

# Ralph Bush

## US Air Force Illinois Air National Guard



**Ralph Bush**  
WW II US Air Force  
Illinois Air National Guard

I enlisted in the Army Air Corps on March 14, 1941 at Middletown, Pennsylvania and was commissioned 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt on October 31, 1941 at Albany, Georgia. At the Advanced Flying School in Stockton, California, I became an instructor of future pilots. At the Army Air Field at Smyrna, Tennessee, I received training as a B-24 pilot and was sent overseas with the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force, 34<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group in April, 1944.

The 34<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group was stationed at Mendelsham, England, Station 156 from which my crew and I flew 20 missions in a B-24. We were over Utah Beach on D-Day. We also flew 10 missions over France and Germany in a B-17 bomber. We made it back many times with damage to our plane and injured crewmen. On major bombing missions heading toward Germany, I could see as many as 1200

bombers streaming through the skies as far as you could see. It was a sight I'll never forget.

I was discharged on September 6, 1945 at Fort Dix, New Jersey, but decided to make the Air Force my career. I joined the Illinois Air National Guard and later became Commander of the 183<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Group at Springfield, Illinois. I had served a total of 37 years in the military on my retirement. My wife Ruth and I have lived in Springfield for many years.

Ralph Bush  
Springfield, IL



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