

LAW OFFICES

ALLEGRETTI, NEWITT, WITCOFF & McANDREWS

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TELEPHONE  
(312) 372-2160

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CABLE ADDRESS  
BAIRFREE

June 9, 1977

Mr. Russell A. Strong  
Rt. 1, Scotch Meadows Drive  
Laurinburg, North Carolina 28352

Dear Russ:

I have your recent communication requesting copies of Special Orders. I have searched for such things, but have come up empty-handed. The search goes on and if I am successful, I will get any found material to you.

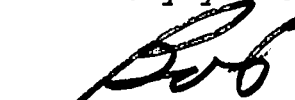
Thanks for sending the photo of the item in Time magazine. I have been unable to uncover a copy of that.

I do have the issue of the Saturday Evening Post (February, 1943) in which that mission is written up in much more detail. I believe that was done by Arthur Gordon. As I recall, you told me that you had that one.

I like your new envelopes. I must congratulate you and Charlie Patton on them.

Keep in touch.

Sincerely yours,



Robert C. Williams

RCW:le

7 July 1977

Mr. Robert C. Williams  
134 Greenbay  
Winnetka, IL 60093

Dear Bob:

The next issue of 306th Echoes will include much of the story about your ill-fated day, from the Saturday Evening Post, and as I had come across the two enclosed pictures, I thought you might like to have prints of them.

I am using one of them in the paper, and last week I got 20 pictures from Del Wilson of Chennault's Pappy after you got it back on the ground. Most of the pictures show battle damage, and I am using three of them with the article.

If your family has never seen these, they'll get a kick out of them, as did Clay Wilson. He recently had his home burn down and lost all such memorabilia, so he was happy to get the pictures.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong

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CABLE ADDRESS  
BAIRFREE

August 7, 1979

Mr. Russell A. Strong  
Rt. 1, Turnpike Rd.  
Laurinburg, N.C. 28352

Dear Russ:

Your letter of July 24, 1979 was refreshing. It brought back plenty.

I have made a photocopy of the photo you sent. I have marked each person on the photo (except J.W.) and give you what I remember:

- B. This was the 423rd Armament Officer
- D. Maurice V. Salada, B Flight Commander, later a Squadron Commander.
- F. Rush Poulan, Squadron S-4, Maintenance Officer. He was with Leahy when they went down east of Newfoundland
- G. Mack McKay
- I. Wendell Hull, Mess Officer, now a successful automobile dealer in downstate Illinois
- J. John Brady, one of the best pure pilots of the group. He and his crew went down in the Channel, returning from some place like St. Nazaire.

The rest of these people look familiar, but I cannot place them or name them.

Have you tried this photo on people like J.W., Mack, or Salada?

page two

Mr. Russell A. Strong

August 7, 1979

Incidentally, you might try it on Hull who has an excellent memory and who, because of his job, knew all of the personnel.

Your remark about J.W. and golf is understood. I played quite a bit with him and General Turner in the summer of 1944. I'll bet he does not hit them as far today.

I have heard from none of the Group lately, not even Bob Starzinski, a Chicago cop.

Keep me posted and include me on the next request for funds.

Sincerely yours,



Robert C. Williams

RCW:le  
Enc.

LAW OFFICES

ALLEGRETTI, NEWITT, WITCOFF & McANDREWS

125 SOUTH WACKER DRIVE  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60606

December 26, 1979

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CABLE ADDRESS  
BAIRFREE

GEORGE B. NEWITT  
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ROBERT C. WILLIAMS  
SEYMOUR ROTHSTEIN  
JAMES V. CALLAHAN  
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CHARLES W. SHIFLEY  
DANIEL A. BOEHNEN  
JAMIE S. SMITH  
L. MICHAEL JARVIS

Mr. Russell A. Strong  
Alumni Office  
Western Michigan University  
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008

Re: 306

Dear Russ:

Thanks for the recent letter, especially the information that you are in the midwest. I am sure you remember calling me from O'Hare while you were on your way for the interview. I have often wondered whether you made the move.

I do have a little to spare now, so enclose a check.

Other things are about normal, with the exceptions of a few physical deteriorations, such as ears, eyes, and circulatory system. But they can all be repaired, and we are in that process.

Please remember that I am good for a lunch in Chicago, sometimes with only an hour's warning.

Sincerely yours,



Robert C. Williams

RCW:le  
Enc.

Notes from July 8 conversation with Robert H. Williams,  
Chicago, for 367th CO and Group Operations Officer

---

Served originally as operations officer for 423rd under Major J. W. Wilson.

JW had a policy that someone had to stay home and mind the store, and that was the function of the operations officer, hence Williams did not fly a great number of missions.

On 1st mission of group, not all planes carried a full load of bombs because ground crews were inexperienced and could not get bombs loaded in time. They worked all night, but were still short.

Flew raid to St. Nazaire because of illness of Lt. Warner. Had lots of trouble, and story was told in March 1943 Saturday Evening Post.

Dr. John Manning in Park Ridge, Ill.

Doug Coleman organized 1st Sweating Squadron. Had wings of lucite cut out for ground personnel. Contributed considerably to the morale of fliers.

Isaac and Dark (N & B) flew in uniform with medals, in case they were shot down, they wanted to go in style. And they were.

Yaussi, early group bombardier, competent  
Saltryniak, first group navigator, was a genius. Better than Cheney.

Found that the more they could air and ground personnel together the better it all worked.

Capt. Check had a belligerent disposition.

306th perhaps blessed with not too many West Pointers.

Jerries evidently had spies in Scotland, because when they landed there on way to Thurleigh, civilians were on hand and asked a great many questions, with data seeming to come back almost immediately on Jerry radio.

Melton's crew ditched, walked through a mine field to shore and safety.

No one could find Thurleigh on the initial run in. Landed twice looking for it. Food was a great problem initially. There was no base housekeeping force, and British were operating things. Pretty bad. Cut heavily into morale.

Morale of entire base rose sharply in spring of 1944.

Williams Conversation - 2

In anticipation of D-Day, planes flew beach patrol, early morning and late in day at 15,000 feet to report how long the bombardier could still sight. This helped set the time schedule for landings.

Capt. Husband - Great flier and good flight commander. Wasn't tough enough for group operations job.

Leahy went down on flight over. Hit water with a terrific fire ball.

Lambert served in the 423rd and as Squadron C.O. Had a younger brother who came in as a pilot. Younger brother missing in midair collision, and had marked effect on Lambert.

Casey was afraid of nothing.

Pervis Youree busted out of AF for buzzing base in Oklahoma after returning from combat. Became bar tender in officers' club the next day.

Transcription from Interview with Robert Williams July 1975

When Curtis LeMay took over the combat wing, he went around to each group, met with the pilots and laid down the law.

Harry Holt was too nice a guy to be a gungho career officer.

My story appeared in the Saturday Evening Post in March of 1943. Arthur Gordon snopped around our base for weeks and weeks and finally came up with this story.

Harry Holt was a grand guy, but when he lost a crew it really hit him hard.

It was in October of 1944 that JW. Wilson got a group. He asked me to be his exec but I turned him down. He then took Rip Riordan. Wilson really didn't have a lot of exposure to Robinson, and Robinson was a different kind of officer. I don't think they attacked a problem the same way. JW was a little bit gung ho.

I liked Cheney's lawyer mentality as a navigator. He was awfully good. But he was not as good as Bob Saltrynik.

JW was an impersonal kind of a guy.

We organized the 306th at Wendover and immediately got a bunch of openings at the Lloyd Fry School at Albuquerque, run by TWA, for 4-engine transition.



Betty Williams

Bot

12/31

Dear Russ -

One of the issues  
of 306<sup>th</sup> Echoes states  
that Del Coleman  
is deceased.

Another implies  
he is living.

Please let me  
know which is  
right.

Give me a day's notice  
before you get here.

# More Issues of 'Echoes'

Here's my help for future issues of Echoes!

I enclose \$ 25<sup>00</sup> to support the production and mailing of the 306th Echoes. I also want to support continuing reunion activities for those who once served.

Name ROBERT C. WILLIAMS

Address 134 GREEN BAY ROAD

Mail to: Wm. M. Collins, Jr.  
2973 Heatherbrae Drive  
Poland, OH 44514

WINNETKA IL

60093

Dear Bill —

See you in Omaha

BB

9 April 1986

Dear Mr. Rooney:

At the request of Robert C. Williams, I am sending under separate over copies of our newspaper, 306th Echoes, and a copy of our group history, First Over Germany.

I hope that you will find both packages enjoyable. Should you find enough in Echoes to interest you, I would be happy to add your name to the mailing list. We publish quarterly, and are currently mailing to about 2,025 persons.

We currently mail copies all over the U. S., to England, Australia, and Sweden, as well as to Africa.

I have handled editorial and production duties since the publication began about 10 years ago, having spent most of my life in newspapering and public relations work. And we are about to make a switch in mailing and have that done from Kalamazoo as well to save a lot of hassle.

One other aspect of the 306th might pique your interest, in that we have no dues structure. We have always operated on a voluntary contribution basis, and this arrangement has worked very well. Those who can contribute and those who can't enjoy the newspaper as well. We have also published one directory, and another one is in production at the moment and will make its appearance in May. Again, there is no charge, but we do encourage people to put a fiver in the mail to the treasurer and this more than covers the cost.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong

**ROBERT C. WILLIAMS**

**134 GREEN BAY ROAD  
WINNETKA, ILLINOIS 60093  
TELEPHONE (312) 446-4952**

April 6, 1986

Mr. Russell A. Strong  
2041 Hillsdale  
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007

Dear Russ:

I was wearing my 8th Air Force cap in a local supermarket several weeks ago, when I was accosted by a veteran of the 20<sup>th</sup> Air Force. I assured him that I, too, was such. His name is William A. Rooney, and he is on distribution of this letter.

It turns out that Bill is the scribe of the Memories which he publishes periodically for the 40<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group of which he was a member early, in South America, and on through India. He left the 40<sup>th</sup> for the Z.I. before the Group went to Tinian to participate in the war against the Japanese.

I enclose a copy of the current issue of Memories, and have kept a copy. I have recently received copies of another half dozen which I may send on to you. I find them most interesting, and describe a different war than you and I were in.

Another link which you have with him is that he too was an officer in the Intelligence sention.

I have no idea what the supply situation may be with respect to copies of back issues of Echoes. If possible, I shall appreciate your sending a few as available, without destroying your files.

Please send Bill a copy of First Over Germany. His address is at the bottom of this sheet. It will give him a taste of the pressure without the trimmings of living in England while performing the task.

Betty joins me in greetings to you and June. Do NOT forget us the next time you must see my old friend Eugene Derlacki.

Sincerely,



c.c.: William A. Rooney  
517 1/2 Ridge Road  
Wilmette, Illinois 60091

ROBERT C. WILLIAMS

134 GREEN BAY ROAD  
WINNETKA, ILLINOIS 60093  
TELEPHONE (312) 446-4952

April 6, 1986

Mr. William A. Rooney  
517 1/2 Ridge Road  
Wilmette, Illinois 60091

Dear Bill:

I enclose a copy of my note to Russ Strong.  
He is a real pillar in our association, being full  
of ideas.

Russ does all of the work on our Echoes except  
printing and mailing, which are handled by Bill Collins  
in Poland, Ohio. Bill is also our contact with the  
8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Historical Society.

If Russ is unable to send you copies of Echoes,  
I can provide some on a loan basis.

Please let me know when you hear from him.

Sincerely yours,



WILLIAMS, Robert C. 0437623

Sqdn Ops 423rd 7/29/42

Captain 11/13/42

Plane badly damaged over St. Nazaire 11/17/42

DFC 12/4/42

Asst. Group Operations 2/23/43

AM 5/22/43

Major 5/5/43

Group Operations 6/22/43

Lt. Col. 12/3/43

C.O. 367th 5/1/44

Led wing to Berlin 5/24/44

Led wing to Illiers L'Eveque 6/11/44

Led "B" wing to Noyen 6/17/44

Led "B" wing to Bremen 6/24/44

Led wing to Munich 7/13/44

Group Operations 7/19/44

Trans. Home 10/17/44

Dir of Trng 20th AF

December 13, 1979

Col. Robert C. Williams  
134 Greenbay  
Winneka, IL 60093

Dear Willie:

Although the writing phase is moving along well at this time, there is still some research remaining for the 306th Bomb Group history, and I could well use some additional research funds.

As you indicated earlier that you might be able to give some additional support, I am writing to ask if you might consider it at this time.

The 306th Bomb Group Association is now a federal tax-exempt organization, therefore any contributions would be tax deductible.

As you will note on the reply envelope, I have made a move, returning to my home town as alumni relations director at Western Michigan University.

My best wishes to you and your family for a happy holiday season.

Sincerely yours,

  
Russell A. Strong

/cms



3 November 1987

Col. Robert C. Williams  
#102  
134 Green Bay  
Winnetka, IL 60093

Dear Bob:

At the reunion I was told this story, I believe by the irate crew chief, although it may have been one of the other ground crew members for the plane.

Do you suppose it is true?

I have written it in the form of a story, but certainly would not want to publish it without some further verification of the event.

Would appreciate any light you might throw on it.

June and I haven't found time to come to Chicago this fall. We are off to North Carolina next week for a pre-Christmas visit, and I have then set retirement for 8 January 88. It looks like it will be busy until then, and I suppose after that we will go back south for some house hunting.

Give my best to Betty, and if we don't make it to Chicago we'll see you in Las Vegas.

All the best,

134 GREEN BAY ROAD  
WINNETKA, ILLINOIS 60093  
TELEPHONE (312) 446-4952

Aug 25, 1989

Dear Mrs Aug,

I have just received a note from Russ Strong about the passing of your husband and my friend and associate.

We served together in the 306<sup>th</sup> from some time in 1942 until I was sent home in October, 1942.

We were together on the Group Staff from late in 1942. He, Aug, Coleman, and I shared living quarters for almost two years, and developed a real friendship.

Betty Williams

3/14/89

Dear Russ 2<sup>nd</sup> June -  
Miss our visits when you  
came to see Dr. - when you're in  
town please let us know so  
we can get together even for  
a short time.

The enclosed check is for  
the "Echoes" publication, printing  
postage or whatever - we do  
so look forward to receiving  
it.

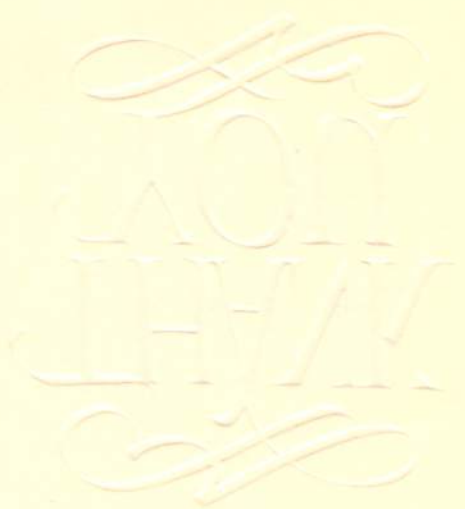
Fondly  
Betty & Bob

Charles called me in  
my office in about 1955-  
1960. I shall not forget  
talking with him at that  
time.

Please tell your children  
that I share the grief of  
his passing with all of  
you.

Sincerely,

Bob



Dear Russ -

Thanks for the letter from  
Vince Kieby - I loved it!  
That's my boy all right!

Yours,  
Betty



THANK  
YOU