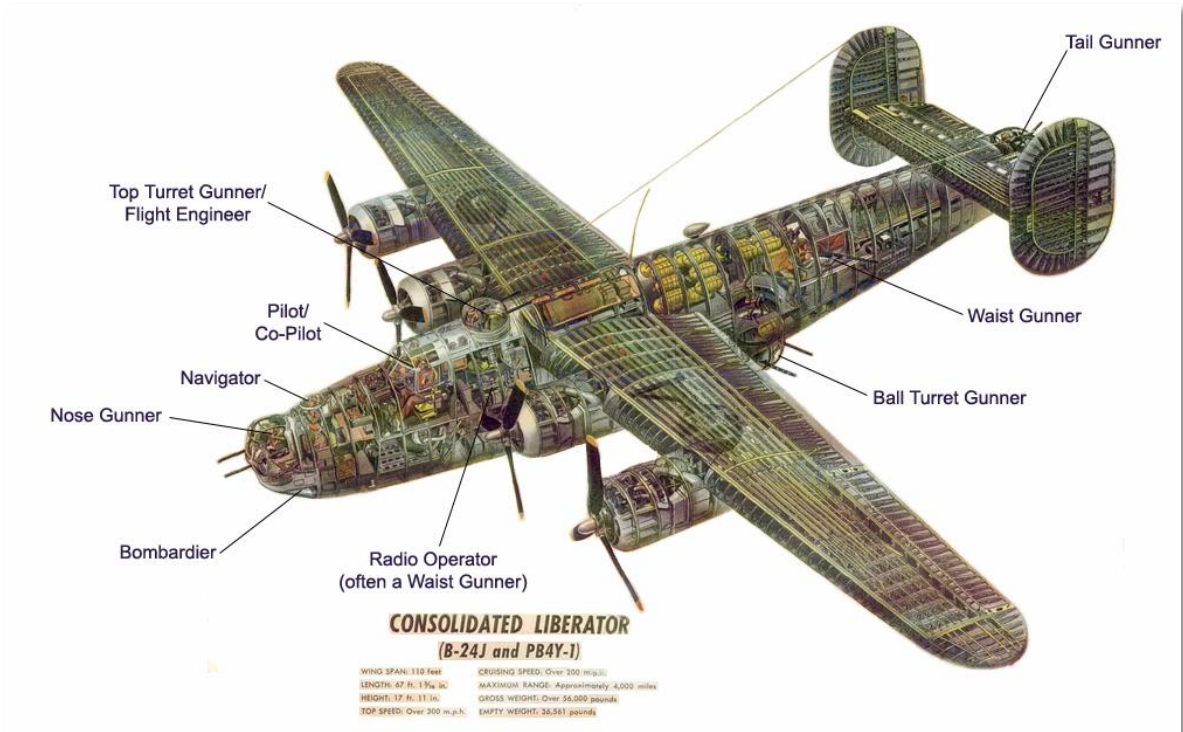
Diego continued turning out B-24's in 1945. Late in the B-24 program, attempts were made to trim its weight (in the Pacific, field engineers had been removing the belly turrets to save weight). The result was the B-24L, some 1,000 pounds lighter than the "J," of which 1667 were built, mostly at Willow Run.

Specs of B-24J (key differences from B-24D in **boldface**)

- Four Pratt & Whitney **R-1830-65** fourteen-cylinder radial engines, rated at 1200 hp, **with GE turbosuperchargers**
- Performance: Maximum sustained speed **278 mph** at 25,000 feet.
- Service ceiling: **28,000 feet**.
- Range: **1700 miles** at all-up weight of 61,500 pounds.
- Fuel capacity: 3614 US gallons.
- Dimensions: Wingspan 110 feet 0 inches, length 64 feet 2 inches, height **18 feet 0 inches**, wing area 1048 square feet.
- Weights: **38,000 pounds empty**, 55,000 pounds gross, Maximum takeoff weight **71,000 pounds**.
- Armament: Bomb bay could accommodate up to eight 1600-pound bombs.



Eleven .50 caliber machine guns: three in the nose, two in the belly turret, two in a tail turret, two in a dorsal turret (just aft of the cockpit), and two in the waist.



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The only B-24 that was still flying by 2019 is the “Witchcraft”, SN – 252534. It was restored to its original condition by many volunteers from the Collings Foundation. This aircraft along with a B-17 Flying Fortress⁵, B-25 Mitchell and P-51 Mustang toured the country annually as part of the “Wings of Freedom Tour.” Photographs of the exterior and interior taken during a walking tour of the aircraft clearly show the challenges faced by the crews and the bravery it took to fly mission after mission into hostile territory.

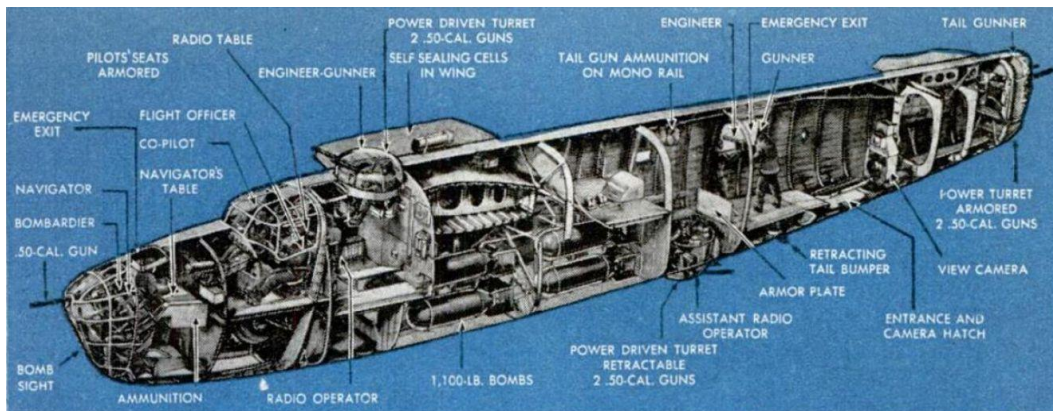


⁵ The author was fortunate to have flown on the restored B-24 Liberator in 2018. Sadly, in 2019, the B-17 Flying Fortress crashed on landing at Bradley Airport in Connecticut killing several passengers and crew. The restored aircraft are now permanently grounded and on display at the Foundation's American Heritage Museum in Hudson, Massachusetts.

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The B-24 flew with a ten-man crew, sometimes 11. There was little room to maneuver and with an unpressurized fuselage there were no creature comforts – plenty of noise, no heat (-50 degrees F at 22,000 feet), no plumbing, few places to stand and stretch ... and no really quick or easy way out when trouble arrived.

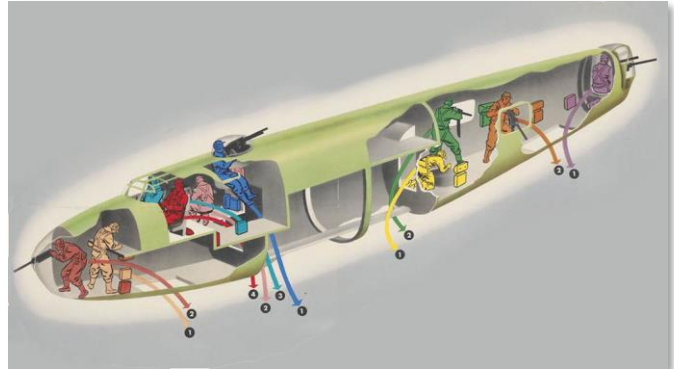


The crew would have significant training and practice in abandon ship maneuvers but in a crisis situation on a crippled and possibly out of control ship it is a daunting task. If

- the intercom continued to work and all of the crew members heard the abandon ship call,
- the pilot could maintain some degree of control and level flying,
- the bomb bay doors remained open following the bombing run,
- the bomb bay doors were closed but could still be opened,
- the turret gunners could get out of their enclosures,
- debris was not blocking the narrow passages,
- the nose wheel could be lowered
- there were no interior fires
- none of the crew were injured

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... those closer to the center of the fuselage could get out first. The tail and belly turret gunners would no doubt have been at their stations and have the additional challenge of getting out of their harnesses and getting out of their enclosures. In particular for the belly gunner the ball turret can only be exited if it is in the properly rotated position and that requires hydraulic power or the ability to disengage it, rotate it manually and lift it vertically.



The radioman, engineers (also serving as top turret gunner while under attack) and pilots and co-pilots have a short drop to the bomb bay and if that was unable to be opened run across the catwalk through the bomb bay to the waist windows or main hatch in the rear. The nose gunner, navigator and bombardier who could also have served as the nose gunner can only exit via the front landing gear wheel well and only if the wheel is extended. That can be done manually as well as under hydraulic power. The airman in the nose gunner position has the same harnessing and enclosure problems to overcome as the tail gunner.

WALKING TOUR OF A FULLY FUNCTIONING B-24J

Liberators were crewed (depending on the model) by 7 to 11 personnel. The pilot and co-pilot were situated in the high-mounted stepped flight deck with views forward, to the sides and above. Of the two seats in the cockpit, the pilot occupied the left hand seat while the co-pilot sat to his right. The pilot was essentially the overlord of the Liberator and ultimately held responsible for the actions and relative well-being of the rest of his crew. The pilot maintained



the Liberator's position in flight and was called upon to deliver the aircraft to the target area and back or make split-second decisions based on actions to keep his crew alive. The co-pilot was equally trained in the systems afforded the pilot and was, for all intents and purposes, the pilot's right-hand man. He participated in the operation and controls of the Liberator to help alleviate the responsibilities of the pilot. Like the pilot, the co-pilot could be called upon to fully operate the aircraft to and from the target area and, like the navigator, was skillfully trained in the fine art of navigation⁶.

This is a view forward from the catwalk in the bomb bay. The radio operator sat at the station to the right and just through the bulkhead you can see the cockpit.

⁶ [Appendix B](#) contains an abbreviated version of the B-24 Pilot Training Manual..

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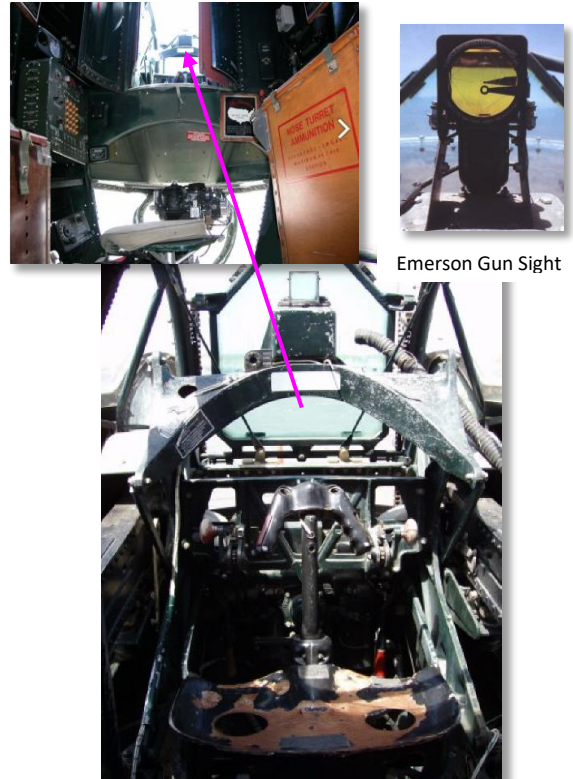
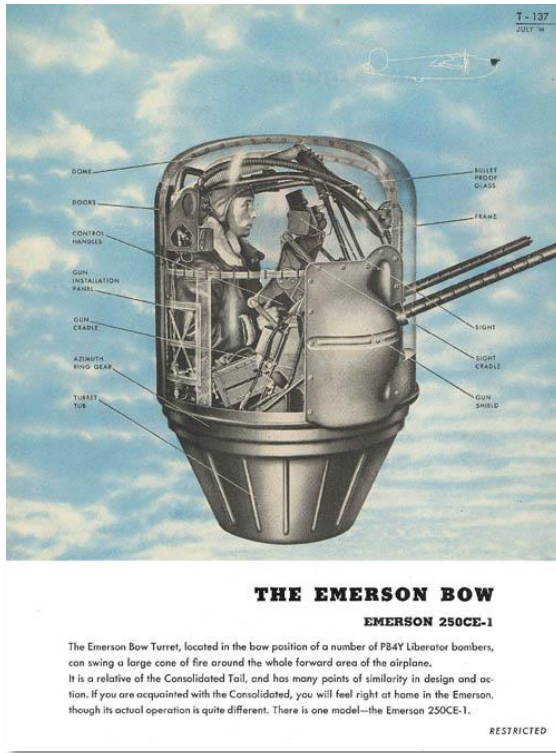
The nose gunner, bombardier and navigator were housed under a glazed nose well forward in the design. This is a view forward from the catwalk in the bomb bay but under the floor of the radio operator and the cock pit. The forward (nose) landing gear can be seen in the center of the photo with the nose wheel extended through the open hatch. This was the only way out for the nose gunner, navigator and bombardier – if the nose wheel hatch could be opened.



During flight the forward area was accessed by crawling along the platform to the right of the nose wheel. Looking aft the nose wheel is shown here retracted in flight. The slightest pressure opens the red doors enabling them to be used as an emergency exit.

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The nose gunner was perhaps afforded the most stunning (and oft-targeted) position in the Liberator, watching every bombing mission unfold like no other crewman. The nose gunner had access to the powered nose turret if the model of Liberator called for one, fitting 2 x 12.7mm machine guns. Since the front of the Liberator was most susceptible to incoming enemy fighters, this position was also one of the more dangerous on the aircraft.



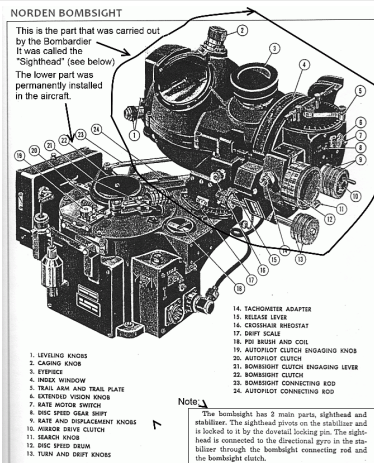
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The bombardier held the most important job in the flight crew. For the Liberator's were designed with bombing in mind, a flight crew without a trained bomber crewmember was ultimately useless in the Allied air campaign. Bombardiers and pilots shared a common role for the bombardier would be called on to take flight control of the bomber when engaging in the bombing run via auto-pilot. Calculations were necessary to unleash payloads directly over target areas, thus requiring bombardiers to maintain a certain level of mettle while blocking out enemy fighters, flak, structural damage or personal combat wounds. Lead bombers were also the elements that triggered the rest of the formation to drop their bombs. Later advances in airborne technologies allowed bombardiers to achieve direct hits even through cloud and smoke coverage.



Looking forward just ahead of the nose wheel you can see:

- the glass nose
- highly proprietary Norden Bombsite
- the lower portion of the nose turret gunner's compartment.



THE BOMBARDIER'S OATH



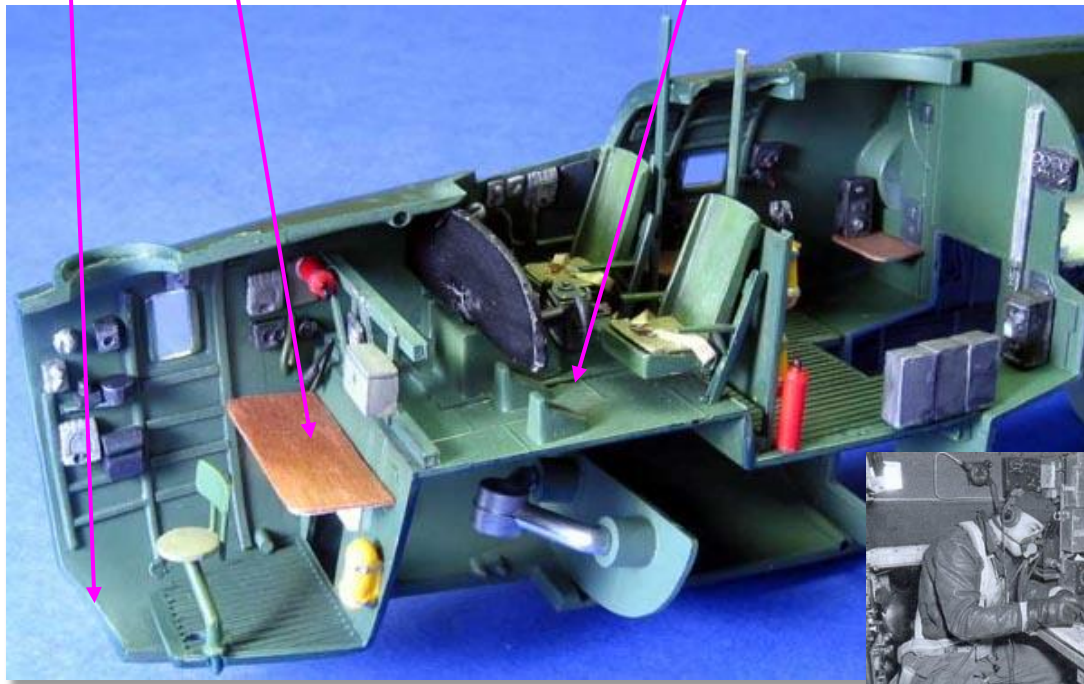
"Mindful of the secret trust about to be placed in me by my Commander in Chief, the President of the United States, by whose direction I have been chosen for bombardier training...and mindful of the fact that I am to become guardian of one of my country's most priceless military assets, the American bombsight...I do here, in the presence of Almighty God, swear by the Bombardier's Code of Honor to keep inviolate the secrecy of any and all confidential information revealed to me, and further to uphold the honor and integrity of the Army Air Forces, if need be, with my life itself."



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The navigator was given the important responsibility of getting the crew to the target and back home. This was particularly important for the lead bomber in a given flight group but all navigators needed exceptional know-how of their position to lead a bomber home should the aircraft become displaced from its group. The navigator could utilize the forward-mounted Plexiglas dome to get his bearings as well as relying on physical landmarks down below and his training in the fine art of navigation. Essentially, the pilot and navigator needed to maintain a close working partnership to get everyone to the target area and back home. If "cheek" machine guns were fitted on a Liberator model, the navigator would man one.

The Navigator's table was located just forward of the Pilot's feet and just over the back of the crouching Bombardier.



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Navigator's Table
Looking Left



Navigator's Table
Looking Right

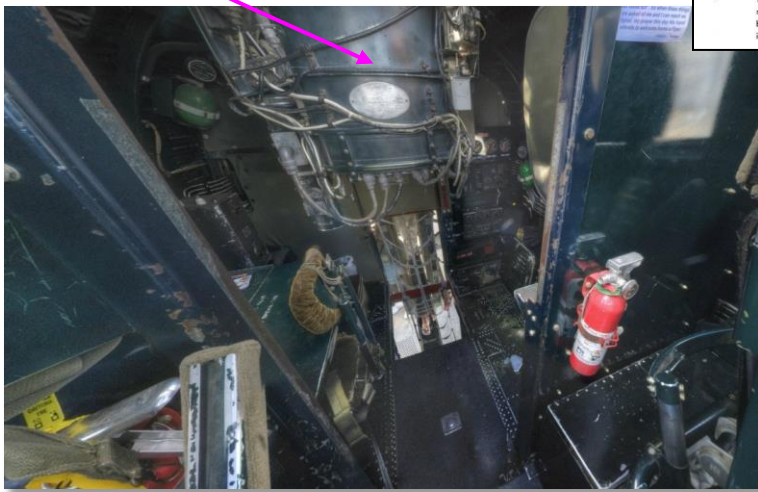
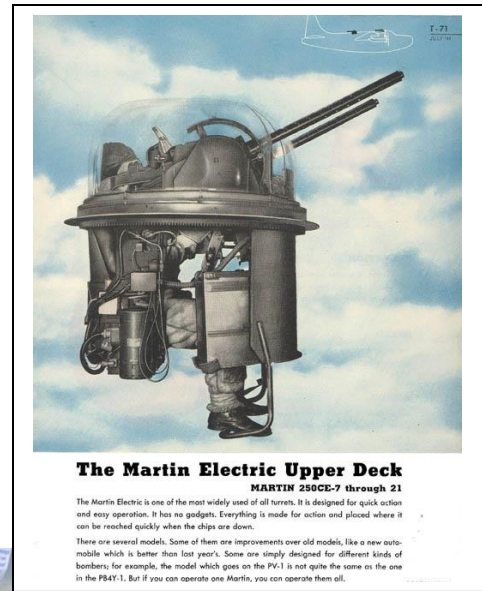


Navigator's Table
Looking Up
at the Celestial
Observation Dome

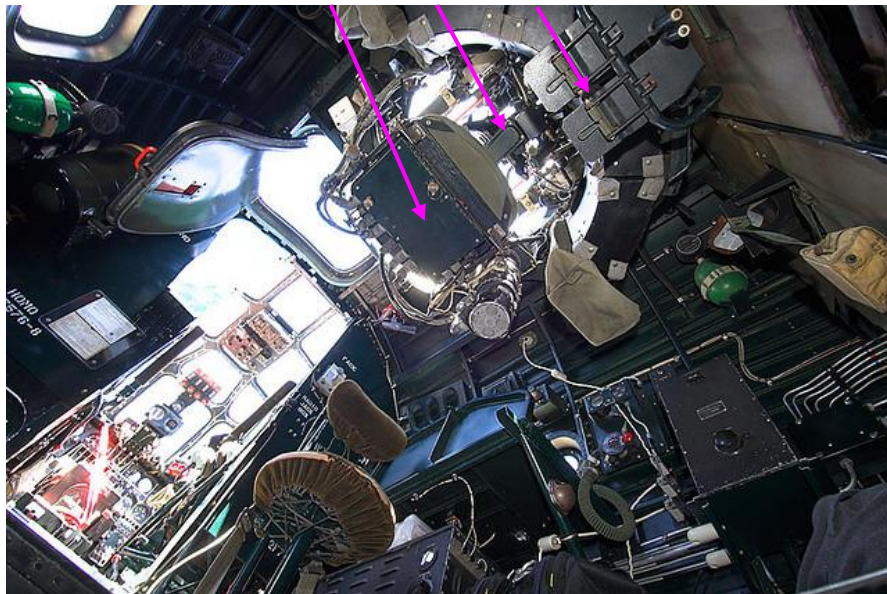
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The dorsal turret gunner also doubled as the flight engineer and probably maintained the best defensive vantage point, offering an exceptional firing arc when compared to all other available gunner positions. The turret mounted 2 x 12.7mm machine guns. As the aircraft's in-flight mechanic, these individuals maintained a certain level of expert knowledge on the inner workings of the aircraft. His primary duty - along with defense of the upper hemisphere of the bomber - also lay in assisting the pilots on the engine condition and fuel usage.

The dorsal or top turret above the radio station seen here looking aft from the cockpit.

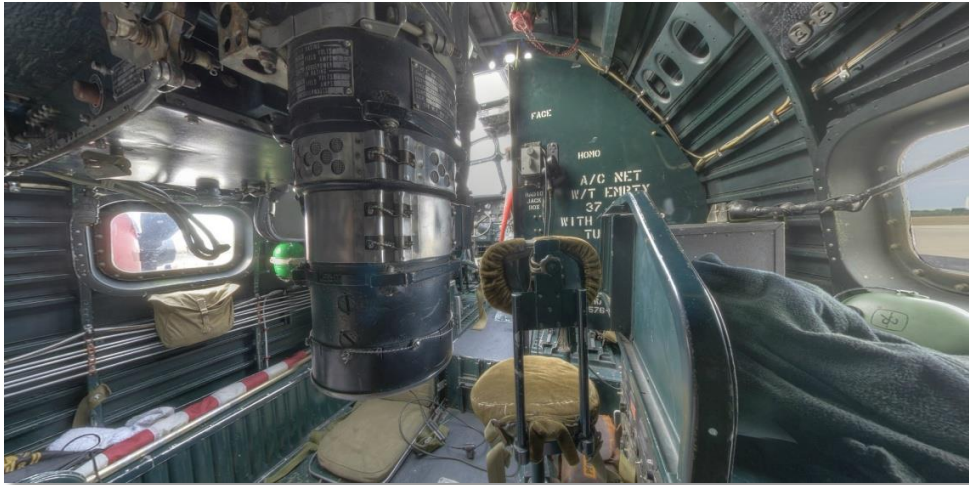


Looking up:
Seat Cannon Foot Rest



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This view from aft of the radio operator's station on the right looking forward into the cockpit shows the suspended top turret position.



Inside the top turret



The radioman was situated within the upper portion of the Liberator's deep fuselage, positioned just behind the cockpit and not aft of the wings as in a B-17. His position required him to stay hours on his

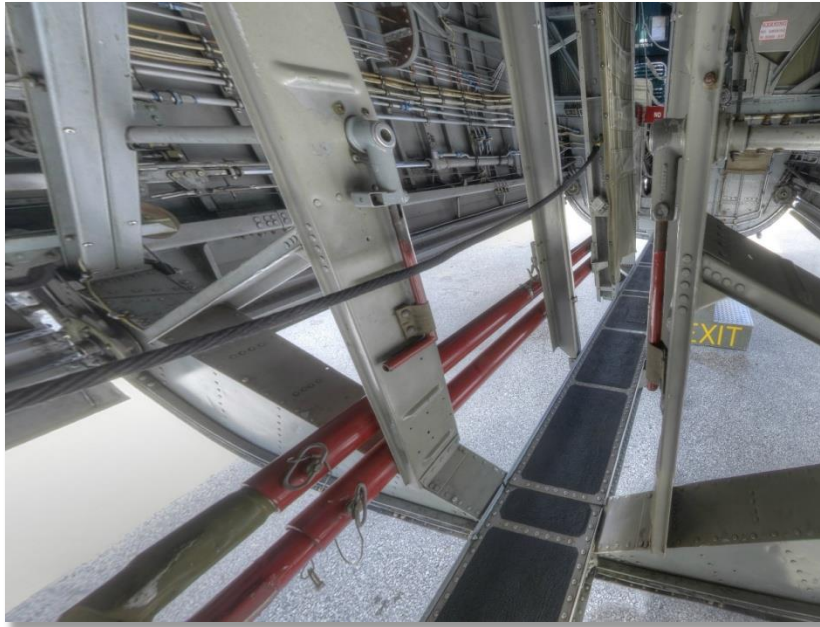
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headset listing for friendly communications, reporting updates to the navigator, reporting situational updates at intervals and communicating with headquarters on mission results. Radiomen were required to keep logs of all pertinent actions and could be called upon to man one of the waist guns if needed.



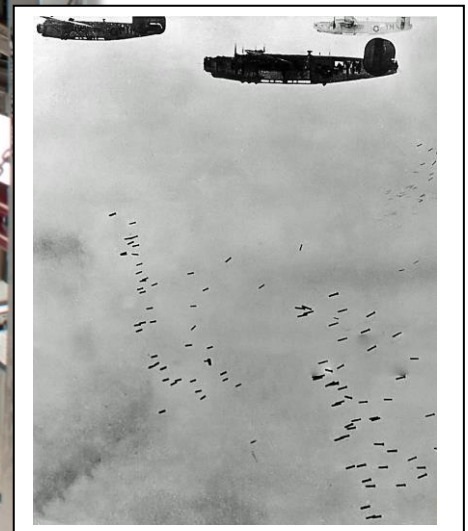
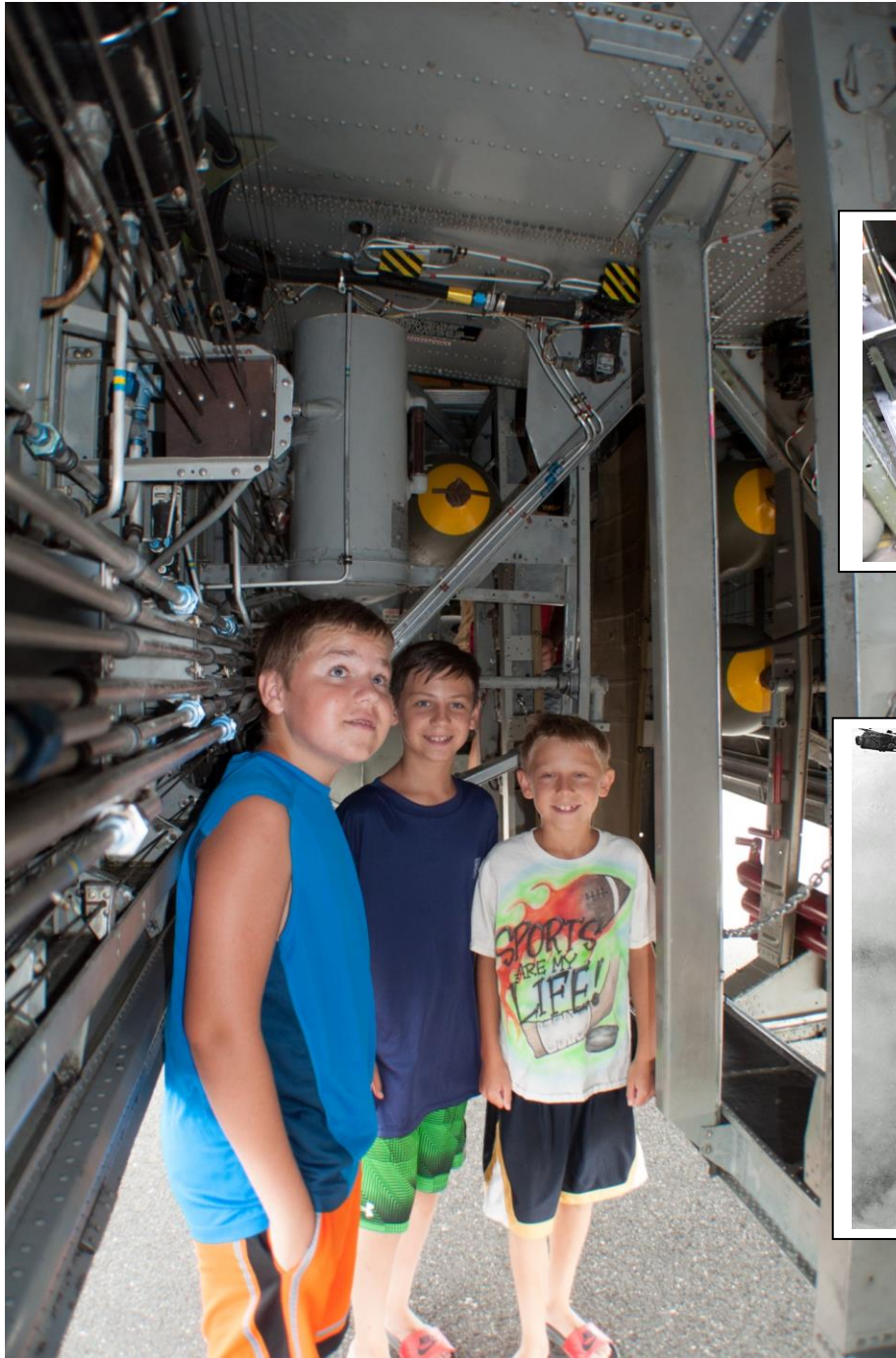
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The forward flight crew was removed from the rear flight crew with access between the two sections of the bomber made via a thin scaffold running the length of the two bomb compartments in the bomb bay. Entry and exit to the aircraft were through a door positioned towards the rear which made for harrowing emergency exits. In an emergency if the bomb bay doors were closed, forward crewmen (pilot, co-pilot, radio operator and engineer) were expected to exit the aircraft via a treacherous narrow catwalk across the bomb bay scaffold and make their way to the rear all the while fitted with their parachutes and bulky warming flight suits. Ten-year-old Peyton Sharkey illustrates this very well wearing nothing but shorts and a tee-shirt.



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The bomb bay could carry eight 1,600 pound bombs when fully loaded – considerably more 500 pounders - for a total payload of 12,800 pounds.

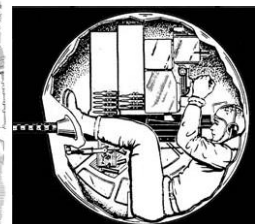
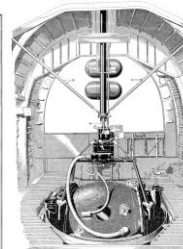
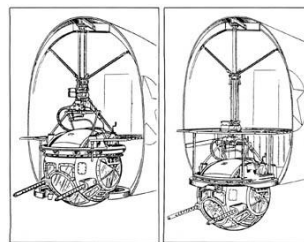
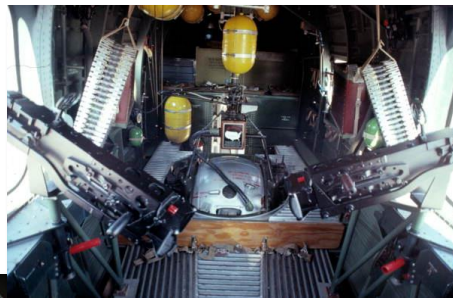
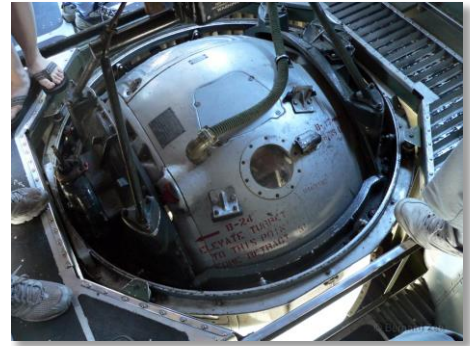


Kyle, Tyler and Peyton Sharkey stand on the tarmac inside the open bomb bay along with several 1,200-pound bombs. Note the numerous hydraulic control lines and cables running through the bomb bay – some of the most vulnerable parts of the aircraft.

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The belly ball turret gun position was a critical defensive position for the B-24 and the ball turret gunner held a distinct view of the action like no other crew member. The smallest bomber personnel were generally enlisted for operation of the ball turret fitting 2 x 12.7mm heavy machine guns. The ball turret was perhaps the coldest position on a given B-24 with many a crewmember reporting frostbite through those frigid minus 50 degree high-altitude sorties.

It was also a death trap for the smaller airmen who operated it. These fellows wore no parachutes (the small size of the ball turret necessitated this) and made their way inside their turrets after the aircraft was in flight. The B-24 ball turret - unlike that on the B-17 - could be retracted into the Liberator's fuselage during take-off and landing. However, the one square access hatch is only visible in some of these photos and it could only be opened if the turret could be turned to the proper position. Stories of belly landings with trapped gunners and others whose remains were washed out of the turret with a hose are tribute to the men who volunteered to take this critical assignment.



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The ball turret gunner's view: Left Cannon, Targeting Window, Foot Rests, Reclined Seat, Right Cannon.



Left Cannon and Side View Window



Right Cannon and Side View Window

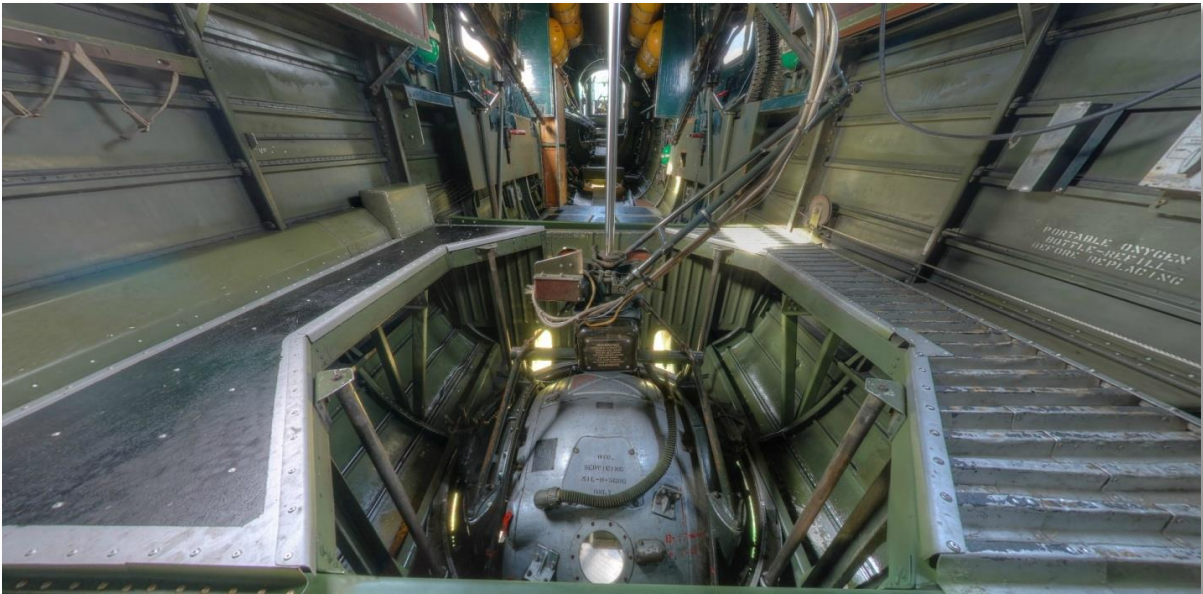


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Reclined Seat – [yes, there are no toilets on the aircraft!]



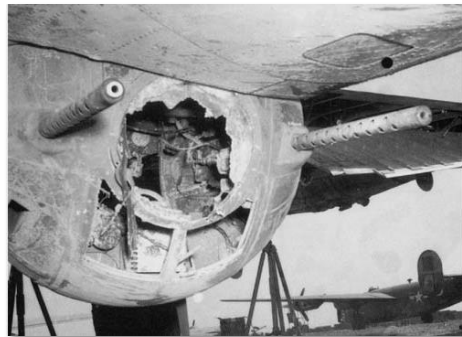
Deployed Turret Ready for Combat



The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner by Randall Jarrell



*From my mother's sleep I fell
into the State,
And I hunched in its belly till my
wet fur froze.
Six miles from earth, loosed
from its dream of life,
I woke to black flak and the
nightmare fighters.
When I died, they washed me
out of the turret with a hose.*



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Waist gunners were charged with the defense of the Liberator's vulnerable sides through use of single 12.7mm machine guns. As such, these positions aboard Liberators suffered the most casualties by incoming fighters ready to strafe the large profile sides of the bomber. These two positions - left and right - were later staggered to compensate for each gunners firing arc. Unlike other turreted positions in the B-24, spent shell casings at these waist positions were not jettisoned from the aircraft automatically, forcing crewmembers to clear their areas themselves. Since firing from these side-perspective positions required a great deal of hand-to-eye coordination via tracer rounds while taking into account target speed and the Liberator's airspeed itself, waist gunners relied on simple targeting sights in the early years. Only later did they receive assistance in the form of compensating sights to help improve accuracy.



Waist gunner positions were quite cramped as can be seen when manned by these ten and twelve-year-olds.



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The tail gunner was given perhaps the most important defensive position aboard the Liberator, manning a powered 2 x 12.7mm machine gun turret. Afforded a spectacular view, the tail gunner was charged with defense of the aircraft's "six", a position most often to encounter trailing enemy fighters eager for the easy kill. One point of note here is that if the Liberator were traveling through a rain of flak bursts, the tail gunner would most often times be the safest position aboard the aircraft, with the aircraft already having flown through the exploding shell burst. It was not unheard of for aircrews to bring aboard their own personal forms of protection (plates of steel for instance) against such flak dangers.



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The tail position was accessed through two bulkheads aft of the waist gunner positions just under four main oxygen bottles.



Looking forward from the tail gunner position past the green personal oxygen bottle.



Looking skyward from the tail gunner's seat.



CHAPTER 4 – BOMBER ASSIGNMENTS AND CREW TRAINING



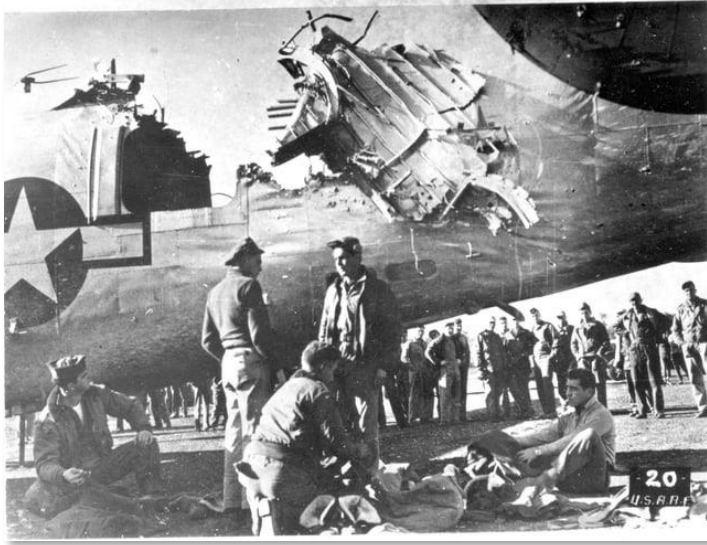
The missions were flown in a combat box formation utilized the strengths of individual Liberator firepower and crews. Gunnery crews could work together and bring to bear the power of multiple machine guns against crossing enemy fighters. Though sound in theory, the heat of battle made for something more. Coordinated gunnery was not always possible - especially between bomber crews - but communications within individual bombers were ultimately important. *(More on the combat box later in this document).*

A young boy dreams – then he realizes this was serious business.



CHAPTER 4 – BOMBER ASSIGNMENTS AND CREW TRAINING

As the young boys crammed into the Bombardier's position in the nose of the B-24 aircraft and listened to the stories of Uncle Gibby, their grandfather, George Hofmann, and best friend, Mike Iriarte facing anti-aircraft fire from below, you could have heard a pin drop.



At that moment, the Colling's Foundation fired up a thousand horsepower radial engine on a fully restored B-25 Mitchell no more than 100 feet away and the engine gave out a mighty backfire. The entire B-24 shook as if it had just been hit by flak. Everyone jumped, looking for the quickest way out – and no one thought it was funny.



CHAPTER 4 – BOMBER ASSIGNMENTS AND CREW TRAINING

DAVIS-MONTHAN ARMY AIR FIELD IN TUCSON, ARIZONA

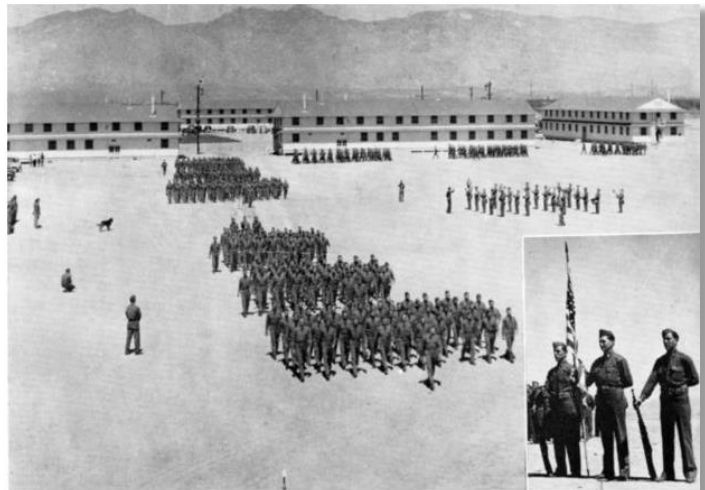
During World War II, the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) established numerous airfields in Arizona for training pilots and aircrews of USAAF fighters and bombers.

Most of these airfields were under the command of Fourth Air Force or the Army Air Forces Training Command (AAFTC) (A predecessor of the current-day United States Air Force Air Education and Training Command). However, the other USAAF support commands (Air Technical Service Command (ATSC); Air Transport Command (ATC) or Troop Carrier Command) commanded a significant number of airfields in a support roles.

Davis-Monthan AFB in Tucson, Arizona, has a strong history as a former bomber base and is currently an active combat wing. It was named in honor of Lieutenants Samuel H. Davis and Oscar Monthan, two Tucsonans and World War I era pilots who died in separate military aircraft accidents.

When the base was constructed in the early 40s, it was several miles southeast of the city, but with the growth of Tucson, it now finds itself within city limits and surrounded by residential and industrial areas.

D-M became a military base in 1925, but its origins can be traced to the earliest days of civil aviation. In 1927, Charles Lindbergh, fresh from his non-stop crossing of the Atlantic, flew his "Spirit of St. Louis" to Tucson to dedicate Davis-Monthan Field -- then the largest municipal airport in the U.S. In 1940, with a war cloud on the horizon, the field was selected for expansion. During



1942: A color guard review outside soldiers' barracks at Davis-Monthan Field, Tucson, in April, 1942 during WWII. Bomber crews for the 39th Bombardment Group were trained at D-M during the war. U.S. Army Air Force



CHAPTER 4 – BOMBER ASSIGNMENTS AND CREW TRAINING



World War II, D-M served as an operational training base for B-18, B-24, and B-29 aircraft. With the end of the war, operations at D-M came to a virtual standstill. It was then that the base was chosen as a storage site for hundreds of decommissioned aircraft.

Davis-Monthan Airport became Tucson Army Air Field in 1940, as the United States prepared for World War II. The first assigned U.S. Army Air Corps units were the 1st Bomb Wing, 41st Bomb Group and 31st Air Base Group, activating on 30 April 1941 with Lieutenant Colonel Ames S. Albro Sr. as commanding officer. In its military role, the base became known as Davis-Monthan Army Air Field on 3 December 1941. Air Corps leaders utilized the airfield, sending Douglas B-18 Bolo, Consolidated B-24 Liberator and Boeing B-29 Superfortress bombers, for training and observation missions. Training at the airfield came to a halt on 14 August 1945, when the Japanese surrendered. Davis-Monthan played a post-war role by housing German POW's from June 1945 to March 1946. It also served as a separation center, which brought the base populace to a high of 11,614 people in September 1945.



CHAPTER 4 – BOMBER ASSIGNMENTS AND CREW TRAINING

Among the bombardment groups trained at the base during the war (Gibby's crew was part of the 444th Bombardment Group):

- [34th Bombardment](#) (Heavy) 13 May 1942 – 4 July 1942
- [94th Bombardment](#) (Heavy) August 1942 – 1 November 1942
- [302nd Bombardment](#) (Heavy) 23 June 1942 – 30 July 1942
- [308th Bombardment](#) (Heavy) 20 June 1942 – 1 October 1942
- [380th Bombardment](#) (Heavy) 4 November 1942 – 2 December 1942
- [382nd Bombardment](#) (Heavy) 23 January 1943 – 5 April 1943
- [389th Bombardment](#) (Heavy) 24 December 1942 – 1 February 1943
- [392nd Bombardment](#) (Heavy) 26 January 1943 – 1 March 1943
- [399th Bombardment](#) (Heavy) 1 March 1943 – 10 April 1943
- [400th Bombardment](#) (Heavy) April 1943 – 2 May 1943
- [446th Bombardment](#) (Heavy) 1 April 1943 – 8 June 1943
- [449th Bombardment](#) (Heavy) 1 May 1943 – 5 July 1943
- [451st Bombardment](#) (Heavy) 1 May 1943 – 3 June 1943
- [459th Bombardment](#) (Heavy) 20 September 1943 – 1 November 1943
- [466th Bombardment](#) (Heavy) 15 August – 17 October 1945
- [486th Bombardment](#) (Heavy) 9 November 1943 – March 1944
- [489th Bombardment](#) (Heavy) 3 April 1945 – 13 July 1945
- [491st Bombardment](#) (Heavy) 1 October 1943 – 11 November 1943
- [444th Bombardment](#) (Very Heavy) 1 March 1943 – 29 July 1943
- [499th Bombardment](#) (Very Heavy) 20 November 1943 – 1 December 1943



While each B-24 had a flying crew of ten or eleven, the ground crew members outnumbered them two to one. This photo taken in China of the entire crew of the 308th Bombardment Group “Johnny Dough Boy” shows one of the teams that trained at Davis-Monthan Air Base.

CHAPTER 4 – BOMBER ASSIGNMENTS AND CREW TRAINING

ADVANCED AND COMBAT CREW TRAINING - Diligent, thorough training of all unit personnel was critical in carrying out future missions under combat conditions. Formation flying was emphasized for pilots, and personnel assigned to all other combat crew positions were given the best training possible.

Training as a crew was intense, flying day and night, all over the local region. Crews practice day and night landings in all weather conditions until they were fully proficient. Frequent long-distance cross-country trips were common testing the endurance of the crew given the inherent long range capabilities of the B-24. It was not uncommon to fly a course as far as Bermuda and back again to base.

Practice bombing runs with both live and dummy munitions were numerous and essential as that was the primary role of the aircraft. Experience with variations in altitude, visibility, temperatures and other weather conditions were the norm as were flying and landing with less than the full complement of operating engines. Training accidents and breakdowns were not uncommon serving to keep the crew on their toes.

Combat crew training was concluded with a cross-country formation flight across the United States sometimes to Bermuda and back with 35 aircraft and crews in full formation. After five months the combat crew was ready and they would receive their deployment orders.

While Davis-Monthan AFB was home to Gibby and the John E. McLaughlin, Jr. crew from 1 March 1943 through 29th July 1943, training and maneuvers took them to various parts of the country including a temporary move to Salinas Army Air Base in California at the end of May.

IGFRK: It being impracticable for the govt to furn.
cooking facilities for rations in kind

HEADQUARTERS
DAVIS-MONTHAN FIELD
Tucson, Arizona
May 30, 1943

SPECIAL ORDERS) R-E-S-T-R-I-C-T-E-D
NUMBER.....150) E-X-T-R-A-C-T

1. The Heavy Bombardment Combat Crews, consisting of the mil personnel listed on the atchd Inclosure No 1, which is hereby made a part of this order, are reld fr atchd-unaagd 39th and 444th Bomb Gps (H), as indicated on the inclosure, trfd to Barnard Prov Gp, WP AAB Salinas, Calif, by rail, reporting upon arrival to CO. Upon arrival at destination personnel to be atchd-unaagd to 34th Bomb Gp (H).

This is a TEMPORARY change of sta. Trav being of a temp nature T at govt expense of dependents and household goods not auth except as provided in Sec VI WD Cir 261, 1942 and Sec IV WD Bull 27, 1942.

TO will furn nec T. IGFRK for EM on troop train TO furn meal tickets under Prov of Par 2 AR 30-2215 for nec meals. Individual equipment will accompany personnel.

Train Comdr will notify CO at destination twenty-four (24) hours in advance of ETA and will notify this hq ATTENTION S-1, with the least practicable delay, hour and date of arrival at destination.

Grs asgmt of single O are terminated effective date of departure in accordance with Par 13 AR 210-10. This constitutes a non-asgmt of grs for married O, there being no adequate grs for them on post.

LDN FD 34 P 434-01-02-03-07-08 A 0425-23.

Auth: TWX 16th BBW N 935E dd May21/43, under auth of II AF Memo 35-15 May 12/43, II AF Memo 75-1 Dec 30/42 as amended.

By order of Col LORELL H. SMITH:

C. O. CARPENTER, JR.
Capt AC
AAJ

OFFICIAL:

C. O. CARPENTER, JR.
Capt AC
AAJ

DISTRIBUTION:

1 - Reto Sec, Misc Div, AGO	5 - COAB Salinas, Calif
3 - AAF Dir of War Orgn & Movement	5 - CO 34th Bomb Gp (H), AAB Salinas, Calif
2 - AAF Dir of Personnel	2 - Resident O Mess
5 - CG II AF	35 - Base Rail T
2 - CG AAF	3 - Base FO
2 - CG ASC	1 - Base Dental Surgeon
2 - 72nd Mach Records Unit II AF	1 - Base FO
2 - CG 16BW	1 - O-in-chg Sales Commissary
1 - Base S-2	1 - Secretary O Club
5 - Lt Col Barnard, 39th Bomb Gp (H)	600 - CO 39th Bomb Gp (H)
1 - Billeting O	400 - CO 444th Bomb Gp (H)

CHAPTER 4 - BOMBER ASSIGNMENTS AND CREW TRAINING

R-E-S-T-R-I-C-T-E-D

PAGE 1 INCL 1 TO PAR 1 SO 150. HQ IMF, TUCSON, ARIZ, MAY 30/43.

Prov Gp Staff

*1LT COL HARVEY P. BARNARD JR 021161, Prov Gp Comdr (Train Comdr)
 *CAPT CARL G. COATS 0419222, Prov Gp Bomb
 *CAPT JOSEPH J. MC CONNELL 0430743, Prov Gp Surg
 *1ST LT JAMES R. REED JR 0435041, Prov Gp Nav
 *WOJG NATHAN BROOKS 12119092, Prov Gp Adl
 *1ST LT HUGH L. HANNA 0791101, Flt Comdr
 *1ST LT ORSON A. ISRAELSON 0390227, Flt Comdr
 *1ST LT DOUGLAS E. SANFORD 0665724, Flt Comdr
 *1ST LT HARRY E. STENGHELE III 0412780, Flt Comdr
 *1ST LT JOEL C. THOMPSON 0430635, Flt Comdr
 **1ST LT JOSEPH C. SLATER 0665727, Flt Comdr

* - asgd Hq 16 BOTW, atchd 39th Bomb Gp (H)
 ** - asgd 1st BC, atchd 39th Bomb Gp (H)

Crew #39-4-86

2ND LT KENNETH S. STARCHER 0735685 (P)
 2ND LT CHARLES G. COUTIS 0747218 (CP)
 2ND LT ELTON L. AULTMAN 0676401 (B)
 Sgt ALFRED J. CONLON 33221455 (E)
 Pvt JERO G. PROULX 12096196 (R)
 Sgt FRANK R. GASTANO 12096313 (AE)
 Pfc JAMES E. HOFFMAN 33193703 (AR)
 Sgt DANIEL E. LYNCH 32465063 (G)
 Sgt JOHN A. COUGHLIN 33373165 (AG)

Crew #39-4-79

2ND LT PAUL W. NICHOL 0674613 (P)
 2ND LT RAYMOND E. GREEN 0747255 (CP)
 2ND LT HAROLD F. ANSTER 0676332 (B)
 Sgt THOMAS H. CRAMFORD 34128994 (E)
 Cpl EDWARD A. ROCKHOLT 34367816 (R)
 Cpl ERNEST A. WAGNE 32402442 (AE)
 Sgt CLARK S. SCOTT 18049285 (AR)
 Pvt RAYMOND P. LIBUDEZINSKI 13100111 (G)
 Sgt JAMES R. RAINSBOTTOM 16109877 (AG)

Crew #39-4-97

2ND LT DAVID B. WILLOCK JR 0740999 (P)
 2ND LT ROLLAND E. GOODLANDER 0747252 (CP)
 2ND LT HERBERT MAZER 0671468 (B)
 Pvt PAUL SMITH 33111541 (B)
 Sgt MACK M. BALLARD 36135846 (R)
 Sgt LOUIS M. JOHNSON 32270140 (AE)
 Sgt GANDOLFO A. ALBERTI 12129270 (AR)
 Sgt WAYNE M. OLSAN 39538343 (G)
 Sgt CLARENCE W. DICKERSON 35442185 (AG)

Crew #39-4-115

1ST LT WALTER R. TALLIAFERRO 025591 (P)
 2ND LT MARVON M. HURBY 0745020 (CP)
 2ND LT FRED J. KIEBLE 0728182 (B)
 S sgt WILLIE M. CONGER 34285009 (E)
 S sgt AUGUSTINE A. MONAHAN 32451892 (R)
 Sgt SIDNEY H. BRANCH 13064865 (AE)
 Sgt JACK F. FLETCHER 36188541 (AR)
 Sgt OREN W. DIERDORF 35560884 (G)
 Sgt JOHN DESANO 12129472 (AG)

Crew #39-4-118

2ND LT ROBERT D. CHAMBERS 0797467 (P)
 2ND LT GEORGE M. HANS 0747261 (CP)
 2ND LT WILLIAM F. NEUHAUS 0736719 (B)
 S sgt KARL O. MACFARLANE 39829962 (E)
 S sgt ELBERT L. LAZEBY 38210090 (R)

Crew #39-4-82

2ND LT ROBERT J. WALLING 025722 (P)
 2ND LT MERLE W. EMCH 0747240 (CP)
 2ND LT JACK BERKOWITZ 0676337 (B)
 Sgt ROBERT J. DEBO 31111761 (E)
 Sgt GRENVILLE C. BAKER 31164993 (R)
 Sgt JACK M. PINNICK 15195165 (AE)
 Sgt JOHN J. BILLIK JR 32462854 (AR)
 Sgt ARTHUR P. SPITZ 32517486 (G)
 Sgt JAMES D. BATY 39455953 (AG)

Crew #39-4-95

Flt O TREVOR G. BEVAN JR 260662 (P)
 2ND LT JOHN EVANS 0747242 (CP)
 2ND LT STEPHEN G. PAZAR 0671091 (B)
 Cpl CHARLES E. KARNBY 33236617 (E)
 Sgt GARVIN C. MC KINLY 33237102 (R)
 Pvt JOHN SCHLITT 36253756 (AE)
 Sgt GEORGE P. MILLER 37380189 (AR)
 Sgt HAROLD E. WORMINGTON 37227051 (G)
 S sgt RICHARD E. GRADY 38291294 (AG)

Crew #39-4-99

2ND LT DALE J. TRUEMAN 0672908 (P)
 2ND LT MARK E. ESTES 0747241 (CP)
 2ND LT LEWIS F. BARTON 0676404 (B)
 Sgt BOYD C. WALROUD 14131195 (E)
 Sgt RUSSELL R. MOORE 35507220 (R)
 Sgt MERRILL A. LITTLE 34313378 (AE)
 Sgt MARCELO M. MARTINEZ 18118567 (AR)
 Sgt JOHN S. JENSEN JR 12152595 (G)
 Sgt FRANKLIN R. GREEN 18199606 (AG)

Crew #39-4-116

2ND LT JOHN E. MC LAUCHLIN JR 0797160 (P)
 2ND LT JOHN K. NORMAN 0747307 (CP)
 2ND LT CARLYLE R. ASHBURN 0801093 (N)
 2ND LT GILBERT A. RAUH 0738767 (B)
 S sgt SAUL SACHER 32434882 (E)
 S sgt ROBERT C. GALLAGHER 13108259 (R)
 Sgt DAVID W. HANCOCK 14149370 (AE)
 Sgt HAROLD L. SEIFREID 13080602 (AR)
 Sgt ROBERT S. SIMMONS 19116733 (G)
 Sgt BERNARD A. BAUMGARTNER 16021719 (AG)

R-E-S-T-R-I-C-T-E-D

CHAPTER 4 - BOMBER ASSIGNMENTS AND CREW TRAINING

R-E-S-T-R-I-C-T-E-D

PAGE 5 INCL 1 TO PAR 1 SO 150, HQ DMF, TUCSON, ARIZ, MAY 30/43.

Crew #39-4-30

2ND LT ROBERT S. MOORE 0740877 (P)
2ND LT WALTER H. BERGEN 0678144 (CP)
2ND LT MARCUS A. PHARR JR 0731345 (B)
S sgt H. A. (IO) CAMPBELL 17111331 (E)
S sgt CHARLES E. ROWLEY 11016379 (R)
Sgt VALENTINE (NMI) GONDECK 37299773 (AE)
Sgt HENRY (NMI) FRISHOF 33307814 (AR)
Sgt SAMUEL B. OSTERMILLER 39535568 (G)
Sgt CARROLL L. THOMPSON 37226709 (AG)

Crew #39-4-63

PLT O HILFORD O. BINGHAM T-60664 (P)
2ND LT CARL R. BROWNING 0801240 (CP)
2ND LT JOHN F. GRAHAM 0676377 (B)
Sgt CURTIS F. HELMS 33188589 (E)
Sgt ORLANDO A. MASSIMIANI 33294026 (R)
Sgt MELVIN C. HARRIS 34168894 (AE)
Sgt JOHN L. NEMETH 13125934 (AR)
S sgt LAWRENCE A. CLAFFEY 35374123 (G)
S sgt DUARD B. McGUFFIN 36248593 (AG)

Crew #39-4-51

2ND LT DAVID W. THOMPSON 0675380 (P)
2ND LT NORMAN H. SANDERS 0801309 (CP)
2ND LT LLOYD A. HAYNES 0676386 (B)
S sgt RAYMOND E. OWENS 18109212 (E)
S sgt JOHN P. PREPURA 16100208 (AE)
Sgt FRED (NMI) SCHMABOLK 32464998 (AR)
Sgt EDWARD J. ZAHURAK 35510723 (G)
Sgt DONALD E. SORACCA 12146519 (AG)
Sgt SYLVESTER A. KOPPAL 37382180 (R)

Crew #39-4-37

2ND LT EDWARD H. WOLCOTT 0799526 (P)
2ND LT EDGAR A. WORSHAM JR 0799702 (CP)
2ND LT HARARDT E. PEDERSON 0671092 (B)
S sgt VERNON R. BLACK 38121751 (E)
Sgt EARL M. MILLER 38242896 (R)
S sgt ANDREW W. CURTIS 38133203 (AE)
Sgt CECIL B. ROBINSON 39252166 (AR)
Pfc HERBERT F. BIDDLE 15102888 (G)
Sgt ARTHUR F. ADAMS 31152525 (AG)

Crew #39-4-60

2ND LT ALBERT H. HINTEMACH 0797532 (P)
2ND LT HENRY W. WOLCOTT III 0801233 (CP)
2ND LT DAVE (NMI) FRANK 0676369 (B)
S sgt MAX B. WHITING 39829855 (E)
Pfc PATRICK D. McHUGH 38200840 (R)
Sgt HENRY C. GASKILL 33327217 (AE)
Sgt HARRY T. WILKINSON 35417695 (AR)
Sgt ROBERT E. METCALF 36375707 (G)
Sgt CHARLES R. MORRIS 34394339 (AG)

Crew #39-4-50

2ND LT ROBERT G. GILLESPIE 0797512 (P)
2ND LT DOUGLAS J. BAMES JR 0800071 (CP)
2ND LT HERBERT (NMI) RUDH 0738944 (B)
Sgt EDWARD B. COLETT 33351112 (E)
Sgt OTTAVO F. TOSTI 11086811 (R)
Sgt GEORGE J. CAREY 31159831 (AE)
Sgt DOMINIC L. ZAPPIA 15330308 (AR)
Sgt MAX J. SIMPSON 35561096 (G)
Sgt ROBERT E. BRINK 13093672 (AG)

Crew #39-4-32

2ND LT ARTHUR S. MARCOULLIER 0800916 (P)
2ND LT DONALD W. DYER 0678201 (CP)
2ND LT GROVER C. TRUMBO JR 0739637 (B)
S sgt THOMAS C. HATCH 37329410 (E)
Sgt FRANK R. BRYSON 32469779 (R)
S sgt ALFONSO (NMI) MATTINO 32292603 (AE)
Sgt JOSEPH S. BLECHA 16126757 (AR)
Sgt JAMES W. WEATHERFORD 34392196 (G)
Sgt GORDON A. WOOD 31156855 (AG)

Crew #39-4-61

2ND LT JOHN M. REPP 0740274 (P)
2ND LT BURTON R. DAYHARSH 0801260 (CP)
2ND LT JOSEPH T. MURPHY 0738654 (B)
Sgt MAX A. GLANBARD 33321819 (E)
Sgt LEONARD J. MAJCHER 36268581 (R)
Sgt JOHN E. HOH 13106953 (AE)
Sgt ARGERY H. KAVAFES 32518435 (AR)
S sgt LESTER A. HILDEBRAND 15334151 (G)
Sgt HOWARD C. BROWN 36229951 (AG)

Crew #39-4-65

2ND LT THOMAS R. SLINGLUFF 0797624 (P)
2ND LT JOHN R. W. TITUS 0797638 (CP)
2ND LT DONALD E. MILLER 0671473 (B)
S sgt CLIFFORD M. PRESTON 11016091 (E)
Sgt EMANUEL A. MAURO 32470352 (R)
S sgt ELDON L. SASSER 39392911 (AE)
Sgt ROBERT E. WILLARD 35419030 (AR)
Sgt WALTER M. BARLEY 19116727 (G)
Sgt CECIL E. BAKER 38109055 (AG)

Crew #39-4-64

2ND LT JOHN E. BOYCE 0671864 (P)
2ND LT CARL H. HUBER JR 0800495 (CP)
2ND LT JACK F. HERB 0670388 (B)
Sgt LEONARD M. ELLIS 37299978 (E)
S sgt MAX MAGARIL 32413380 (R)
Sgt JOHN A. GOLDBACH 33188500 (AE)
Pfc HERBERT F. WELLS 33341255 (AR)
Sgt HUBERT A. MOSCHELLA 15323395 (G)
Sgt MALCOLM E. NUGENT 18170999 (AG)

Crew #39-4-58

2ND LT JAMES R. WILSON 0670697 (P)
2ND LT CHARLES M. BAGAN 0800045 (CP)
2ND LT ANTHONY KUHN 0738654 (B)
Sgt GERALD (NMI) MILLER 33208597 (E)
Sgt FRANCESCO ESPOSITO 32413399 (R)
Sgt WILLIS M. CUTWAY 32489581 (AE)
Pfc HEREDITH M. McMILLAN 38281871 (AR)
Pvt JOSEPHUS (NMI) BAKER 17067648 (G)
Sgt ROBERT B. CARPENTER 32551200 (AG)

Crew #39-4-54

2ND LT MENOESLAUS C. SERAFIN 0675376 (P)
2ND LT LEROY H. BECK 0799183 (CP)
2ND LT CHARLES A. WEAHLAND 0734661 (B)
S sgt ADRIAN G. WAMSER 35285904 (E)
Pfc CAMPBELL H. McKEE 36702249 (R)
Sgt WESLEY L. HARDISON 34313321 (AE)
Sgt JOSEPH (NMI) TADDONIO JR 31201181 (AR)
S sgt WALTER C. JONES 32436161 (G)
S sgt PAUL J. ALLEN 37222668 (AG)

R-E-S-T-R-I-C-T-E-D

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CHAPTER 4 - BOMBER ASSIGNMENTS AND CREW TRAINING

R-E-S-T-R-I-C-T-E-D
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444th Bomb Op (H)

Crew #39-4-17

2ND LT WILLIAM W. HALLIDAY 0789311 (P)
2ND LT ARTHUR E. BAKER 0802695 (CP)
2ND LT JAMES H. CHAIN JR 0678693 (B)
2ND LT VICTOR A. STRASSERGER 0741105 (B)
Sgt JOHN W. KANE 12063939 (B)
Sgt CHARLES E. STEWART 31081601 (R)
Sgt EARL H. HATCHER 33221588 (AE)
Sgt OLIVER E. SMITH 37216926 (AR)
Sgt KENNETH J. SELLERS 39900151 (G)
Sgt JAMES V. GIANCOLA 12169353 (AG)

Crew #39-4-21

2ND LT CARROL W. ALLEN 0422354 (P)
2ND LT SAMUEL (NMI) AUSLANDER 0801541 (CP)
2ND LT WILLIAM J. BRENNAN 0735166 (B)
Sgt JAMES E. COUGHLIN 35391063 (B)
Pfc CECIL (NMI) MALKIN 32517882 (R)
Sgt FRED R. OZUPICH 33188312 (AE)
Pvt JACK D. LIESERMAN 39529105 (AR)
Sgt JAMES M. SHOOK 33293504 (G)
Sgt BEN C. ROSS 38222767 (AG)

Crew #39-4-29

2ND LT KENNETH R. KING 0800899 (P)
2ND LT JOHN R. CRADDOCK 0677679 (CP)
2ND LT JOHN S. RAIR 0671349 (B)
Sgt LESTER E. LONG 15065212 (B)
Pvt KENNETH L. GURNEY 32369878 (R)
Sgt FREDERICK L. OICKLE 31078709 (AE)
Sgt FLOYD L. ELINE 35661305 (AR)
Sgt CHARLES K. SINGLETON 14125198 (G)
Pvt STEPHEN G. ESKERDIN 36382468 (AG)

Crew #39-4-33

2ND LT FREDERICK V. JOHNSTON 0675349 (P)
2ND LT MAJOR M. KESSICK 0677832 (CP)
2ND LT AUGUSTUS L. STEINLE 0731803 (B)
Sgt DONALD (NMI) GREEN 35462147 (B)
Sgt EUGENE E. ANDRIS 16028759 (R)
Pvt DAVID (NMI) PEST 14130256 (AE)
Sgt ROBERTSON D. SHORT 35339045 (AR)
Sgt EUGENE H. PUNKHOUSER 35495933 (G)
Sgt PHILLIP D. IDLET 17015167 (AG)

Crew #39-4-24

2ND LT JAMES A. MONAHAN 0797578 (P)
2ND LT GEORGE H. CARNEY 0799901 (CP)
2ND LT ROBERT J. VAN CURA 0735938 (B)
Pvt EVAN F. GOOS 37428559 (B)
Sgt DONALD E. BALL 31167451 (B)
Sgt FREDERICK H. PAGELS 32077884 (AE)
Sgt GUY E. BOWEN 33193032 (AR)
Sgt RALPH E. SMITH 37225468 (G)
Sgt JOHN (NMI) PONDSTA 12149217 (AG)

Crew #39-4-28

2ND LT PHILIP W. GORE 0735076 (P)
2ND LT RICHARD E. FLEMING 0678214 (CP)
2ND LT CHARLES E. GRAHAM JR 0671423 (B)
Sgt HERBERT L. KINDY 38189123 (B)
Sgt THOMAS P. DeGUISEPPA 32500832 (R)
Sgt LEE E. DILL 18129655 (AE)
Sgt PETER (NMI) LANGER 3392369 (AR)
Sgt SILVERSTER C. BROWN 12167572 (G)
Sgt RICHARD E. KENDIG 13093846 (AG)

Crew #39-4-19

2ND LT IRVING H. WATERMAN JR 0799519 (P)
2ND LT CHARLES E. MUSGRAVE 0677846 (CP)
2ND LT FREDERICK G. SPEAR 0731759 (B)
Sgt FRANK H. LAWSON 33274902 (B)
Sgt JOHN E. McAULIFFE 12155326 (R)
Sgt CURTIS S. ELLING 12137825 (AE)
Sgt ROBERT P. SHAYER 11098481 (AR)
Sgt CHARLES S. BOUNER 13093515 (G)
Sgt HAROLD E. FLENNOR 35562361 (AG)

Crew #39-4-23

2ND LT ROBERT E. WALTERS 0799899 (P)
2ND LT ROSS D. JACKSON 0677755 (CP)
2ND LT RALPH F. GARTON 0676461 (B)
Sgt ANTHONY J. DAVIS 31123511 (B)
Sgt PAUL W. RHODES 33284840 (R)
Sgt RAYMOND F. MITCHELL 31171954 (AR)
Sgt CLAUDE J. SAUFI 31170720 (AR)
Sgt ORVIN W. LOWE 14156356 (G)
Sgt JAMES B. CRONE 35427894 (AG)

Crew #39-4-31

2ND LT GEORGE H. FERROU 0675282 (P)
2ND LT GEORGE W. ACHROSE 0802693 (CP)
2ND LT EVERAL A. GUINOND 0671427 (B)
Sgt LAWRENCE L. BOYDSTUN 17086722 (B)
Pfc WALTER W. FURST 33338012 (R)
Sgt WILLIAM K. BISHOP 39841480 (AE)
Sgt FRANCIS E. HAWTHORNE 35340375 (AR)
Sgt HARRY E. WEFF 17060066 (G)
Sgt FRANCIS E. PRASE 38279805 (AG)

Crew #39-4-12

1ST LT MYERS E. CATHER 0372895 (P)
2ND LT GLEN E. McGRAM 0742448 (CP)
2ND LT PETER J. ROE JR 0736728 (B)
Sgt PHILIP (NMI) FLORES 35316956 (B)
Pfc JOSEPH P. KOWALSKI 31186641 (R)
Sgt FRANK J. SANMARCO 32382330 (AE)
Pfc WILLIAM T. NEILL 32516064 (AR)
Sgt EDWARD W. RADKE 37263640 (G)
Sgt DONALD D. MILLER 39398067 (AG)

Crew #39-4-26

2ND LT ROBERT L. BARKER 0675022 (P)
2ND LT SILVIO A. LEONARDINI 0742736 (CP)
2ND LT RAYMOND J. SKRYJA 0736732 (B)
Sgt LEONARD C. PORTER 31145662 (B)
Sgt WILLIAM E. MANNING 32437354 (R)
Sgt ELLIS D. GOOD 33300398 (AE)
Sgt FRANCIS W. HICKEY 31206949 (AR)
Sgt THOMAS A. BROWN 37226581 (G)
Sgt HAROLD T. POUND 17058699 (AG)

Crew #39-4-22

2ND LT ROBERT E. McCONNICK 0675254 (P)
2ND LT RICHARD R. OSBURN 0678132 (CP)
2ND LT JAMES E. HANSEN 0671429 (B)
Sgt WILLIAM H. GENTRY 39389081 (B)
Sgt MICHAEL S. CRAWFORD 34267452 (R)
Sgt MILTON (NMI) HESTER 18078405 (AE)
Sgt CHARLES P. P. HANSON 33324214 (AR)
Sgt BILLIE B. MYERS 18166363 (G)
Sgt HENRY H. O'HARA 32436174 (AG)

R-E-S-T-R-I-C-T-E-D

CHAPTER 4 - BOMBER ASSIGNMENTS AND CREW TRAINING

R-E-S-T-R-I-C-T-E-D

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Crew #39-4-121

2ND LT FRANK D. WELDON 0799522 (P)
2ND LT WILLIAM E. JOHNSON 0747272 (CP)
2ND LT DOMINICK S. MIERZEWSKI 0736785 (B)
Sgt BRILLO V. OCLANGULO 11044655 (E)
Sgt WILLIAM GHIE 31062093 (B)
Sgt HERBERT P. CLARK JR 34380227 (AR)
Sgt OWEN R. WEBB 18125349 (AR)
Sgt EDWIN A. KARRISH 12132885 (G)
Sgt IRVING F. BAILEY 32493158 (AG)

Crew #39-4-129

1ST LT RUSSELL J. SMITH 025660 (P)
2ND LT KENNETH M. GAGATH 0747291 (CP)
2ND LT FRANK S. LEMAR 0669337 (B)
Sgt JUNIUS C. KHAL 35193637 (E)
Sgt MARTIN R. GOLDMAN 11073423 (R)
Sgt CARL B. JACKSON 16097675 (AR)
Sgt HUGH A. WORTENSTEIN 39529360 (AR)
Sgt ALFRED H. SILLAR 32518695 (G)
Sgt LOREN J. SCHORR 35403762 (AG)

Crew #39-4-131

2ND LT CHARLES W. HAINBLIN 0432746 (P)
2ND LT DONALD L. HIGG 0747305 (CP)
2ND LT JOSEPH J. CARING 0676352 (B)
Sgt ALFRED R. SEARS 31081807 (E)
Sgt WILLIAM E. BUSHILL 31152166 (R)xx
Sgt HAROLD E. HARRIS 39309130 (AR)
Sgt LESTER J. HARRIGAN 11117041 (AR)
Sgt VERNAL B. LINDSAY 32266601 (G)
Sgt ROY D. FAURET 11105571 (AG)

xx - emergency fur, report direct fr home

Crew #39-4-133

2ND LT THOMAS B. ARTHUR 0797444 (P)
2ND LT EDWARD C. PEDERSEN 0747313 (CP)
2ND LT GEORGE R. GUNTERMAN 0670223 (B)
Sgt BRUCE E. RYAN 3207680 (E)
Sgt CARL E. BANGART 15331333 (R)
Sgt QUINN A. HESS JR 33250988 (AR)
Sgt JOSEPH J. FLORIO 32624628 (AR)
Sgt ROY W. WESTBERG 39189307 (G)
Sgt LOUIS SCARVERA 39537257 (AG)

Crew #39-4-81

Pvt O DON E. TAYLOR T121028 (P)
2ND LT GOULDING W. SMITH JR 0747361 (CP)
2ND LT PETER E. BURCHAMILL 0676498 (B)
Sgt ALFRED J. GAULHIN 31273541 (E)
Sgt HAROLD A. CLOUGH 32452375 (R)
Sgt ELLIS G. GOODMAN 35182369 (AR)
Sgt ALBERT J. BAUER 12135368 (AR)
Sgt MILTON B. HOGUE JR 32282525 (G)
Sgt RICHARD A. BUNK 18158704 (AG)

Crew #39-4-89

2ND LT CHARLES W. WALTERS 0797208 (P)
2ND LT J. M. (IO) BICKLEY 0749039 (CP)
2ND LT JACK D. GEORGE 0729463 (R)
Sgt VICTOR A. RICHARD 11045475 (E)
Sgt LOUIS D. DELGUIDICE 31168760 (R)
Sgt CARL E. HITE 15330263 (AR)
Sgt ELMER KUEH 35316101 (AR)
Sgt JOHN J. STALKER 13125583
Sgt VINCENT S. SWEET 32255510 (AG)

Crew #39-4-94

2ND LT THOMAS HAIGH 0797524 (P)
2ND LT ALBERT D. MATTHEI JR 0800001 (CP)
2ND LT WARD C. WALKER 02043707 (B)
Cpl PETER F. STILES 13112232 (E)
Cpl WILLIAM D. BUTLER 18162207 (R)

Crew #39-4-122

2ND LT WILLIAM E. CHENEY 0675320 (P)
2ND LT EDWARD LAXIN 0747290 (CP)
2ND LT JOHN B. MULBERRY 0731186 (B)
Sgt MICHAEL G. VETRECHIN JR 15320307 (E)
Sgt ROBERT F. GOLDSBOROUGH 33326217 (AR)
Sgt GERALD K. BRONER 31128647 (AR)
Sgt SALVATORE SGRIO 12096677 (AR)
Sgt JAMES M. HIGHCOCK 39256020 (G)
Sgt WALTER L. BELTZ 37226696 (AG)

Crew #39-4-130

2ND LT DONALD P. LACKY 0799033 (P)
2ND LT HUBERT R. NEUGENT 0747303 (CP)
2ND LT HAROLD C. EDGEMAN 0670045 (B)
Sgt HARRISON ADAMS 35430790 (E)
Sgt JOE O. PIRGIO 35335024 (R)
Sgt DOUGLAS A. ROSENBAUGH 15103613 (AR)
Pfc ROY A. JOHNSON 11100514 (AR)
Sgt BYRON H. COLLIER 34357391 (G)
Sgt HARRY J. SMITH 11110595 (AG)

Crew #39-4-132

1ST LT B. B. (IO) SKAGGS 025626 (P)
2ND LT LESLIE J. PAUL 0747312 (CP)
2ND LT GEORGE P. JOYCE 0729775 (B)
Sgt HOWARD C. BRIGHT 35322965 (E)
Sgt OLIVER E. CAMERON 39184256 (R)
Sgt JOHN C. DAVIS 17105995 (AR)
Sgt ROBERT H. CRISMAN 34176199 (AR)
Sgt EDGAR A. RICH 17080324 (G)
Sgt EDWARD P. SCHMITT 14082816 (AG)

Crew #39-4-76

2ND LT WILLIAM D. KYLE JR 025750 (P)
2ND LT ORIN D. SMITH 0747350 (CP)
2ND LT JACK E. SLAUGHTER 0676482 (B)
Sgt ROBERT J. DEVLIN 31139541 (E)
Sgt PAUL PATRUSKA 31156986 (R)
Sgt EDWARD J. COHRAD 32394466 (AR)
Sgt ROY L. SMITH 18117438 (AR)
Sgt HERMAN B. PULLIAM 37226423 (G)
Sgt MILTON BERNSTEIN 12039085 (AG)

Crew #39-4-83

2ND LT JOHN R. SAWYER 0672873 (P)
2ND LT ROBERT E. BRASLEY 0745035 (CP)
2ND LT GRANT W. HOEL 0736772 (B)
Sgt JOHN B. HALL 34364246 (E)
Cpl GLEN E. AKE 15332228 (R)
Cpl JOHN GROCHMAL 3111616 (AR)
Sgt ALFRED J. CAFFARO 37377873 (AR)
Sgt ROBERT L. GUYER 35342191 (G)
Sgt FRANK I. GREGG 35419451 (AG)

Crew #39-4-93

2ND LT WILLIAM R. VROMAN 0672911 (P)
2ND LT JOHN R. PARMETER 0801303 (CP)
2ND LT EBERN B. KILSTOFFE 0738544 (B)
Sgt WILLIE C. COX 35491507 (E)
Cpl SALVATORE F. MAIRO 32459769 (R)
Sgt ELDON J. BRAND 35365148 (AR)
Pfc HANS D. NOREN 36002312 (AR)
Pvt HAROLD W. JOHNSON 39250739 (G)
Pvt LESTER W. WHITEHOUSE 32465669 (AG)

Cpl WINSTON P. IVEY 14105456 (AR)
Pvt EDWARD D. RAGER 35436025 (AR)
Sgt FRED C. MALARA 12146224 (G)
Sgt ROMEO GIACOMINI 36606952 (AG)

R-E-S-T-R-I-C-T-E-D

CHAPTER 4 – BOMBER ASSIGNMENTS AND CREW TRAINING



SALINAS ARMY AIR FIELD - The airfield opened in late 1941. It was used by the United States Army Air Forces Fourth Air Force as a sub-post to Fort Ord during the war. Its mission was that of an incoming personnel processing center and a training field for Army pilots in reconnaissance and observation duties in various aircraft from light observation planes to medium bombers. The Air Transport Command also used the field and had an air freight terminal here for transshipment of cargo.

The John McLauchlen training crew members who worked together for so many hours became good friends and those friendships carried them through both good and bad times. Not all of them would survive the war. In fact, four of them would never make it home but their memories were carried forward by those who did.

Crew #39-4-116
2ND LT JOHN E. MC LAUCHLEN JR 0797160(P)
2ND LT JOHN K. NORMAN 0747307 (CP)
2ND LT CARLYLE R. ASHBURN 0801093 (M)
2ND LT GILBERT A. RAUH 0738787 (E)
S sgt SAUL SACHER 32434882 (D)
S sgt ROBERT C. GALLAGHER 13108259 (R)
Sgt DAVID W. HANCOCK 14149370 (AM)
Sgt HAROLD L. SEIFREID 13080602 (AR)
Sgt ROBERT S. SIMMONS 19116733 (G)
Sgt BERNARD A. BAUMGARTNER 16021719 (AG)



Gilbert A. Rauh
KIA – 1 Dec 1943
Bombardier



John E. McLauchlen, Jr
KIA - 1 Dec 1943
Pilot



John G. MacDonald
Co-pilot
1916 - 2010

CHAPTER 4 – BOMBER ASSIGNMENTS AND CREW TRAINING



Carlyle Richard Ashburn
Navigator



1917 - 1988



Robert Seth Simmons
Gunner
1921 - 1964



David Wade Hancock
Gunner
1924 - 2004



Robert C. Gallagher
Radio Operator
1923 - 2006



Bernard A. Baumgartner
Gunner



KIA – 23 JAN 1944



Harold Louis Seifreid
Gunner
KIA – 1 Dec 1943



Saul Sacher
Engineer

