

50th Anniversary of World War II : Son Pays Tribute To His Father

Approximately three years ago on November 16, 1989 I experienced one of the saddest and now the proudest moments of my life. That day my father died and that night, for the first time in my life, I read the diary which he had written about the 30 missions of heavy bombardment he flew over German occupied territory during World War II.

My dad's name was Tech. Sgt. Merrel L. Duncan and he was Group Lead Radio Operator for the 91st Bomb Group - 401st Squadron. I have personally contacted the men who flew with my father in the B-17 Bombers. In many cases I have located some of the men and now fifty years later reunited them. But, this was not enough for me. I had to do more. I had to fly my "Last Mission" for the men and my father. I feel that everyone should know what these brave men sacrificed for love of their Country and fellow man. Knowing that in every mission they flew, they probably would not return and many men did not. In the first seven months of action, the 91st Bomb Group suffered 82% casualties. Of the 48 original planes in the group only four were left seven months later.

I have commissioned artist, Bryan Moon, to paint a limited edition painting of one of the last planes which my father flew in called "Tennessee Tess". The title of the painting is called "The Last Mission". I have also reproduced my dad's diary which is approximately 60 pages in length and a copy of the original, hand-written diary will go with every print.

Robert R. Goldsmith, the pilot of my father's original crew, who also flew group lead pilot in "Tennessee Tess" will fly here from Houston, Texas. Artist, Bryan Moon and R.R. Goldsmith will be at Watermans Restaurant in Lake City, MN on November 9, 1992 to sign all 850 limited edition prints. You are welcome to come there to interview them and see the original painting and diary which will be on display, as well as, some other World War II original pictures taken by some of the aircraft crew members.