

War Era Story Project 2012

Submitted by: Robert D. Davis
Current home town: Costa Mesa, CA
Age: 88

My name is Robert D. Davis. I was born on March 17, 1924, in Belle Center, Ohio. After living in several small towns in Ohio and Michigan, we moved to Springfield in 1937. Upon graduation from Springfield High School in June of '42, I took the exam for pilot training with the Army Air Force, but in October I was told I had failed the physical because of color blindness. So, I enlisted in the Army Air Force on November 1, 1942. At that time we were living at 311 South Lowry Ave., in Springfield.

I went to Radio School in Chicago, and then on to gunnery school at Buckingham AAFB in Ft. Myers, Florida. I joined a B-24 bomber crew and trained in Mountain Home, Idaho and Casper, Wyoming. Our crew went overseas to England in February, 1943, and was assigned to the 392nd Bomb Group, 578th Bomb Squadron, in the 8th Air Force. We were shot down on our 23rd mission and I, along with the rest of my crew, became Prisoners of War.

Ohio was well represented among my fellow servicemen during WWII. My pilot, Gilbert O. Eiserman, was from Cincinnati, Ohio. In the prison camp in Germany—Stalag Luft 4—of my 25 roommates, seven of us were from Ohio:

T.R. Kellers, Akron

William E. Shay, Springfield

Robert Hittle, Cincinnati

John F. Corrigan, Cleveland

Ralph Finney, Dillonvale

Richard F. Drews, Cleveland

A more detailed account of my recollections may be found in my recent autobiography entitled “Before I Forget”, now available on Amazon.com.

John Corrigan later became a Juvenile Court Judge in Cleveland, and William E. (Gene) Shay has been recognized for his many years of providing “Taps” for veterans in the Springfield area.