

2 February 1976

Dear Mr. Strong,

I am sorry I have been so remiss in getting a paper to you, but will try and get a few remembrances down at this time. Please pardon the typing which is poor, but much better than my penmanship. I will ramble somewhat as thoughts come to me, so please bear with me.

As to a Bobardier being courts martialled I do not recall the incident, but do recall a Flight Officer on his first mission returning with his bombs, I interrogated him on return and he said that he could not stand to put his head in the plexiglass nose during all ~~of~~ that flak, and thus could not see the lead bombardiers bombs go. A little local punishment was given him ie, 8 hours on the ramp with rifle and parachute. HE IMPROVED AFTER THAT AND WENT ON TO DO a good job until he was shot down.

I bit of review of my personal history with the group. Joined 306th at Wendover Utah 367th Sq. Teamed up with Geo Bucky pilot, Bob Brandon Co Pilot, Lem Smith Nav, and I was Bombardier. The only EM I remember by name was Hicks. Wendover to Westover where we picked up new aircraft ours being Comce #25306. On to Thurliegh where we participated in first raid, and Bucky and I flew the first 18 missions flown by the group. Lem Smith was lost while flying with someother crew, Bob Brandon was lost in the English channel after getting his own crew, do not know what happened to him as crew was lost on return to Thurliegh after being diverted to So England due to weather at home base. Replacement Nav. was Geo Nelson, And Co-Pilot Mac Machern. After 18 missions assigned to Gp Hdqtsas Staff Bombardier. Stayed in this Job untill 9 Oct 44. flying with Bill Raper, Jim Cheney on Division lead missions only. Returned to States in Oct 44.

I am sure you are aware of the hard luck the 367th had and was cosquetly called the Clay Pidgeon Sq. Out of original sq. I can only think of 4 officers and 7 Enlisted men who made it thru the tour. It seemed that no matter where we flew as a sqdn we got hit the hardest,

A bit of humor that might be of interest. A 367th Co-pilot who shall remain anonymous since he is now dead was known as Piss Head _____, due to the fact his relief tube froze up making it necessary to use his Flak helmet as a replacement while at altitude, Comes the target and much flak in the excitement _____ put his helmet on and left it on until we started decent over channel, where upon melting occurred and name was coined.

As a publicity stunt for the 306th Aircraft 25306 was named the Margret Rose, for the Princess. The then King, Queen and Elizibeth came to Thurliegh for the Christening, Margret was sick and unable to make it. All went well except it took about four swings to breack bottle ovwr nose of 25306. Aircraft got badly shot up after ceremony and never was the same bombing platform again. Had ice cream for desert. ~~King~~ King George stated Margret would sure have liked the ice cream. took 2 gallon bottles out of aircraft and sent same to sick Princess, several of group were invited to Palace for Thanksgiving tea as result.

That seems to be about all I can think of at this time, hope these few memories will be of help. Good luck on your enterprise, and will be looking forward to the end product.

Yours truly,

Walt Boone

28 January 1976

Col. Walter Coons
2203 Glenn Summer Road
Colorado Springs, Colo.

Dear Col. Coons:

In my continuing research on the 306th Bombardment Group, I note that I have not received a questionnaire back from you, and I would like to have more detailed information about than I now have.

Also, today in a conversation with Seymour Remby, a lawyer with the 306th (and also variously PX officer and MP commander at Thurleigh), I learned about the story of the bombardier who was tried by courts martial for not bombing the target.

As his story left several gaps, I would like to trace it down further. Can you tell who was involved, when it happened and any other details you may know the incident. I would like to try to get the full story.

I spent a day with Charles Duy a couple of weeks ago, as well as with John Bairnsfather, and found them both active and in good health.

I would very much appreciate hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong

4900 Appleridge Court Dayton, Ohio 45424

cc. Judge Donald Ross

COONS, Walter H.

Original crew member

AM 1/2/43

olc 3/20/43

olc 4/17/43

Group Training Officer 8/7/43

Group bombardier

Major 1/17/44

Led division to Munster 9/30/44

Transferred home 10/17/44

Dear Walt:

In trying to sort out a lot of things concerning 306th aircraft, I have a couple of questions for you on the plane you flew over on, 41-24464.

Did the plane have a name? If so, what? *NONE THAT I RECALL*

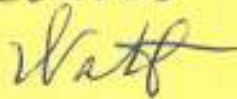
Who was the crew chief? *GEO HADDIN FTK ENG, CREW CHIEF UNKNOWN*

Glad to see you will be making Washington in September. *SEE YOU IN SEPT.*

All the best,



REGARDS



RUSSELL A. STRONG
2041 Hillside
Kalamazoo, MI 49007



**306th Bombardment
Group Association**



Col. Walter Coons
2203 Glenn Summer Rd
Colorado Springs, CO 80909



PM



WALTER H. COONS
2203 GLENN SUMMER RD.
COLORADO SPRING, CO 80909



Russell A. Strong, Secretary
306th BG Association
2041 Hillisdale
Kalamazoo, MI 49007



RECORDS UPDATE

306th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

(Please complete as much of this form as you wish to, fold and mail as per address on reverse side. Or, if obtained at a reunion, hand to Russ Strong)

LAST NAME: COONS FIRST NAME: WALTER H TITLE: COL

STREET ADDRESS: 2203 GLENN SUMMER TELEPHONE: (303)682-5679

CITY: LAKE SPES, COLO STATE: COLO ZIP: 80909

DATE JOINED 306th ASSOCIATION: JULY 1942

REUNIONS ATTENDED: (Years) 87, 85, 84, 83, 82

WIFE'S NAME: BETH

LAST EMPLOYMENT: USAF

COLLEGE(S) ATTENDED: UNIV DENVER DEGREE(S): DATE:

SERIAL #: SQDN: 367TH MOS: 1034

DATE ARR: SEPT. 42 CREW: BUCKEY / RADER

DATE DEPARTED: OCT 44 HIGHEST RANK IN 306th: MAJ.

SERVICE RETIREMENT DATE: RANK or GRADE:

DECORATIONS WITH 306TH: DFC 9 CLUSTERS
AIR MED 7 CLUSTERS, CROIX DE GUERE

TOP SERVICE ASSIGNMENT AFTER 306TH: GROUP BOMBARDIER

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS WITH 306TH:

QUESTIONNAIRE

CATERPILLAR CLUB - IRVING CHUTE COMPANY

NAME:

COMBAT JUMP DATE & MISSION:

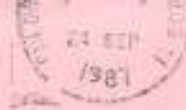
HEIGHT WHEN BAILED OUT:

ANY PROBLEMS WITH PARACHUTE:

306th Bombardment Group. SQDN:



Col Walter H Coons
2203 Glen Summit Rd
Colorado Spgs CO 80909



Russell A. Strong
2041 Hillsdale
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

