

# 307th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HV) ASSOCIATION

## "THE LONG RANGERS"

2350 Derby, Birmingham, MI 48009  
March 10, 1997

Mr. Jack L. Coleman  
3302 East Angela Drive  
Phoenix, AZ 85032

Dear Jack,

Dave Owens has forwarded your February 28th letter to me in which you requested information about your brother, thinking that I, as 307th Association Historian could be of help.

I was in the 372nd as a combat crew radio operator. Our crew went through the Combat Training Course (CTC) on Guadalcanal that your brother's crew had just completed when you tried to visit him. We were flown to Los Negros in a C-47, joining the 307th on June 2, 1944. By June 23rd we had flown our fifth mission, four to Truk and one to Yap. We did not fly the mission on which your brother's plane went down. Though I should, I don't remember any of the EM on the Coleman crew nor do I remember their loss, for our crew was still pretty green and not yet too aware of what was going on around us beyond our own personal involvement. I suspect they may have been as new to the game as we were. I remember five crews including us - (and maybe Coleman?) joining the 372nd at about the same time. Of those 50 men, only 18 survived.

The Intelligence Officer responsible for the monthly Historical Reports submitted to HQ was apparently too busy in June to include anything more than the overall report, a copy of which is enclosed. I had hoped to send you the mission plan and the final mission report for the 25th but none of these records were included for that month. The missing records exist somewhere but I've not been able to find them.

Your request for information will appear in our Newsletter which will be sent out sometime around April 1. Soon after that I hope you will receive word from someone who knew Gerald and/or his crew and can give you personal details.

I called a friend who lives nearby, a 372nd navigator, who was on the June 25th mission. His address and phone number:

Leonard A. Lystad  
29546 Norma Drive  
Warren, MI 48093-3585

Ph. (810) 751-3659

Len didn't remember the Coleman crew personally but had

recorded the June 25th mission in his diary but has no contact with any of his crew. You can write or call him.

A Missing Air Crew Report (MACR) would have been submitted at the time of the loss. It should contain whatever information was known at the time including the spot where the plane went down and eye witness reports which are good to have, especially if written by someone currently a member of our Assoc. You can request MACRs from:

Modern Military Field Branch (NNMF)  
Military Archives Division  
National Archives  
Washington National Records Center Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20409

MACRs are filed under the missing aircraft number and also under the name of each individual lost with the plane. I believe your brother was flying A/C No. 44-40598 that day. The MACR number was, I believe, 10023. If you should write for the MACR send this information, plus your brother's name, rank and Army Serial Number and the date of the loss of the plane just in case my information is wrong. If you should get the MACR I would certainly like a copy.

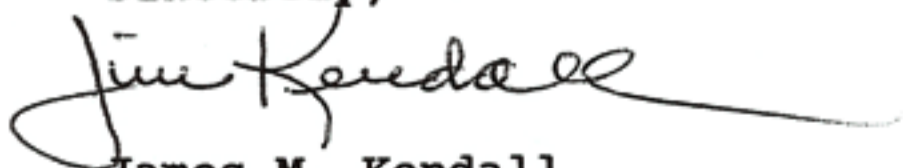
You can also request a copy of your brother's complete military records, if they still exist. I say "if they still exist" for a large fire at the records center back in 1972 destroyed a great number of WW II vintage records stored there, mine included. Send his name, rank, serial number, military unit, date of entry into the Army and any other information you may have that seems pertinent. Write to:

National Personnel Record Center  
Military Personnel Records  
Air Force Section  
9700 Page Blvd.  
St. Louis, MO 63132

They will notify you of the small fee involved before starting the search. I don't know the current charge. They sometimes take months to reply so don't give up hope.

Hope all this is of help. Please keep in touch.

Sincerely,



James M. Kendall  
Historian, 307 BG Assoc.