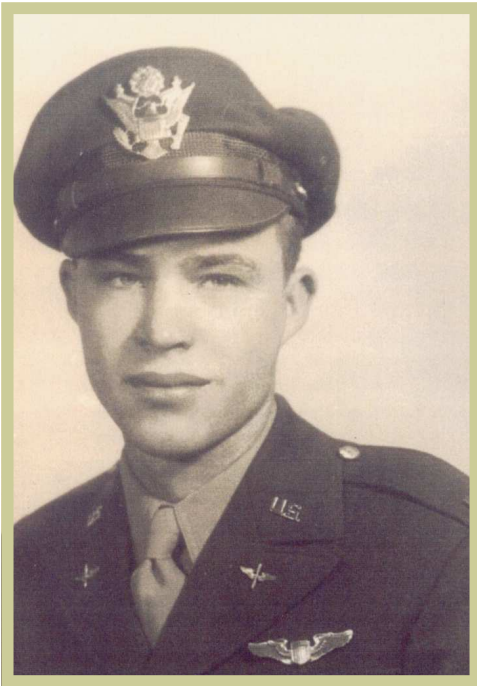


Wes Duiker

U.S. Army Air Corps

42nd Bomb Wing, 17th Bomb Group, 37th Bomb Squadron



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U.S. Army Air Corps WWII
42nd Bomb Wing, 17th Bomb Group,
37th Bomb Squadron
Pilot - B-26 Marauder

I was attending college when I enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. It was November 1942. After two years of training in California and Texas, I graduated as a twin-engine pilot 2nd Lieutenant. I met my five man crew in Louisiana and we trained together learning how to bomb and how to ditch a plane in water. We made a harrowing 30-day trip to England by way of Brazil, Ascension Island, and Morocco. Our first mission was to bomb the ball bearing city of Schweinfert, Germany for General Patches 7th Army. We were a tactical support for the Army as the 42nd Bomb Wing, 17th Bomb Group, 37th Bomb Squadron. By 1945, most of the German Luftwaffe had been decimated, but they had one plane, the first jet fighter called the Messerschmitt 262. I recall one devastating flight. We were six planes flying

together when I saw the number 3 and the number 6 planes hit, explode and be taken out. My tail gunner took one-half credit for that Messerschmitt..

After V - E Day, our Bomb Group was split up. I was put in charge of a troop train. While in the area, I visited Dachau Concentration Camp. Later, I attended the War Crime Trials in Nuremberg. I also served in Frankfurt with the European Air Transport Command delivering the mail to the bases in Europe. In June 1946, I arrived in New York with no fanfare and no parade, just so happy to be back on U.S. soil. I went back to school and became a psychologist. I married Bette Drymon and we had five children.

Wes Duiker
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