

# 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

**T**wenty-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



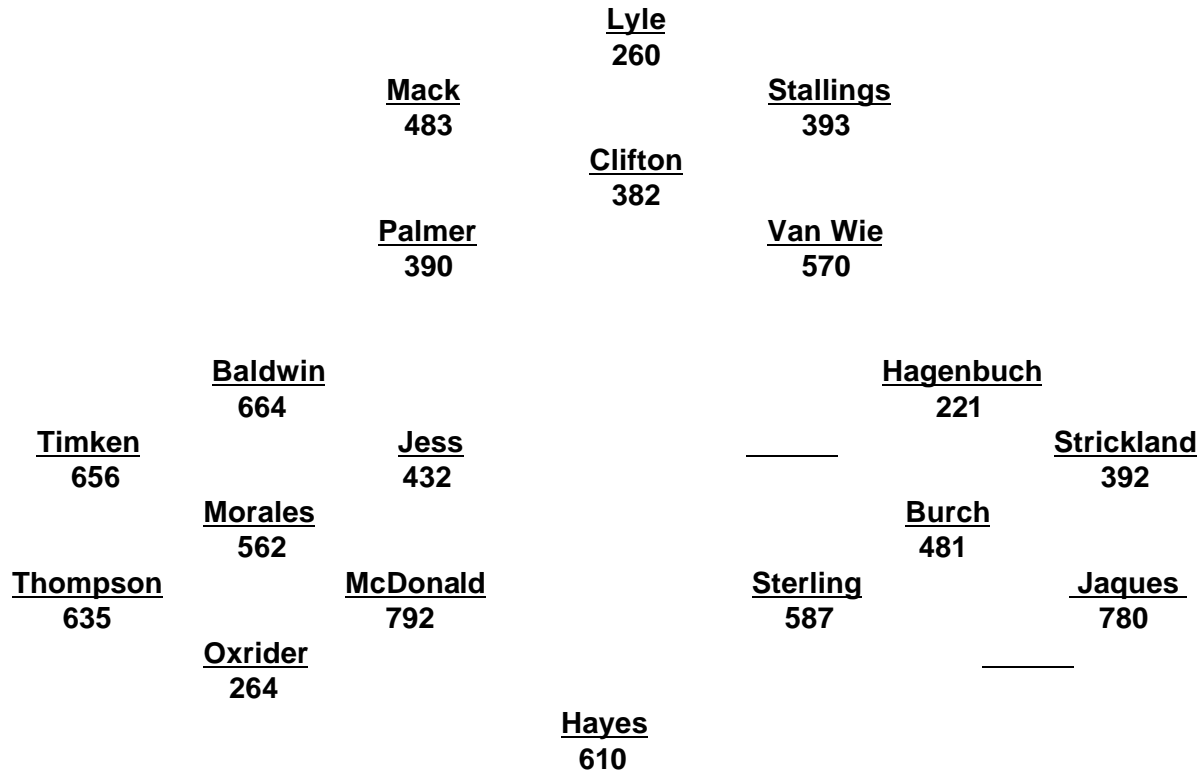
**Yardbird #42-5260 (360BS) PU-A**

**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

<b>CREW POSITIONS</b> 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	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
	<b>RESULTS OF MISSION</b> KIA - Killed in action WIA - Wounded in action MIA - Missing in action POW - Prisoner of war		

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***

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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***

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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.***

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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***

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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***

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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***

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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***

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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***

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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***

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P Stallings, George V., Jr., Lt  
CP Bradbury, Joseph E., Lt  
NAV Kelly, 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***

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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***

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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***

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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***

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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*)**

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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)**

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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 Btfsplk**

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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**

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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**

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P Jaques, 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**

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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**

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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**

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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