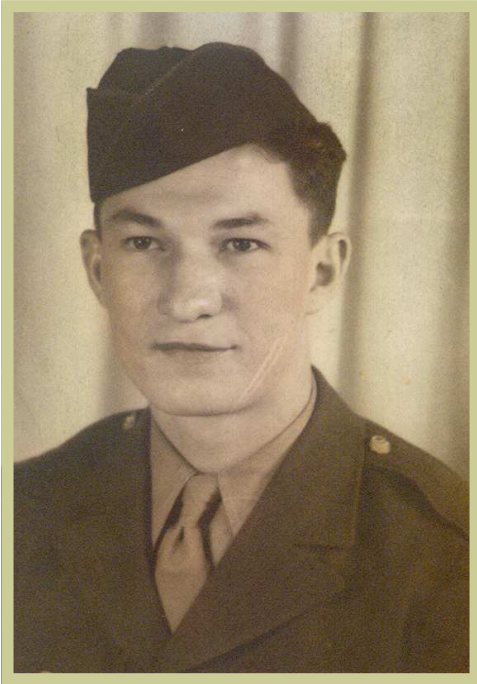


Charles J. Ondes

U.S. Army Air Corps

787th Bomb Squadron of the 466th Bomb Group



Charles J. Ondes
Flew 27 Missions In B24

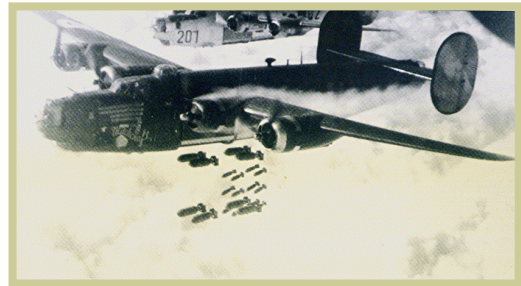
Charles J. Ondes was born December 9, 1923 at Livingston, Illinois in Madison County, the son of Andrew and Julia Turzak Ondes. He graduated from Livingston Community High School with the class of 1941. Shortly after graduation, Chuck was inducted into the Army Air Corps at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri and was assigned to the Corps Cadets at Amarillo, Texas. He attended Texas Tech at Lubbock for six months and then sent to Yuma, Arizona for Gunner School. In 1944, Chuck's unit was assigned to a crew and sent on to Mountain Home, Idaho for Training Simulation Missions.

On November 1, 1944, aboard the Ile de France at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey with 10,000 crew members, Chuck left for England, arriving on November 12, 1944. He was assigned to Gordon's Crew of a B 24 Liberator, part of the 787th Bomb Squadron of the 466th Bomb Group. Lt. Bob Gordon's Crew was made up of four officers and six enlisted men. They would remain together through 27

missions.

The Gordon Crew's first mission was on November 26, 1944. The target was a bridge at Bielfeld where their B 24 picked up five flak holes in the tail section over Egmond, Holland. The every present 88 mm anti-aircraft fire was heavy. Bad weather continued, alerts were frequent and aborted. On the 18th of December, Allied forces came under heavy attack in the Ardennes and we were anxious to join the battle.

We were alerted for the 12th time on the morning of December 23rd. The fog lifted and the 8th and 9th Air Force struck the German troops and their supply lines. On Christmas Day, we flew the 4th mission bombing Prum, supply lines and rail yards. We bombed Coblenz, Remagen and Kirn, their bridges and rail yards. The next mission was Heilbron, north of Stuttgart where we lost an engine. We knew by now that the white smoke of the German anti-aircraft guns was danger ahead. Black smoke was another kind of gun, but not as dangerous. We were forced down at Amiens, France which had been liberated just two weeks before. We hung around there for 10 days before getting a ride back to Attlebridge, England in a C-47.



We had fighter protection before and after the target, but not over it. We continued to bomb rail yards, bridges, viaducts and factories. The 21st mission was on April 11 to Regensburg, Germany to destroy their oil storage depots. German fighters were thinning out and no longer a serious threat. Next, we bombed a German gun emplacement at Hogan, France and used napalm bombs at Royin, France for the first time. Our 27th and last mission was to Passau on

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the Czech border on April 28. On May 8, 1945, the war ended.

The guys on Gordon's B-24 Crew were a family:

- Lt. Bob Gordon, Pilot, KS and New Orleans, LA
- Lt. William F. Rieger, Co-pilot, OH and Winter Park, FL. (deceased)
- W.O. Seymour Schram, NYC and New Orleans, LA. Bombardier
- Lt. Otis Tichenor, WS and El Paso, TX. Navigator
- T/Sgt. George Perry, Colliers, GA Engineer (deceased)
- T/Sgt. Leroy Zach, Davenport, Iowa, Radioman
- T/Sgt. Marvin Hendrickson, Arlington, WA Ball Turret Gunner
- T/Sgt. Lane Arrington, Waynesville, NC Tail Gunner
- S/Sgt. Doyle Campbell, AR and Dodge City, KS, Nose Gunner
- S/Sgt Charles Ondes, Livingston and Springfield, IL Top Turret Gunner

Charles Ondes is in front row, first on left. The Crew went home to the States, leaving England,



about a month after the war ended. Chuck Ondes arrived at Scott Air Force Base at Belleville, Illinois and was discharged on November 7, 1945. After buying himself a new suit, he hitch hiked home to Livingston, Illinois. He married and had three children, Robert C., Janice L. and Cynthia J.

Charles Ondes had three brothers who served in World War II and after. They were

1) **Clarence A. Ondes** who enlisted in the **Army Air Corps** in 1940 and served as a pilot in the South Pacific. He remained in the Air Force and became a Lt. Colonel in the Strategic Air Command serving 25 years.

2) **Melvin J. Ondes** who joined the **U.S. Navy**, trained at Farragut, Idaho in 1943 and took part in the battle of Tulagi in the Pacific.

3) **Wilbur E. Ondes** enlisted in the **Air Force** in 1948 and served six years.

Charles Ondes
Springfield, Illinois