

303rd BG(H) Combat Mission No. 31

17 April 1943

Target: Focke Wulf Factory, Bremen, Germany

Crews Dispatched: 29

Length of Mission: 6 hours, 20 minutes

Bomb Load: 5 x 1000 lb H.E. M44 bombs

Bombing Altitudes: 25,500 ft & 27,000 ft

Ammo Fired: 89,585 rounds

Enemy Aircraft Claims: 19 Destroyed, 4 Probables, 4 Damaged

Twenty-nine 303rd BG(H) B-17s (part of the 115 8th Air Force bombers), the largest number dispatched into Germany, bombed the primary target at Bremen. Maj. **Lyle** led the 303rd BG(H) formation that bombed the target with 72 tons of 1,000-lb. bombs. Flak at the 25,500 foot bombing altitude was intense, accurate and quite concentrated, of the barrage type.

Enemy fighter opposition was considerable, although no 303rd BG(H) plane suffered severely. The Group saw 50 to 75 enemy aircraft and experienced 40 encounters. The attacks started just inside the German coast, continued over the target and lasted a short distance over the North Sea. The Group gunners destroyed 19 single-engine and twin-engine enemy fighters with another four probable and four damaged. All aircraft returned safely to base with no casualties. The VIII Air Force gunners claimed a total of 63 enemy aircraft destroyed, 15 probables, and 17 damaged. It was later learned that only 10 German fighters were lost

S/Sgt. Howard E. **Hernan**, top turret gunner on Lt. Claude W. **Campbell's** crew, remarked after the war, "I know that gunners made many claims and probably a lot of us got credit for planes that were not actually shot down. I think this was true on both sides. In order to claim a fighter, you had to have two other witnesses. Heaven knows how many men were shooting at the same plane. Intelligence would ask for the exact location and it would sometimes take up to 45 minutes longer to sit in interrogation if you were claiming a fighter. By this time we were absolutely worn out, hungry and trying to get warm, and it just wasn't worth the effort. After all, we weren't there to shoot down fighters. Our primary concern was the bombing of targets. Eventually, intelligence told us we were claiming too many fighters. From then on I never claimed another fighter, even if I knew I'd got it."

Two of the other four Groups attacking Bremen were not as lucky as the 303rd BG(H). The 91st BG(H) lost six B-17s, five from its 401st Squadron, and the 306th BG(H) lost 10 planes. The loss of 16 B-17s was double that for any previous missions and created serious doubts with the VIII Bomber Command leaders that our bombers could hold their own with enemy interceptors. It reemphasized the critical need for long-range U.S. fighter support.

Maj. **Lyle** commented, "You really knew that there was a war going on, flying into what we did today. Flak was by far the worst I have seen. The German fighters were really anxious. Our Group, however, did a lot of damage to one of our chief worries, the German fighter plant that we bombed."

M/Sgt. William B. **Stamper**, one of the few Air Force non-commissioned bombardiers, told of his trip. "I was flying in the *Thumper*, one of the formation's lead Flying Fortresses. We were in perfect formation. The German fighters started to come up as soon as we hit the German coast. They started on the Group ahead of us and really worked them over. The fight went on right over the target. We dropped our bombs and started back. I couldn't see my own bombs drop, but I knew they hit the target. We then flew into the heaviest flak that I have seen and I have been on a lot of missions. The fighters stayed right with us until we reached the coast. I may have damaged a FW-190."

Lt. Mark **Mathis**, brother of Jack **Mathis**, the 303rd BG(H) bombardier who received a posthumous Congressional Medal of Honor for his bravery on the Vegesack mission of 18 March 1943, was flying as bombardier in *The Duchess*. On his first 303rd BG(H) mission, Mark flew in his brother's aircraft, in his brother's crew position, and used his brother's bombsight. Mark said, "I hope that I can do as well as Jack. I'm going to make every one of those bombs pay off as a personal revenge. What happened today was just my start."

The Flying Fortress, *Bad Check*, really bounced a juicy morsel of coincidence into the *Believe It or Not* annals as the result of a discovery made when the Fort's left inboard engine was examined following the Bremen raid. S/Sgt. Charles E. **Dugan** was holding down the tail gun position while "sweating out" his 13th raid (or rather his 12-A, as it was often designated by the combat men who failed to appreciate the number 13). But the "Jerries" knew that it was S/Sgt. **Dugan's** 13th mission and they proved it. Embedded deep within the mechanical guts of the No. 2 engine, which had to be feathered in the vicinity of the target, was a large, jagged fragment of flak bearing all too plainly the grooved number 13. It was sensational, to say the least.

Crew Report of Enemy Aircraft Destroyed or Damaged

S/Sgt. H.J. Brody (664)	FW-190	Claimed
S/Sgt. J.K. Sadler (264)	FW-190	Claimed
Sgt. G.R. Redhead (656)	ME-110	Claimed
S/Sgt. C.S. Carpenter (792)	FW-190	Claimed
S/Sgt. H.E. Godwin (664)	ME-110	Claimed
T/Sgt. E.A. Dasher (264)	ME-110	Claimed
S/Sgt. R.L. Aubrey (635)	JU-88	Claimed
Sgt. Homer H. Corben (656)	ME-110	Claimed
S/Sgt. V.E. Brown (640)	ME-109E	Claimed
Sgt. G.W. Vogel (482)	FW-190	Claimed
Lt. P.M. Thomas (243)	ME-110	Claimed
S/Sgt. C.H. Owen (561)	FW-190	Claimed
S/Sgt. C.E. Davis (430)	FW-190	Claimed
S/Sgt. F.M. Ketron (605)	ME-109	Claimed

S/Sgt. J.D. Snell (243)	FW190	Claimed
S/Sgt. E.R. Howard (177)	FW-190	Claimed
S/Sgt. L.L. Jordan (624)	ME-110	Claimed
S/Sgt. R.F. Tibbles (177)	FW-190	Claimed
S/Sgt. M.C. Milliff (624)	ME-110	Claimed
S/Sgt. P.P. Catozza (029)	FW-190	Damaged
S/Sgt. T.G. Swanson (570)	FW-190	Damaged
S/Sgt. J.B. Paiva (656)	ME-110	Claimed
T/Sgt. A.S. Stevens (393)	ME-110	Probable
S/Sgt. A.J. Peklinsky, Jr. (780)	FW-190	Probable
T/Sgt. T.F. Kelly (393)	FW-190	Probable
S/Sgt. E.L. Morton (570)	FW-190	Probable
S/Sgt. A.L. Longo (780)	FW-190	Claimed
T/Sgt. L.W. Means (610)	FW-190	Claimed
S/Sgt. J.C. Cleavelin (587)	FW-190	Claimed
S/Sgt. W.M. Kirkpatrick (221)	FW-190	Damaged
S/Sgt. G.L. Thompson (606)	ME-109	Claimed



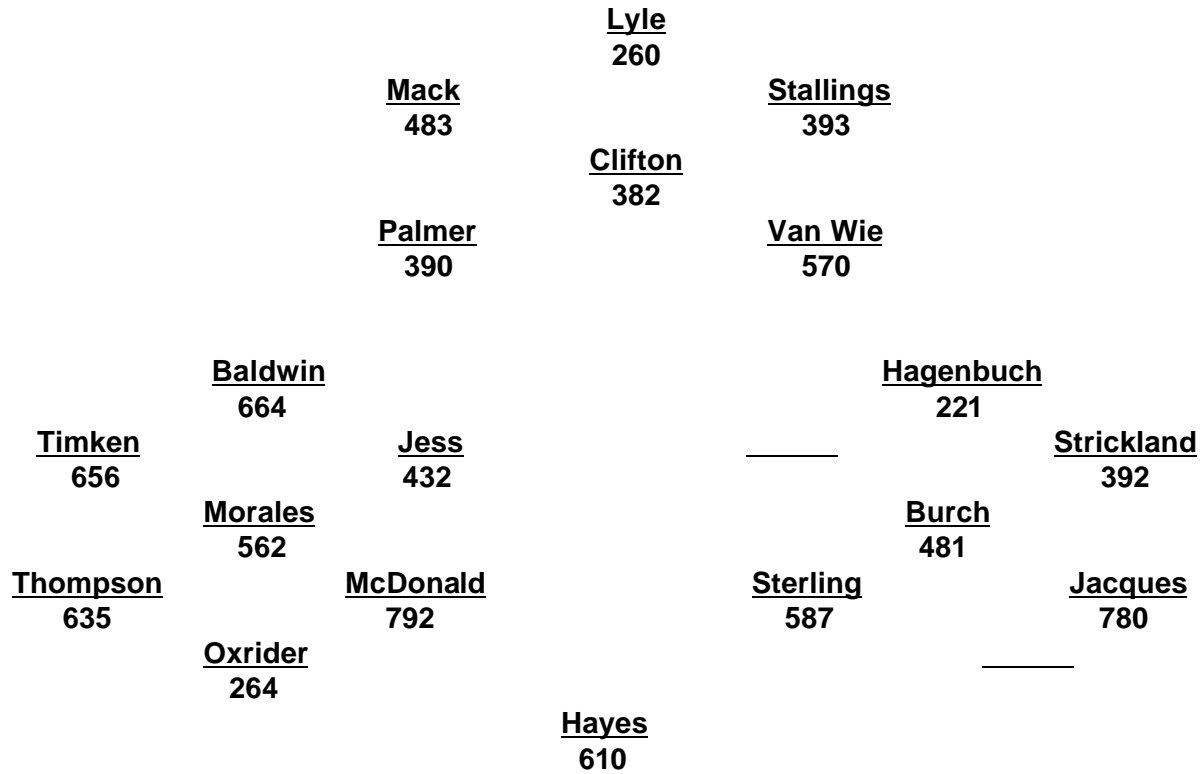
Yardbird #42-5260 (360BS) PU-A

102nd PBCW #2 (360BS) - Pilot Maj L.E. Lyle / CoPilot Capt J.W. Farrar

(Back L-R) S/Sgt J.R. Sunderlin (BT), Capt A.W. Dieffenbach (B),
 Capt J.W. Farrar (CP), Maj L.E. Lyle (P),
 Lt R.N. Auman (N), Lt S.H. Anderson (N)

(Front L-R) S/Sgt L.T. O'Connell (TG), T/Sgt E.K. Lindewall (R),
 T/Sgt K.G. Hassler (E), S/Sgt M.A. Semonick (WG), Sgt G.A. Murray (WG)

Aircraft Formation at Over Target



KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

CREW POSITIONS CMP - Command Pilot P - Pilot CP - Co-Pilot NAV - Navigator ANV - Ass't. Navigator MNV - Mickey Navigator ENG - Engineer BOM - Bombardier RO - Radio Operator	TOG - Toggler BT - Ball Turret Operator TT - Top Turret Operator TG - Tail Gunner NG - Nose Gunner RG - Radio Gunner WG - Waist Gunner LWG - Left Waist Gunner RWG - Right Waist Gunner GUN - Gunner	VI - Voice Interpreter OBS - Observer PAS - Passenger PHO - Photographer RESULTS OF MISSION KIA - Killed in action WIA - Wounded in action MIA - Missing in action POW - Prisoner of war	DOW - Died of wounds EVD - Evaded the enemy INT - Interned in neu cuntry REP - Repatriated RES - Rescued ESC - Escaped BO - Bailed out DCH - Ditched CR-L - Crashed on land CR-S - Crashed at sea
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303rd Aircraft Which Flew in Composite Group
with 305th BG(H) Over Target

			<u>Stockton</u> 606		
		<u>Lemmon</u> 640		<u>McClung</u> 482	
			<u>Bales</u> 243		
	<u>Stouse</u> 561				
<u>Smith</u> 177		<u>Haines</u> 430			
	<u>Roller</u> 605				
<u>Konsmo</u> 624		<u>Campbell</u> 029			

358th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17F #42-5792 *The Mugger*

P McDonald, James M., 1Lt
 CP Rogan, Dave L., 1Lt
 NAV Clement, Richard W., 1Lt
 BOM Montgomery, James H., Jr., 1Lt
 ENG Fanning, David D., T/Sgt
 RWG Zioance, John, S/Sgt
 RO Carpenter, Glenn S., T/Sgt
 BT Bruskotter, James E., S/Sgt
 TG Sterling, Robert W., S/Sgt
 LWG Martin, James C., S/Sgt

B-17F #41-24562 *Sky Wolf*

P Morales, Carl H., Capt
 CP Swaffer, Calvin A., 2Lt
 NAV Miller, Hubert E., 1Lt
 BOM Zasadil, Frank E., 1Lt
 ENG Hinds, Francis G., T/Sgt
 BT Dioquardo, Fred J., Sgt
 RO Burns, Francis J., T/Sgt
 LWG Hill, John E., S/Sgt
 TG Blake, Robert C., S/Sgt
 RWG Westfall, Max M., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-29664 *Jersey Bounce, Jr.*

P Baldwin, Irl E., Capt
 CP Joy, Ripley W., 2Lt
 NAV Madsen, Parley W., Jr., 1Lt
 BOM Bone, Donald R., 1Lt
 ENG Rodriguez, James E., Jr., T/Sgt
 RWG Meddaugh, Allerton F., S/Sgt
 RO Warren, Russell M., T/Sgt
 BT Brody, Harry J., S/Sgt
 LWG Weiskopf, Dennis, S/Sgt
 TG Godwin, Harold E., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-5264 *Yankee Doodle Dandy*

P Oxrider, George J., 1Lt
 CP Hurlburt, Donald W., 2Lt
 NAV Grant, Donald L., 2Lt
 BOM Steele, Earl A., 2Lt
 ENG Ziemer, Frederick B., T/Sgt
 BT Smith, Robert H., S/Sgt
 RO Dasher, Everett A., T/Sgt
 RWG Maxwell, Samuel P., S/Sgt
 TG Sadler, James K., S/Sgt
 LWG Heaps, Theodore C., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-5432 *The Hunting Club*

P Jess, Ray W., 2Lt
 CP Gunn, Harold W., 2Lt
 NAV Davidson, Robert P., 2Lt
 BOM Box, Charles M., 2Lt
 ENG Smith, Harold E., T/Sgt
 RWG Hardacre, Charles F., S/Sgt
 RO Godzinski, Joseph J., T/Sgt
 BT Johnson, Byron W., S/Sgt
 LWG Howard, George Z., Sgt
 TG White, Frank M., Sgt

B-17F #41-24635 *The 8 Ball MK II*

P Thompson, Frank H., 2Lt
 CP O'Connor, Robert S., 2Lt
 NAV McConnen, James R., 2Lt
 BOM McCord, Lawrence E., 2Lt
 ENG Welch, James R., S/Sgt
 TT Fulanovich, Charles J., S/Sgt
 RO McGuire, Robert J., T/Sgt
 BT Nakaniski, Ralph, S/Sgt
 TG Aubrey, Eldred L., S/Sgt
 RWG Wilson, Donald R., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-29656 *The Terrible Ten*

P Timken, Jack C., 1Lt
 CP Wright, George E., 2Lt
 NAV Chamberlain, William V., 2Lt
 BOM Solverson, Robert K., 2Lt
 ENG Knuth, Leland N., T/Sgt
 RWG Kagey, Martin I., Jr., Sgt
 RO Baxter, Jack, T/Sgt
 BT Toy, James E., S/Sgt
 TG Corbin, Homer H., Sgt
 LWG Paiva, Joseph B., S/Sgt
 GUN Redhead, George R., Sgt

B-17F #42-29640 *Old Ironsides*

P Lemmon, John V., 1Lt
 CP Clark, Elmo E., F/O
 NAV Gust, Darrell D., 2Lt
 BOM Stone, Elbert E., 2Lt
 ENG Berzansky, Andrew, T/Sgt
 RWG Beavers, Albert T., S/Sgt
 RO Hogue, Earl, T/Sgt
 BT Bagwell, Clayton R., S/Sgt
 TG Brown, Virgil E., S/Sgt
 LWG Briggs, Wayne E., S/Sgt

359th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17F #42-5177 *Fast Worker MK II*

P Smith, Sanford T., 1Lt
CP Farrell, Lawrence C., 2Lt
NAV Summers, Thomas E., 1Lt
BOM Dwyer, Robert P., 1Lt
ENG Hardaway, Sidney T., T/Sgt
LWG Adams, Ralph B., S/Sgt
RO York, Robert F., T/Sgt
BT Tibbles, Russell F., S/Sgt
TG Howard, Earl R., S/Sgt
RWG Perryman, Jack L., Sgt

B-17F #42-5243 *FDR's Potato Peeler Kids*

P Bales, Ross C., Capt
CP Dooley, Walter E., 1Lt
NAV Jacobsen, Norman N., 2Lt
BOM Thomas, Paul M., 1Lt
ENG Winter, Raymond K., Jr., T/Sgt
RG O'Reilly, Francis W., S/Sgt
RO Kilgore, Raymond H., T/Sgt
BT Zsamper, Joseph G., S/Sgt
TG Snell, Jack D., S/Sgt
RWG Van Ravenstein, Edward A., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-29624 *Pappy*

P Konsmo, George E., Capt
CP Mulligan, Thomas E., 2Lt
NAV Street, Benjamin B., 1Lt
BOM Gordon, LeRoy V., 1Lt
ENG Doran, Arnold S., T/Sgt
RO McGee, Paul P., T/Sgt
TG Milliff, Mike C., S/Sgt
RWG Jordan, Lloyd L., S/Sgt
BT Lemann, Paul C., S/Sgt
LWG Kerr, Joseph, Sgt

B-17F #42-3029 *Wallaroo*

P Campbell, Claude W., 1Lt
CP Miller, Arthur W., 2Lt
NAV Ririe, George M., 2Lt
BOM Boutelle, Winston E., 2Lt
ENG Hernan, Howard E., T/Sgt
RO Murray, Robert L., S/Sgt
RWG Bachert, Kurt W., S/Sgt
BT Catozza, Peter P., S/Sgt
TG Bruns, William H., Jr., Sgt
LWG Wilson, Benton, Sgt

B-17F #42-5430 *Pappy/Good Snuf*

P Haines, Rolland M., 1Lt
CP Kramer, Mayer, 2Lt
NAV Delorenzo, D.D., 2Lt
BOM Morse, Anthony E., 2Lt
ENG Wood, James A., T/Sgt
LWG Garcia, Robert A., S/Sgt
RO Kalk, Kenneth T. M., T/Sgt
TG Davis, Charles E., S/Sgt
RWG Martin, Raymond W., S/Sgt
BT Foster, Allen G., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-5482 *Cat-O-Nine Tails*

P McClung, Guy H., 1Lt
CP Pents, Arthur H., 1Lt
NAV Stettler, Donald G., 2Lt
BOM Rothman, Theodore I., 2Lt
ENG Coykendall, Ralph A., T/Sgt
RWG Traban, James J., S/Sgt
RO McCoy, Gordon K., Sgt
TG Piatek, Casimir P., S/Sgt
BT Vogel, George W., Sgt
LWG Ryan, Francis J., S/Sgt

B-17F #41-24561 *The Duchess*

P Stouse, Harold L., Capt
CP O'Connor, Squire T., 1Lt
NAV McColl, Daniel A., 1Lt
BOM Mathis, Rhude Mark, 1Lt
ENG Dougherty, John A., T/Sgt
RO Richardson, Donald R., T/Sgt
LWG Fortunak, Richard C., S/Sgt
BT Garriott, John A., S/Sgt
TG Owen, Calvin H., S/Sgt
RWG Brown, Houston B., Jr., S/Sgt

B-17F #41-24605 *Knockout Dropper*

P Roller, Jack, Capt
CP Cline, William J., 2Lt
NAV Strickland, Joseph M., 1Lt
BOM Shoup, John R., Jr., 2Lt
ENG Ketron, Frank M., S/Sgt
RO Terry, Charles R., T/Sgt
TT Murphy, Murel A., S/Sgt
BT Beringer, John L., Jr., S/Sgt
TG Stephen, Willard W., S/Sgt
LWG Gonsalves, John D., S/Sgt

360th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17F #42-5393 *Thumper Again*

P Stallings, George V., Jr., Lt
CP Bradbury, Joseph E., Lt
NAV Kelley, James F., Lt
BOM Stamper, William B., M/Sgt
ENG Watson, James A., T/Sgt
LWG Yattaw, Robert H., S/Sgt
RO Jones, Dick W., S/Sgt
BT Stevens, A.S., T/Sgt
TG Stickler, John J., S/Sgt
RWG Kelly, Thomas F., T/Sgt

B-17F #42-5483 *Red Ass*

P Mack, David W., Lt
CP Way, Arthur C., Lt
NAV Smith, Roland M., Lt
BOM Stewart, Jack W., Lt
ENG Deitch, Daniel T., T/Sgt
BT Peterson, Andrew C., S/Sgt
RO Cicinelli, Salvatore J., S/Sgt
TG Biernacki, Joseph J., S/Sgt
LWG Stewart, Carl C., S/Sgt
RWG Spitzfaden, Robert E., Sgt

B-17F #42-5390 *The Avenger*

P Palmer, Joseph F., Lt
CP Trojan, Joseph E., Lt
NAV Rosenblum, Nathan J., Lt
BOM Kieffer, Claude M., Lt
ENG Lauffer, Gerald T., T/Sgt
TT Duffey, Elmer E., S/Sgt
RO Gullage, Edmund, T/Sgt
BT Owen, Burl M., S/Sgt
TG Hodges, Alva E., S/Sgt
RWG Holder, Samuel A., S/Sgt
OBS Sheldon, Robert M., Lt

B-17F #42-5260 *Yardbird II*

P Lyle, Lewis E., Maj
CP Farrar, John W., Capt
NAV Anderson, Samuel H., 1Lt
NAV Auman, Rictor R., 2Lt
BOM Dieffenbach, Albert W., Lt
ENG Hassler, Kenneth C., T/Sgt
LWG Murray, Gilbert A., Jr., Sg
RO Lindewall, Erick K., T/Sgt
BT Sunderlin, Joseph R., S/Sgt
RWG Semonick, Martin A., S/Sgt
TG O'Connell, Lincoln T., S/Sgt

B-17F #42-5382 *The Witches Tit*

P Clifton, David S., Lt
CP Garvey, John L., Lt
NAV Wright, Howard R., Lt
BOM Currie, Herman C., Lt
ENG Doss, Carroll P., T/Sgt
RWG Compo, Anthony, S/Sgt
RO Morrison, Eugene D., T/Sgt
BT Mitchell, John B., S/Sgt
TG Villarreal, Rodolfo A., S/Sgt
LWG Jameson, Jimmie E., Sgt

B-17F #42-29570 (*No Name*)

P Van Wie, John A., Lt
CP Walsh, James D., Lt
NAV Blank, Paul, Lt
BOM Rice, Bernard, Lt
ENG Hlebasko, Albert, T/Sgt
BT Morton, Eugene L., S/Sgt
RO Noll, Robert W., T/Sgt
RWG Spring, Benjamin F., S/Sgt
LWG Swanson, Theodore G., S/Sgt
TG Bridges, Robert C., S/Sgt

427th Bombardment Squadron Crew Lists

B-17 #42-29481 (No Name)

P Burch, Armand F., Lt
 CP Cardwell, Burt J., Lt
 NAV Noblin, John D., Lt
 BOM Butt, Byron K., Lt
 ENG Barlow, Benjamin, T/Sgt
 BT Bourdon, Louis F., S/Sgt
 RO Ashworth, George W., S/Sgt
 LWG Arnold, Robert W., S/Sgt
 TG Brown, Howard T., S/Sgt
 RWG Cooney, Robert M., Sgt

B-17F #41-24610 Joe Btfspk

P Hayes, Ralph S., Jr., Lt
 CP Rolfson, Jack G., Lt
 NAV Illgen, Frederick, J., Lt
 NAV Hinds, Durward L., S/Sgt
 ENG Means, Lucian W., Jr., T/Sgt
 TG Bednarchuk, Antonio, S/Sgt
 RO Jessee, Jesse J., T/Sgt
 LWG Smith, Delvyn, S/Sgt
 RWG Hairr, Elwood F., S/Sgt
 BT Johnson, Otto D., Sgt

B-17F #42-29606 Butch

P Stockton, Donald E., Capt
 CP Barker, John C., Lt
 NAV Grant, Lawrence H., 2Lt
 BOM Shirley, Lloyd A., 2Lt
 ENG Smith, Roy Q., S/Sgt
 RO Amos, Lee H., S/Sgt
 RWG Bryant, Carson, S/Sgt
 LWG Thompson, George L., S/Sgt
 TG Koch, Vernon E., S/Sgt
 BT Jenkins, Robert R., Sgt

B-17F #42-5780 Black Swan

P Jacques, Chester D., Lt
 CP Holder, Alvin D., Lt
 NAV Bradshaw, John W., Lt
 BOM Carlson, Robert C.A., Lt
 ENG Good, James K., T/Sgt
 TG Clapshaw, Keith L., S/Sgt
 RO Coomes, Clarence S., S/Sgt
 BT Longo, Angelo L., Sgt
 RWG Peklinsky, Anthony J., Sgt
 LWG Ryan, Clayton W., Sgt

B-17F #42-5392 Stric Nine

P Strickland, Alexander C., Lt
 CP Olsen, Curtis M., Lt
 NAV Hokans, Carl A., Lt
 BOM Lamme, Edwin G., Lt
 ENG Baart, James C., T/Sgt
 TT Strohsack, R.R., S/Sgt
 RO Martel, Albert E., Jr., T/Sgt
 BT Peck, Raymond R., S/Sgt
 TG Sherg, Anthony W., S/Sgt
 LWG McGill, Edward E., Sgt

B-17F #42-5221 Son

P Hagenbuch, Glenn E., Maj
 CP Southworth, Billy B., Jr., Capt
 NAV Soha, Walter M., Capt
 BOM Sherwood, Lyle D., Lt
 ENG Zipfel, Charles E., T/Sgt
 RO Doughty, Edward J., T/Sgt
 BT Kirkpatrick, Ward M., S/Sgt
 TG Henderson, George W., S/Sgt
 LWG Brandt, Waldo B., S/Sgt
 RWG Harmon, Edward Z., S/Sgt

B-17F #41-24587 Bad Check

P Sterling, Jay R., Lt
 CP Neil, John L., Lt
 NAV Roach, Harry E., Jr., Lt
 BOM Parker, David M., Lt
 ENG Griffin, P.E., T/Sgt
 BG Belk, Jack, S/Sgt
 RO Fields, Harley W., T/Sgt
 RWG Cashman, Daniel J., S/Sgt
 TG Cleavelin, Jesse C., S/Sgt
 LWG Whalen, William R., Sgt