



# WWII BATTLEFIELD RESEARCH AND PRESERVATION GROUP

ASBL, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

1

B-17G crash site concluding findings of Aircraft #44-6141, "Sneakin Deacon"  
United States Army Air Forces, 384th Bomber Group, 544th Bomber Squadron  
Date Found: 14 March 2018. Identified June 2020,  
Northwest of Weicherdange, Luxembourg

Focus and Interrelated Effort:

- Positive identification of aircraft wreck site. Site is geographically linked to ongoing investigation of 91st Bomber Group US Army Air Forces aircraft 43-38911, "Bull Session".
- Ongoing search effort for discovering the whereabouts of the crash site for USAAF aircraft 43-38911 and possible discovery of two MIA personnel.

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<b>LIST OF PAGES</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>3</b>
Hallmark Statement to Integrity of Scientific Research	3
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	
<b>2018 THE MOVE NORTHEAST- SEARCH FOR THE CRASH SITE</b>	<b>4</b>
Beirgerhaard	4
<b>AIRCRAFT DETAILS</b>	<b>6</b>
B-17G Flying Fortress	7
<b>44-6141 BOMBING MISSION SUMMARY</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>ESTABLISHING POSITIVE PROOF OF IDENTIFICATION</b>	<b>10</b>
“Bircherknupp”	10
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL DATA</b>	<b>13</b>
Site search area near Weicherdange	14
site map – Fig 17-1	17
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>WRECKAGE PHOTOS, ANNEX- I</b>	<b>24</b>
Personal and Necessaries	25
Communications	28
Armament	32
Engines	37
Landing Gear	43
<b>INSTRUMENTS – INDICATORS – DATA PLATES</b>	<b>44</b>
Cabin and Fuselage Items	44
Data Plates	48
Controls	49
Fuel System	51
Oxygen System	53
Safety Equipment	55
Windows and Plexiglas	56
Colors	57
<b>SOME ADDITIONAL FINDS, NON-WRECK RELATED</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>INTEGRITY OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>RESEARCH RESOURCES ANNEX - II</b>	<b>62</b>
Online sites	62
In Addition	62
Military Technical Orders and Catalogs	63
Official Records	63
Cover photo WWIIBRPG, site location	



384th Bombardment Group (Heavy) in World War II

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3

## ABSTRACT

This report focuses on the verification of a previously known crash site unidentified for 76 years tightly intermixed with an ongoing active case file for two MIA. The first phase of the MIA case is finding the wreckage location of the US Army Air Forces B-17 # 43-38911, near Boevange/Wincrange. Phase II focuses on establishing hard evidence supporting the whereabouts of the missing Airman Sgt. MICHAEL HOLOWATY, and Sgt. STEPHEN P. WULDERK, Sgt Wulderk, previously not known to be missing until the 2017 summer field season by the discovery of information in a US government report.

Archive data includes Combat Mission Record, post-incident documents obtained from the National Archives, 384th Bombardment Group (Heavy) in World War II, and the US Air Force Historical Research Agency, (USAFHRA).

### Hallmark Statement to Integrity of Scientific Research

Conducting fact-based scientific research is essential for shared human history; we have the utmost and profound respect for the heritage and culture preservation that goes with it. Respect for the land, both public and private is imperative. The goal is to conduct research with full respect and cooperation with all parties of ownership. That said permission of private landowners through cadaster records, authorizations of permits with various government agencies, and maintaining heritage/historic integrity of the land is necessary. This statement has become a hallmark for the organization.

The Centre National de la Recherche Archéologique (CNRA) is always sought after and a primary resource for scientific guidelines and advice. As in the past, full cooperation is with, landowners, the community, the Department of Forestry, Luxembourg Army SEDAL, the Police, and the US Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA).

## INTRODUCTION

### 2018 THE MOVE NORTHEAST- SEARCH FOR THE CRASH SITE

A search began in 2017 with goals of establishing the wreck site/sites for the aircraft initially started out searching for, USAAF, B-17 43-38911, "Bull Session". This aircraft shot down on 14 January 1945 as it entered the West Luxembourg border area of Wincrange/Boevange area 20,000 feet above the forest named Beigerhaard. It belonged to the 91st Bomber Group, 323rd Bomber Squadron of Bassingborn UK, AAF Station- 121. This case is ongoing and would just add confusion if detailed too much at this time. For simplicity, it will be best to familiarize the reader with the circumstance as to how the two cases relate.

#### Beigerhaard

The search of Bull Session in the Beigerhaard forest, a dense 4.5 square kilometer area of a combination of pine, oak, beech, and birch trees, inhabited by loads of deer, both large and small varieties, raccoons, wild boar, fox, badgers, wild cats, and other small animals. The search began on what very little to be known at the time about its crash location. Information only based on a couple of photos and local accounts after the war while salvaging pieces of the plane from the forest. The recovered remains of the Pilot, Co-Pilot, and Navigator were near and in the area of Boevange in 1945/46. In summer 2017, 70% of the Beigerhaard forest had been searched, as much of the 4.5 square km area as possible, only turning up a few small aluminum pieces and a half dozen rivets. Once the primary location/s of wreckage found, a focused search for the two MIA would pursue. Findings began to form a pattern, a pattern that connected clues found in an area 10.5 km Northeast that had three identified remains of the crew and a small section of the aircraft found by 35th Division ground troops in fighting attached to the Sixth Armored Division late January.

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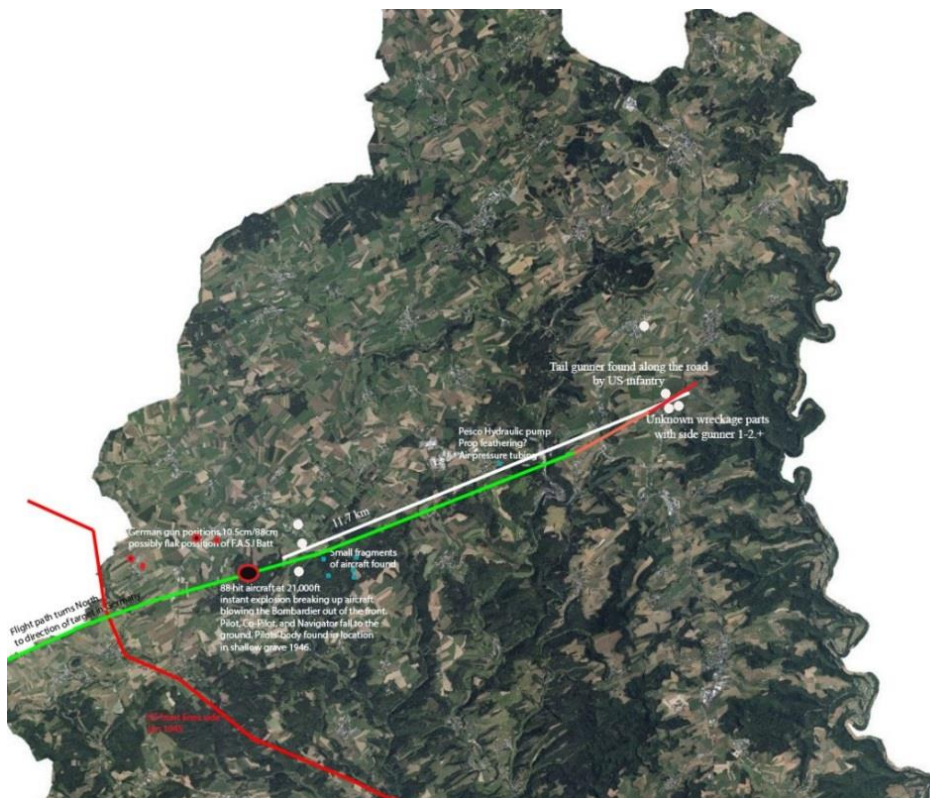


Figure 4-1, Geoportal, WWIIBRPG

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Late in the 2017 season, plans were to press forward to the North and East direction of the Beigerhaard in direction of Weicherdange for 2018. Being informed that there was another B-17 wreck in the Gebranntebierg area; details were requested as to exact location and any documentation such as a Missing Air Crew Report (MACR), the serial number of aircraft, names of the crew, and any captured German reports on it. At the time, none of this information was known, and that only a date of 30 November 1944 that a B-17 crashed there and the crew survived. The incident as to knowledge at the time written as follows:

John Dernenen;

1. CRASH band I, 1999, B-17, 14 January 1945, Weicherdange “Gerbranntebierg” pg.238.
2. CRASH band II, 30/11/44, B-17 Weicherdange, pg.250, and pg.245 30-11-44 Weicherdange, “Gebranntebierg”
3. E.T. Melcher’s BOMBENANGRIFFE AUF LUXEMBOURG IN ZWEI WELTKRIEGEN, pg.280, 30-11-44, Eselborn, “Wolfshof”

Immediate researching for data to uphold the claim started, so to avoid running into the mysterious aircraft and killing time used to search for 43-38911. At the time and throughout 2017 to mid-2020 no additional information surfaced. A look in the Boeing Flying Fortress Registry, data compiled by Joe Baugher\* did not show a B-17 crashing/or missing in the 10km area of Weicherdange in any of the 680+ pages on 30-11-44 or around that time frame, B-17F or G model.

Inquiries to the Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) to double-check this information were sent; they responded back with a list of known A/C dates and localities, none of which are a B-17 on 1-14-45. Nor were there any MACR found to support any such incident.

5

Email excerpt from DPAA:

*You asked what other crashes occurred in the vicinity of your search area. Using Eselborn as a center point, DPAA is tracking 8 resolved air crashes within 10 kilometers. This information is drawn from last known locations as given in MACRs, and also present in Bishop & Hey's Losses of the 8th Air Force. Our database shows the following:*

P-47D at Troisvierges – 16-1-45,

B-24H at Hupperdange

P-38J 20 km S of St. Vith (possibly in Germany) – 22-1-45 Hosingen

B-26B 16 km E of Bastogne

B-26C west of Eschweiler

3 x P-47Ds near Hosingen, 22-1-45

B-24H, Heinerscheid, 13-04-44

US Bomber, Heinerscheid 8-SEP 44

B-17, Heinerscheid 1-1- 45.

P-47, Hupperdange, 28-9-44

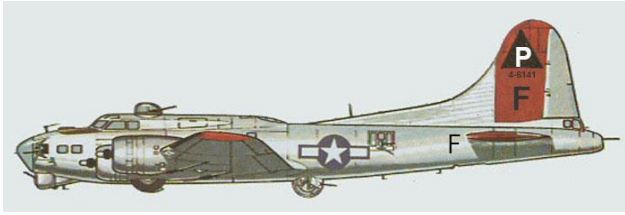
B26, Hosingen, 23-12-44

A26, Grindhausen, 23-01-45,

.

\* The Boeing Flying Fortress Registry list every B-17 built, where it deployed and what its status is/was, including after war scrapping or sales.

## AIRCRAFT DETAILS



Serial Number: 44-6141  
 Name: SNEAKIN DEACON  
 Manufacturer: Built by the Douglas Aircraft Company  
 Squadron: 544th Bombardment Squadron (H)  
 Aircraft ID Code: SU\*F  
 Start Date: 10 June 1944. New Replacement AC.  
 Missions: This aircraft was credited with 64 combat missions with the 384th.  
 End Date: 30 November 1944, failed to return from combat operations.  
 Production Block: B-17G-45-DL

6

8AF-110-C

### MONTHLY INVENTORY REPORT OF AIRCRAFT

COMMAND EIGHTH AIR FORCE UNIT REPORTING 384TH BOMB GROUP (H)  
 WING DIVISION 1ST BOMB DIVISION AS OF 2,000 HRS 6 OCT 1944

**IMPORTANT** AIRCRAFT ON THIS REPORT MUST AGREE WITH TOTALS IN SECTION II OF DAILY STATUS REPORT 110-A OF SAME DATE

I				II			
TYPE-MODEL SERIES	SPEC USE CODE	FULL AAF SERIAL NO	UNIT ASSGD TO	TYPE-MODEL SERIES	SPEC USE CODE	FULL AAF SERIAL NO	UNIT ASSGD TO
A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
<b>PART I</b>				B17G		43-37717	384
B17G		42-32106	384BG	"		43-37971	"
"		42-37788	"	"		43-38062	"
"		42-37822	"	"		43-38266	"
"		42-37843	"	"		43-38542	"
"		42-37917	"	"		43-38548	"
"		42-38013	"	"		43-38588	"
"		42-38208	"	"		43-38615	"
"		42-39888	"	"		43-38616	"
"		42-97251	"	"		44-6105	"
"		42-97263	"	"		44-6109	"
"		42-97282	"	"		44-6135	"
"		42-97320	"	"		44-6141	"
"		42-97510	"	"		44-6142	"

This aircraft made it to England, the (ETO) European Theater of Operations in June 1944 assigned to the 384<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, 544<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron Army Air Force Station 106 Grafton Underwood UK. She shows up on this bomber group inventory dated 6 October 1944. Figure 6-1, 384<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group (Heavy) in World War II website

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## B-17G Flying Fortress

**Accommodation:** 2 pilots, bombardier, navigator, radio-operator, 5 gunners

**Engines:** 4X895kW (1200HP) 1820-97 Wright radial engines made by Studebaker.

**Max Speed:** 287/mph.

**Range:** 3,750 miles

**Ceiling:** 35,600 feet

**Dimensions:**

**Span:** 103 ft. 9 inches.

**Length:** 74 ft. 4 inches.

**Height:** 19 ft. 1 inch.

**Weight:** 65,000lbs.Gross

**Armament:** X2 .50 cal. Browning MG - Ball turret, chin, Top turret, tail, two waist, cheek and ventral positions. 13 Total plus approx. 5,000 rds of .50 cal ammo

**Load:** 9,600-pound bomb load

<https://www.boeing.com/history/products/b-17-flying-fortress.page>

## 44-6141 BOMBING MISSION SUMMARY

This aircraft, 44-6141 lost 30, November 1944, suffering damage during bombing mission to Zeitz, Germany.

### CREW DATA:

7

POSITION	CREWMEMBER
PILOT	FLESHMAN, WARREN GRAY
CO-PILOT	LANEY, JOHN NEAL
NAVIGATOR	COCHRAN, JOHN EDWARD, JR
TOGGLIER	DECKER, FLOYD VIRGIL
RADIO OPERATOR	RICHARDSON, WILLIAM H
ENG/TOP TURRET	WOODRUFF, WALTER C, JR
BALL TURRET	MITCHELL, OREAL H
TAIL GUNNER	GALETTO, ANTHONY J
WAIST GUNNER,	BAUMANN, FREDERICK H

Twelve aircraft belonging to the 41<sup>st</sup> Combat Wing "B" group, 384<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, 544<sup>th</sup> Bomber Squadron posted at Army Air Station 106, Grafton Underwood left the tarmac between 09:28 to 10:03 hrs. Aircraft from the 544th Squadron was call signed, "Clinker". Aircraft (A/C), 44-6141 designated as "Clinker-F" and assigned to position #5 in low-level formation. After take-off, aircraft assigned to low-level formation maneuvered into the group. Attached to the "B" group of the mission and target of the day was to be the synthetic oil refinery of Zeitz, Germany. Once the group had formed and on their way, they departed the English coast at 11:05 hrs. near Felixstowe flying at 10,000 feet; all was preceding to standard operation. The group then crossed over the Belgian coast at Ostend at 11:27 hrs. encountering neither flak nor enemy aircraft all the way to target.

At the IP (Initial Point) of the primary target at 13:49hrs. the haze from the smoke screens and contrails of the lead group's warranted a second run. Following the lead high and mid-level groups, twenty 250 pound bombs dropped from each ship at 14:19 on the town of Wintersdorf a TO (Target of Opportunity), 6 and ½ miles East-Southwest of the primary target. During the bombing, the group encountered moderate, but quite

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accurate flak. Two aircraft were struck by this flak, aircraft # 42-37713 piloted by Lt. Hugh L. Evens, the port wingman to Lt. Warren G. Fleshman who's aircraft 44-6141, also suffered flak damage. Another aircraft was also reported MIA, 44-8409 piloted by Lt. Champ for unknown reasons. After bombs away, the rest of the squadrons and group then banked right on the planned route to England heading back in the reverse direction of advancement from target to Mühlhausen-Frankfurt-Koblenz-Liege-Brussels, Ostend without further difficulties reaching Liege about 15:30. The Group departed the Belgian coast at 16:22 and crossed the English coastal beach at 16:56.

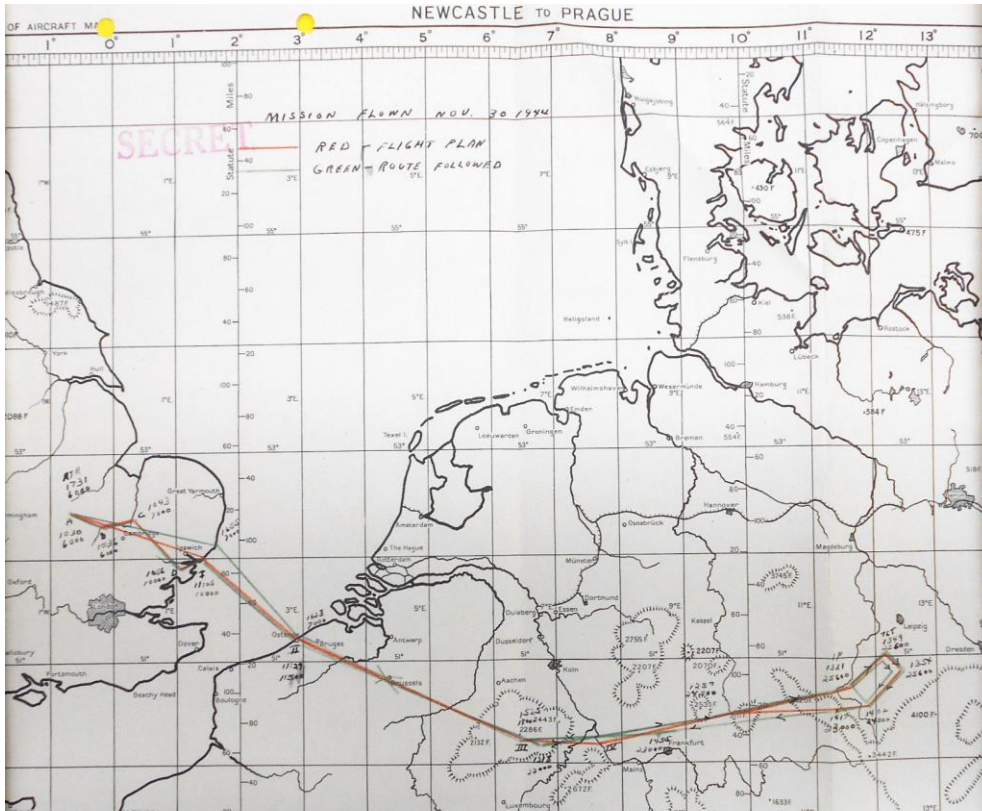


Figure 8-1, 384th Bombardment Group (Heavy) in World War II/USAFHRA

The two aircraft that failed to return flew in the #4 and #5 position of the low-level group. Because of these planes no longer being observed from the rest of the formation, no special notes made of their circumstances, and were assumed lost or straggled behind as noted on the formation sheet.

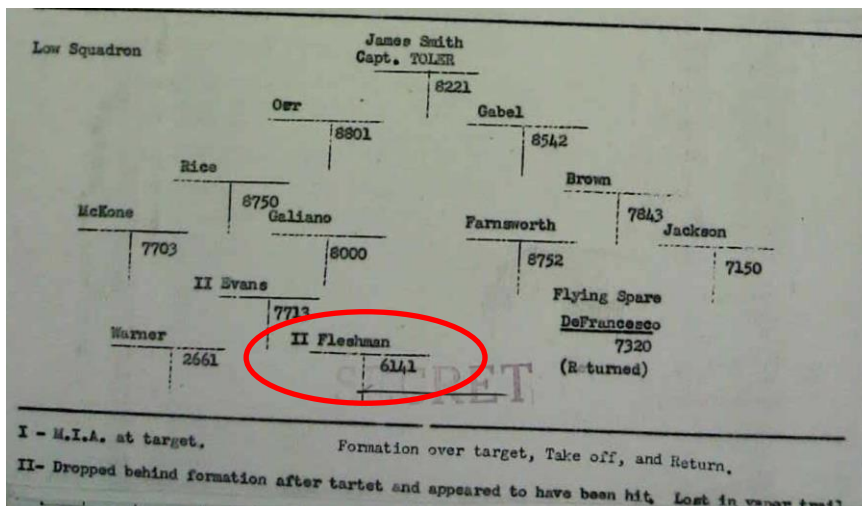


Figure 8-2, 384th Bombardment Group (Heavy) in World War II/USAFHRA



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Noted in the Mission Summary Sortie Report (1) provided by the *384th Bombardment Group (Heavy)* in *World War II* website, [Sortie Engine.php Rev. 3.1.2, 4 October 2018 Report generated: 21 June 2020, 12:23 PM, (PDT) Sortie Report.php Rev. 3.3, 6 April 2017, and also based on what is written in the Boeing Flying Fortress Registry (2) data compiled by Joe Baugher, this aircraft was said to have crashed in France, 30 November 1944 and was scrapped, but there is no known data upholding this claim.

**(1). SORTIE DATA:**

COMBAT CREDIT                    STATUS  
 YES                                    COMPLETED MISSION

COMMENTS: **FORCED LANDING IN FRANCE DUE TO BATTLE DAMAGE; SALVAGED.**

TYPE	SERIAL NUMBER	SQ CODE	NAME
B-17G	44-6141	SU*F	SNEAKIN DEACON

**(2).** History: 44-6141 Del Tulsa 12/5/44; Kearney 25/5/44; Dow Fd 1/6/44; Ass 544BS/384BG [SU-F] Grafton Underwood 10/6/44; b/d Merseburg 30/11/44 w/unknown pilot; **c/l France, Sal.**

There is no Missing Air Crew Report (MACR), or filed aircraft incident to Adjutant. The mishap is also not mentioned in Morning Reports filed either, only that the crew survived and made it back to England as shown in these Morning Reports 7 December 1944. According to archives, the aircraft supposed to have crashed in France and then salvaged. The assumption for this was that they must have bailed out over Luxembourg and parachuting in near the Belgian border\*. Being that the area of Belgium speaks French, One would think that they must have thought they came down in France. It was later confirmed that with an interview of crewmembers that it was said they bailed out over “no man’s land” over Luxembourg and were rescued in Belgium as suspected.

\* (Fayers-Hallin and Bland), the crew reported that they had bailed out over "no man's land" in Luxembourg and were safe in Belgium\*.

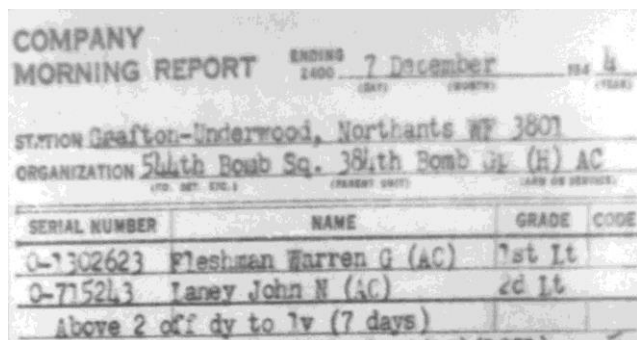
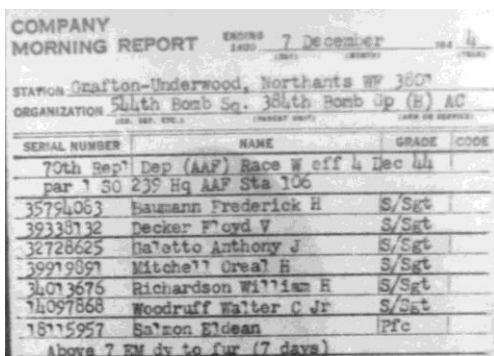


Figure 9-1, 544<sup>th</sup> Morning report 7, December 1944. *384th Bombardment Group (Heavy)* in *World War II* website

We now know the facts surrounding this case after four long tedious field seasons recovering 345 kg of what used to be almost 30,000 kg of aircraft estimating to be tens of thousands of small pieces to include 1,600 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition weighing 70 kg. There were also other mentions of this incident in which are responsible for involvement in the case in which will be detailed in the next section.

## ESTABLISHING POSITIVE PROOF OF IDENTIFICATION

### “Bircherknupp”

In March 2018, contact with the family of MIA Stephen P. Wulderk chanced. The Wulderk family sent several emails expressing their very excited and enthusiastic desire to assist in any way they could be of help to the research effort. They also acknowledged that the search might not produce the result wanted.

They sent documents as well as copies of Christmas cards between the mothers, letters, and pictures of Stephen, and even the last letter he wrote home. They sent on request every piece of information they had on the case plus, private documents to put a personal touch to the story for a book written when the case is finally closed. The documents sent included, an article translated from German to English about the crash site near Weicherdange, and presented it as Bull Session! Primary aircraft searched. The article was written by Guy Diederich, Mr. Diederich is a resident of Weicherdange and seen as the local war history go-to man; the village is where the Bombardier James D. Buescher was taken for POW (Prisoner of War) processing.

The article (2005) told a short story about the incident as well as pointing out the location of the wreckage. He also mentioned that James Buescher visited the area (Weicherdange) in 2003 with his wife to see the area and town he was taken as a POW. The Meisch farm, which has ownership of one of the crash site fields, was the German Red Cross in Weicherdange, which processed the US prisoners.

10 Mid-March 2018 began with some reconnaissance and interviews with residents showing that there was aircraft wreckage coming from forest/fields. After interviews and visiting with Mr. Guy Diederich, convincing evidence pointed to a crash site in the area and the date that fit the bomber being searched for, 43-38911. With the new government search permit secured, a scientific systematic search of the area began. Permission was also granted and documented by property owners in the area to search.

In May 2018, there was a meeting in Miesau Germany with the U.S. government’s “Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency” (DPAA). At this meeting, we discussed a systematic plan to proceed based on data collected at the time. It was agreed the location was highly suspected to be the correct aircraft in question. The crash zone is approximately 350X280 meter area. Based on the data given, it was pretty convincing that the site was most likely that of Bull Session and thus, began a search to prove 100% the identity of this site as to whatever aircraft it may be. If I proved it to be Bull Session, it would have established a base point for searching for the two MIA, if it were another aircraft, then incorrect data would have been revised and that case resolved as well.

Further conversation with Mr. Diederich, said that his father had told him as well as other people in the village at the time of the crash, it was one of the coldest winters in a long time. Also, there were no US bodies found at the site, only one soldier was taken, that being James D. Buescher. Several boys in the village had gone out to the wreck and taken pieces/parts as souvenirs. They also got into trouble with the fathers, and the “stuff” was thrown back into the woods at the trash piles of the town. Also stated, at the time there were no US troops here, the Germans were still in town and had closed the area off to locals and they were still fighting the Americans. Weichrdange was liberated 21 January 1944 by advancing troops of the 28th Cavalry Squadron of the 6th Calvary Group attached with the 26th Division.

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Mr. Diederich explained that his father had been there during the salvage operation, spring of 1945 when a salvage company came to pick up the engines. The company had also roped off the area warning locals to stay away for munitions were around. He too had in his possession several pieces from the site. One-piece found in the foundations of a shed he and his father was tearing down to rebuild, it was a piece of the airframe. He also had one of the large fuselage armor plates. Also asked if he had recovered any data plates with numbers or dates, because he had found a piece with the data plate on it saying B-17F and dated 1943 he said that the plane was a B-17F. He said the tag was at the local military museum in Clervaux.

Figure 11-1, Clervaux Museum, WWIIBRPG



Figure 11-2, WWIIBRPG



11

At the museum, sure enough, there was a piece of the exhaust collector with the plate and a card saying “ Engine piece, B-17F, crashed near “Wolfshof” Eselborn, 30 Nov 1944”, just like written in the ET Melcher book. A couple of issues with that were, one, the piece came from Weicherdange, not Eselborn and two, the piece does not identify the aircraft, type, or date built/delivered, only that this exhaust collector was first built for a B-17F, April-28 1944. Engine swapping occurred almost daily, as many F models were cannibalized, used as parts surplus from summer 1944 onward as they were old stock. The other confusion was that another piece was a chair, labeled as navigator chair, B-17F Weicherdange 3 November 1944. The chair was actually a radio operator’s chair.



Figure 11-3, Clervaux museum, WWIIBRPG

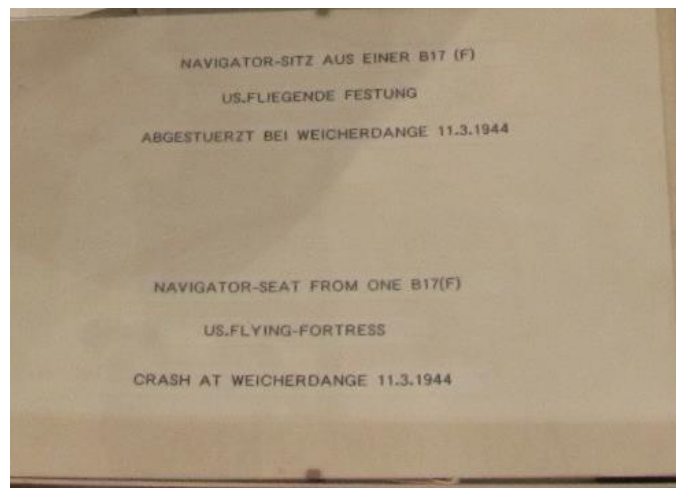


Figure 11-4



This is a navigator's position and chair, as seen at its station, as compared to a radio operator's position in the next picture.

Figure 12-1, web

## RADIO OPERATOR'S STATION



The transmitter and receiver for the pilot and co-pilot were mounted on a rack above the large transmitter shown at left.



Just aft of the cockpit was the compartment shared by the radio operator and the navigator. Although the radio gear in Catalinas varied to some degree depending on a number of factors, the equipment found in the PBV-5 at the National Museum of Naval Aviation is typical. This large transmitter was located just forward of the radio operator's chair on the right side of the compartment.



The main distribution panel for the electrical system was mounted on the aft bulkhead at the radio operator's station. Four spare tuning units are below it.

Figure 12-2, web



Photo © 2000 Hawk

Figure 12-3, web

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Suspicious were that there might be two aircraft, two different dates, one Nov 1944 and one Jan 1945 and several locations, or one aircraft spread over several locations or all the above. The only way to be sure was to recover non-disputable evidence from the crash site to verify the identity of the site and establish a fact-based presentation of events, accomplished as written in Mission Summary.

Food for thought; If this plane or another B-17 had come down 30-11-44 as stated in ET Melcher's book and the book Crash Band I/II, the US forces may have recorded it and secured the area as the US forces occupied that area since 11 September 1944. They would have also secured the crew and returned survivors to the home station. In mid-November 1944, the area was in control of the 28th Division, Head Quarters in Wiltz after exchanging combat zones with the 8th Infantry Division. The village of Doennange, (Diänjen) being occupied by the 110th reserve, 2nd Battalion, under Lt Col. Ross C. Henbest on 10 December and only 1.8 km west of the crash site. To date, no reports have surfaced to support interactions from units in that area at the time of the said crash in November.

## GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The site lies 1.6 km, 335 degrees North-Northwest of the town of Weicherdange on a hill called "Bircherknupp". The extent of the wreck covers approximately 598m in a Northeast to Southwest direction and 367m Northwest to Southeast as confirmed with small fragments of the wreckage of nominal value. Ninety-five percent of the site is open graze field and rotation crop fields, the rest lies in conifer forest, both mature and undeveloped. The wreckage zone is on a westerly slope of 10m per 260m. It has an average elevation height of 495m. Luxembourg grid reference puts it, E66325, N124103. All soil is typical Ardennes light brown (7.5YR 4/4 – 5YR 3/4) clay mixed with small chards of grey schist.

13

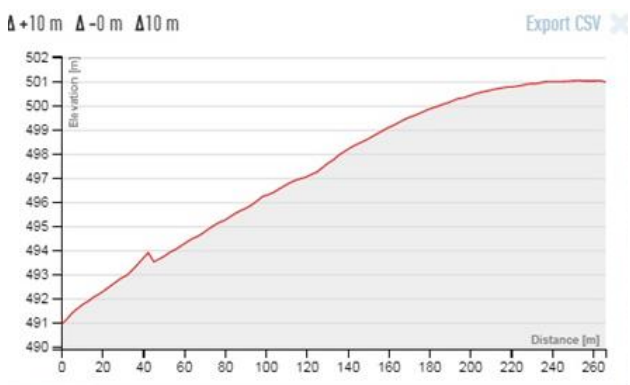


Figure 13-1, Geoportal Lux.



WWIIBRPG

Efforts to preserve the surface integrity by not disturbing the area as much as possible for future recovery is essential *if it were to be* the aircraft (43-38911) and any possible remains to be on site.

## Site search area near Weicherdange

The general research area containing aircraft wreckage was separated into four separate zones. The zones number Z-1 – Z-4. The zones only cover the immediate area that is in scrutiny and research around the hill Bircherknupp.

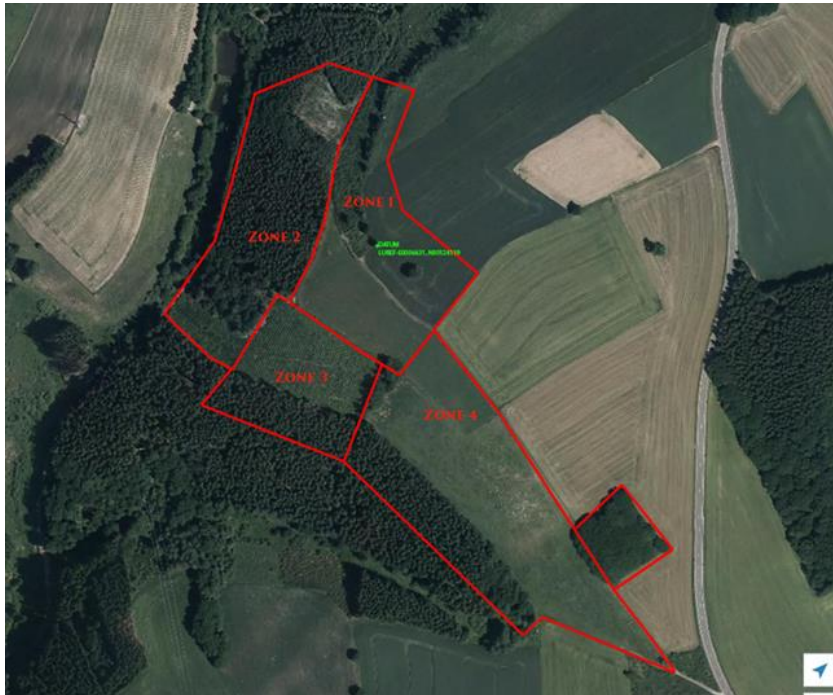


Figure 14-1, Zone search areas, Luxembourg Geoportal, (WWIIBRPG)

To show wreckage scattering patterns and to record significant artifacts a virtual grid-overlay covered all zones. The grid was set up with vertical and horizontal grids being 10 meters square and a number/letter system used. The starting grid was given A-1 at the farthest point North (numbers) based on irrelevant wreckage fragments found and continued to the South, and letters East-West direction.



Figure 14-2, Overlay grid on top of Zone 1-4, Luxembourg Geoportal, (WWIIBRPG)

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The overlay also aids in tracking different types of material/evidence, as to what area was found and if similar material is in the associated area, revealing the sections of the aircraft that had come down and what direction it came from. It was the thought these findings might support identifying the crash to be that of 43-38911. Documenting of significant artifact finds is with LUREF, GPS readings, using a Garmin GPSMAP 64. A datum point was established at (66390E, 124037N) the corner of the crop field bordering the grass field and fence line road.

The goal was to identify the site positively, of course hoping it was Bull Session. It was not to prove anyone else incorrect about what aircraft lay there. Using the “prove myself wrong” idea, if it were Bull Session, there should not have been any part of the empennage, top-turret, or landing gear as these parts are accounted for. The site should show signs of the fuselage, nose to bulkhead 6, wings, engines, chin turret, and ball turret. Any other aircraft on-site would have the top-turret, tail, and landing gear added. Of course, post-war salvage had taken the best and primary identifiable components that would have identified the plane such as serial numbers stamped on the machineguns, radio call plate, aircraft ID tag, vertical stabilizer, and engines.

Artifacts recovered from an average depth of 10cm or less, the exception was the three “pits”. The three wreckage pits found along the field edge in zone-1 grid D-9, 10 and 11 obviously put there by farmers or clean-up personnel. The buried pits were just under the surface, to a depth of 20cm, and averaged 5 meters apart being 1.5 m in diameter. They were very helpful as they carried fine examples of debris and shown importantly the association of material in an area. Under no circumstances were there any plans to engage in recovery of human remains as the DPAA/and local police would be informed directly by phone if any verifiable human osteon material was discovered, as per agreements set in the permit.

15 There are several key components of the cabin cockpit found in three different zones, one, three, and four, which show how far, and wide the cabin had broken up and spread over a 100-meter area. The focus in zone-3 was finding the main data plate of the aircraft, which contains the serial number of the plane and validates the aircraft. This data tag is normally found on the dash just above the flap speed WARNING. Alternatively, the radio call plate found in Z-3 as predicted lead to the identity of the wreck, also located on the dash in front of the Pilot.

There were several pieces of cockpit dash fragments found, mainly in zone-1 and 3. In zone three, the evidence has been in its original position where and when it hit, in “situ”. This is very important as it presents evidence that hit the ground at the moment of impact and stayed in place since November 30, 1944, suffering less damage to forestation (disturbance).

Evidence in Z-1, young trees was perplexing for a while as the pieces had been recently badly damaged but associated, meaning the smaller pieces are parts of the same bigger piece lying in a near area and, sometimes certain pieces found went back together. Later it was realized that after the mature forest was last cut down, they had a mulching machine go through the area grinding down stumps as well as evidence and throwing it all over.

Disturbance in an open crop field is foreseeable and anticipated but still provides a glimpse into an associated pattern of debris distributed in the area.

One can postulate (in simple terms) the break-up of the vehicle and dynamics as to how it descended by systematically plotting wreckage on the ground, presenting orientation and patterns of disbursement. Debris in zone-one is mainly from the nose of the cabin to mid-fuselage (Bulkhead 6), just behind the Ball Turret, wings, and engine. Zone-3 also includes interior wing material from starboard and port sides, plus fuel bladder fragments.

Some fragments of Plexiglas in zone-one are from the nose including the astrodome in the bombardier station.



Figure 16-1, Web, WWIIBRPG

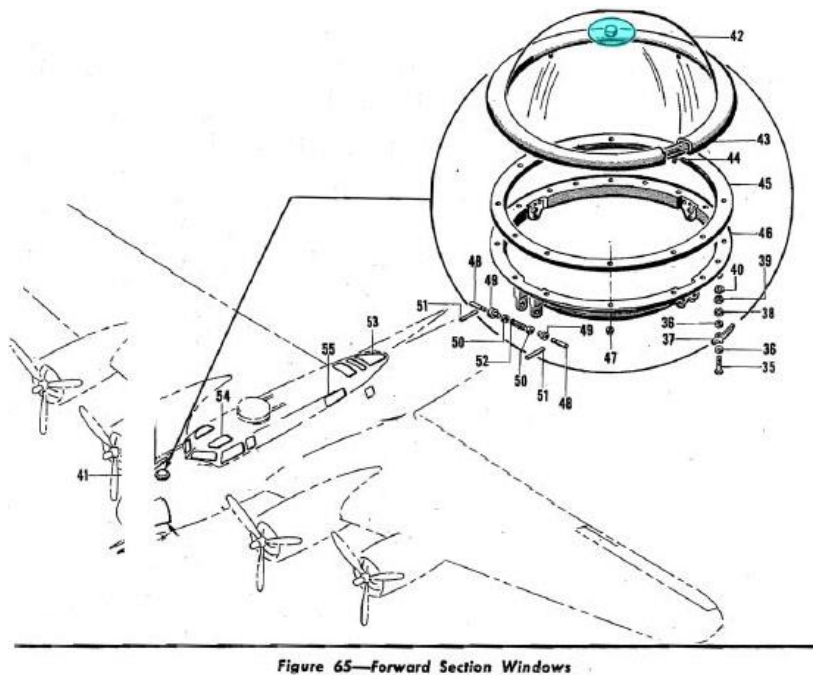


Figure 16-2, AN 01 20EG-04, Diagram of the nose section shows the Navigators dome in the Bombardier, Navigators section of the plane. Found in Zone-4.

The cabin was probably broken into two main parts as well as the upper/lower fuselage. It was surmised from parts found in zone-1 Grid D-10, C/D-9 are of the nose, inclusive parts of the cockpit, chin, Bombardier/Navigator position, ball-turret with A-14 automated gun sight, and outer skin of both wings and fuselage are present.

A site map, (fig 17-1) developed to document significant discoveries, illustrate obstacles and the layout of the site area. A combination of aerial photographs, drone footage and, mapping using GPS, compass, and a Nedo F-Type (F-32) Survey level modified with a laser range finder was used to create the map for as much detail as needed for the project.





## BATTLEFIELD RESEARCH AND PRESERVATION GROUP

Taking into consideration what witnesses had testified, relatives of those who were in the area at the time, evidence recovered from locals, and the geographical data presented. A robust search plan was devised and implemented beginning summer of 2018. One piece of evidence that was standing out and a mystery was a fragment of a tire. According to Mr. Diederich, the tire fragment found on site was used to repair people's shoes, since people had nothing to use post-war. He claimed it to be the main landing tire. It was actually a piece of the tail tire, as the part number was on the piece, at the time, the question was, could it be from the tail section of Bull Session, even if the Tail Gunner was found further NE. Unless this part fell from the fuselage on the way down?



Figure 18-1, WWIIBRPG, Coll. Diederich



Figure 18-2

18

Another dilemma that had to be put straight was the dispute that this aircraft on-site was said to be an "F" model and not a "G", as the aircraft 43-38911 was a "G" model. As earlier mentioned, the aircraft is said to be an "F" model is based on the exhaust tag in the museum that stated B-17F, April 1943. This piece was part of the exhaust collector. Engines were swapped an average of twice per week, due to leaks, break down and component failures, etc. Most likely, it is suspected this plane also had an engine swap at some time. If the engine data plate is found, it may lead to identifying the wreck with 100% positivity. This data tag contains all summery engine data including the engine's serial number, which are recorded in the MACR (Missing Air Crew Report).



Figure 18-3, 91<sup>st</sup> BG, NARA

# BATTLEFIELD RESEARCH AND PRESERVATION GROUP

In mid-summer 2018 the question of whether it was a B-17 G or F was finally answered with the discovery of the wing data plate. The plate is from the port side outboard wing as indicated by the unit number 8088-L MODEL B-17G.



Figure 19-1, WWIIBRPG

Data plate – Briggs Manufacturing Co.

MOD B-17G, BRIGGS UNIT No 8088L, GOV SER# 1.497

PT No-3BDV-75-4799-602, DETROIT MI, FIG-11, PG24 [LH]DOOR ASSY.]



Figure 19-2, web

Also found in 2019 was pieces of the chin turret, which belonged on G models, although very few numbers of F planes had them.



Figure 19-3,web



Chin Turret Assembly  
Arm hanger Pn# 82253



Figure 19-4, web, WWIIBRPG

# BATTLEFIELD RESEARCH AND PRESERVATION GROUP



Figure 20-1, Engine data plate, WWIIBRPG



Figure 20-2, The Studebaker Co. WWIIBRPG

After 100's of hours of searching for 4 months' time, the most important discovery of 2019 was the finding of one of the four engine data plates that would identify an engine by serial number. This serial number is written in the Missing Aircrew Report (MACR). If there is a match, then the aircraft might be identified, there are exceptions, such as an engine swap when an aircraft experienced an engine problem and if the paperwork were not updated, the numbers would not be reflected. Looking for this paperwork was a huge undertaking, and did not prevail, but large credit is due to Marilyn for the effort. This found number did not match the engine numbers in the MACR for 43-38911. The number suffered heavy damage but was managed to be deciphered as best as could on Spangdahlem Air Base at the Non-Destructive Inspection (NDI) center. A luminance bioscopy examination was completed; the number appears to be 43-63662? It also matches some numbers found on a fragment of a crankcase cover, 3-636.. As seen in these pictures.

20



Figure 20-3, Comparison of engine main gear cover and serial # painted, WWIIBRPG, US Air Force Historical Research Agency, AFHRA.

Of course, the primary piece to discover that would identify the aircraft would be the primary identification tag, located on the cockpit dash. This plate provides such data as the date of manufacture, the serial number of aircraft, company, and engines.



Figure 21-1, web, sample

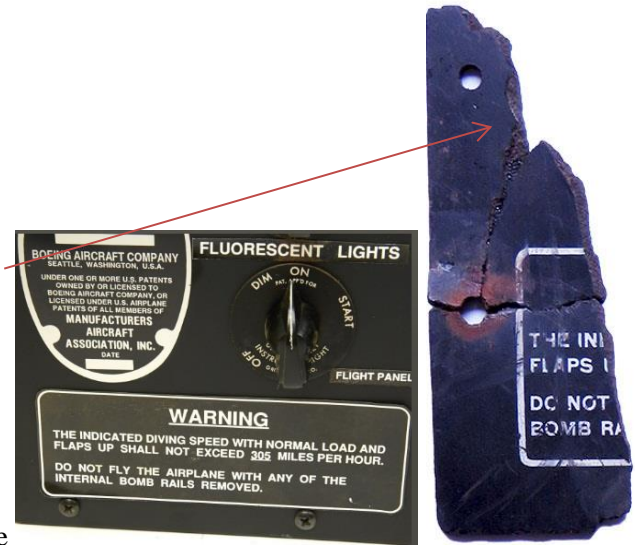


Figure 21-2, comparisson, dash frag found in Z-3,WWIIBRPG



Figure 21-3 Radio Call Plate, WWIIBRPG

## IN CONCLUSION

The discovery of the radio call plate led to the final definite identification of the plane and thus, the discovery of the mission and what happened to it, as to the crew too. There still has been no MACR or mishap report found on this incident, for reasons not yet known. Although it did not turn out to be the primary aircraft in search of, a 75-year mystery has been resolved and records corrected. The 4 search seasons also engaged a variety of so many helpful and friendly local people of the area from the villages, hunters, forest workers, community leadership the farmers, and motivated small town historians, all of which are grateful to have met and grown to know, and appreciative for their help and understanding. It is also an honor and pleasure to be conversing with family members of the crew of 43-38911, who have given so much assistance. The search for 43-38911, Bull Session is ongoing and recent finds this summer may have led to another discovery that appears to be a good suspect in the mystery.

There were numerous artifacts found, some personal. Unfortunately, none of them identified to any one person in the crew. Such as a piece of the Navigator's map divider, which bears a name, not of the crew, but could have been given to the Navigator, or left on board from a previous crew as crews continually changed and swapped planes. Also, found was a watch that suffered heavy damage, this watch was only the internal part and bad luck would not give the backplate that may have had the serial number and name of the owner.

## BATTLEFIELD RESEARCH AND PRESERVATION GROUP

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An enlisted man's belt buckle found had no markings, as was an English bought razor. Small parts and pieces that give visual to the men on board that flew it. A thought of, why was a watch found if no one were killed in the crash. An assumption would be, how would you have looked at the watch to tell time with so many layers of heavy leather jackets, and gloves on at -25 degrees? Take it off before high flight and hang it up near your station? In addition, many crews brought some sort of extra clothes, toiletries in case of a diverting flight and they ended up going to another destination to get back.

From all these parts and pieces in addition to patterns of debris scattered, a pretty good idea of what the crash site have may have looked like after the aircraft fell through the air hitting the ground can be imagined. This scene, rendered to illustrate this image, based on what the evidence presented, and the interpretation of that evidence, which can be the only speaking witness.

It is also surmised that the small amount of debris found at the top of the field in a small defined area are parts that most likely were left behind or fell from larger pieces when the wreckage was dragged from the lower area to be loaded for transport to the scrap dealer.



Figure 22-1, rendering of the crash scene after hitting the ground. Luxembourg Geoportal, WWIIBRPG,

## BATTLEFIELD RESEARCH AND PRESERVATION GROUP

Another rendering was what may have been the replay of what it looked like when the plane came into the ground in the last moments. The aircraft came in from the NE direction, banked left, dipped downright, touching the right-wing, and then folded, then turning over and breaking apart.

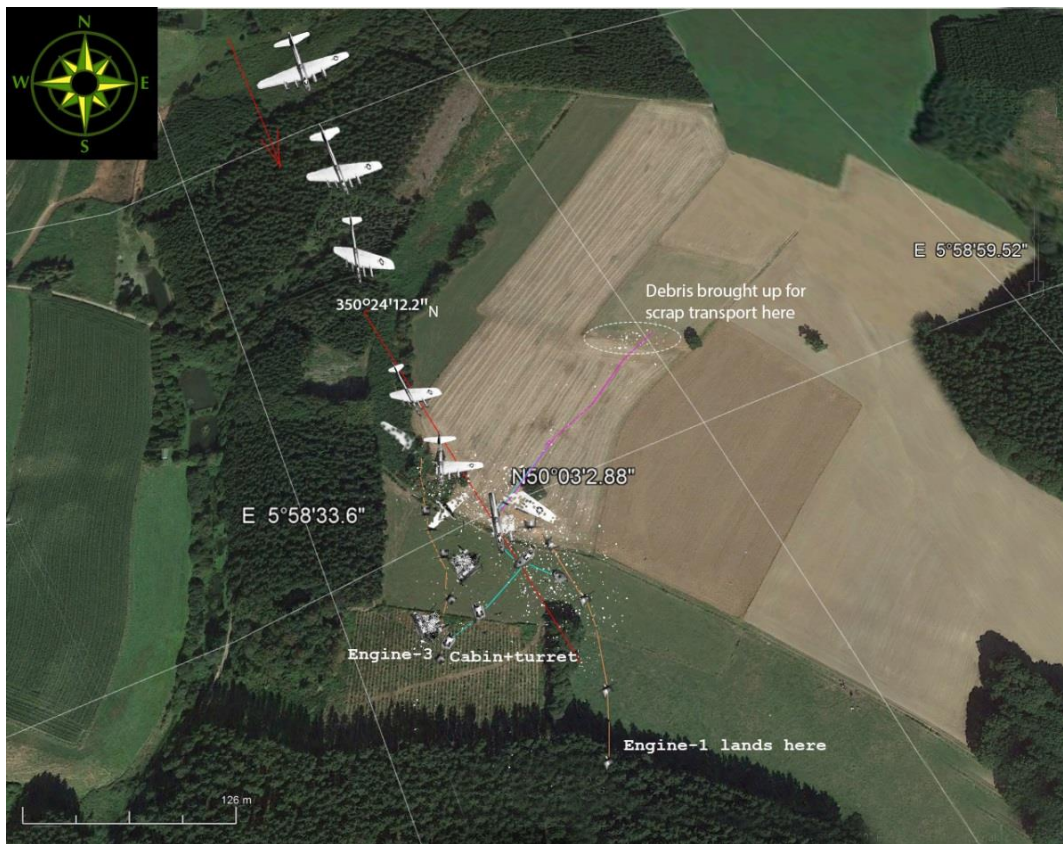


Figure 23-1

What it may have looked like as when the plane struck the ground from the Northeast, Geoportal, WWIIBRPG

All evidence found at the site has been cleaned, photographed, cataloged, tagged, and recorded in a digital file. Items that were identifiable by part number were painstakingly over the winter months looked up in various references and parts catalogs. There are 400+ itemized artifacts by number in the parts listing. Although noted in daily field notes, 100s of thousands of pieces that are merely fragments having no diagnostic value, are too numerous to log without numbers include Plexiglas, Laminated Phenolic compressed board, Formica board, various forms of aluminum from wings, structure, frame, and stations. In addition, a variety of materials to include leather, rubber (seals, fuel bladder), glass, textile, wiring, insulation, and fabrics are noted and either described or identified when possible, some identifying is ongoing. Numerous electronic connectors, components, life support such as oxygen systems, communications, and armament systems comprising pieces of the K-4 Automated Gun Sight, Norden components, and .50 cal. Type E-11 Gun Mount Adaptor, navigational equipment comprising the Pioneer Gyroscopes and various compasses and indicators for them.

The next few pages represent the better examples of items recovered; some are compared to items that show what the pieces were, or where they went in the aircraft. The majority of the wreckage is respectfully reburied, in remembering the crew and history of the crash site; other items are to be shared with the local museum/community. Many of the cataloged parts will remain curated for comparison and study; all personal items traced to owners will be returned to the family.

## WRECKAGE PHOTOS –ANNEX-I



24

Figure 24-1, 2m tape, Hundreds of thousands of parts from all sections of the aircraft. Each piece picked up one – by -one, a lot of bending down WWIIBRPG

Over 4 summers; there was approximately 345 kg of debris recovered from what was a 30,000 kg aircraft. That included 70+ kg of .50 ammo turned over to the Luxembourg Army. With all primary means of identifying the aircraft gone, one could only hope to find a clue in laundry markings, dog tags, call plates, engine plates, or an a/c serial number on something. A great deal of relentless research through countless hours of reading manuals, technical bulletins, parts catalogs, engineers notes, pilots manuals, and 100s of internet sites.

Many of the pieces had numbers on them, many do not, for those without you have look for something that is the same, compare it with photos, and sometimes that luck of finding a duplicate item that may be in better condition can help. Restoration photos and museum pieces have helped greatly, as have nostalgic and vintage sites for selling parts to hobbyists and collectors. This type of detective work would have taken years and lots of time in museums, archives, and history flight organizations in the past, not that it would be boring.



Personal and necessities



Figure 25-1, Navigator map divider, R H Kahle, WWIIBRPG

Map Divider found in Zone-1, Section 10, Grid-D, name scratched in is R. H Kahle, research ongoing (WWIIBRPG)



Figure 25- 2, WWIIBRPG



Figure 25-3, pocketknife, Z-1, WWIIBRPG

Update on map divider artifact from 2018:

Found with the name R H. Kahle. A map divider found Z-1 might belong to one of the following USAAF airmen, with the name on it. List of Richard Kahle:

Richard Hollis Kahle - #5780624, 19 Oct 1923 - 1983

Richard Kahle - 043148868, 29 April 1920 - 1987, AF

Richard H. Kahle – 12122067

~~Richard Henry Kahle, 0-722587, 2lt USAAF – no longer suspect as he was killed in a propeller accident in the US July, 1944.~~



Figure 25-4, Bootlace loop, Z-1, WWIIBRPG



Figure 25-5, Glove fragment, web, WWIIBRPG



Figure 26-1, US belt buckle, Web, WWIIBRPG

Enlisted mans brass belt buckle  
Z-1, 2018



Goggle padding  
Z-3, 2018

Figure 26-2, Z-3, WWIIBRPG, web

These watches were either issued to officers in the Air Corps or bought privately. The watch would have backing on it that may have given the name and a serial number of the owner. Finding the back would be of significant discovery, as it would identify a crewmember and confirm the aircraft in question. This very important find was discovered in the field Z-1, Grid A-14. The found artifact is on the left compared to a pristine example on the right and below. Figure 26-3, web, WWIIBRPG

26



Elgin 539 USAAF A-11 watch  
Found Z-1, Grid A-14, 2018  
Produced 1943/44





Figure 27-1, Ever-Ready shaving razor, made in England compared to a new one. Web, WWIIBRPG



Figure 27-2, a variety of buckles for seat straps, parachute, and clothing. WWIIBRPG



Figure 27-3, WWIIBRPG



Figure 27-4, leather fragments, WWIIBRPG

Here is an assortment of Flip the Dot snaps, belt, and strap ends. Many of these went to several different types of canvas bags for first aid, flair kits, maintenance bags for tools, and more everyday things on board.

Fragments of leather sometimes found include glove fragments, headgear, shoe, and name tape?

Communications

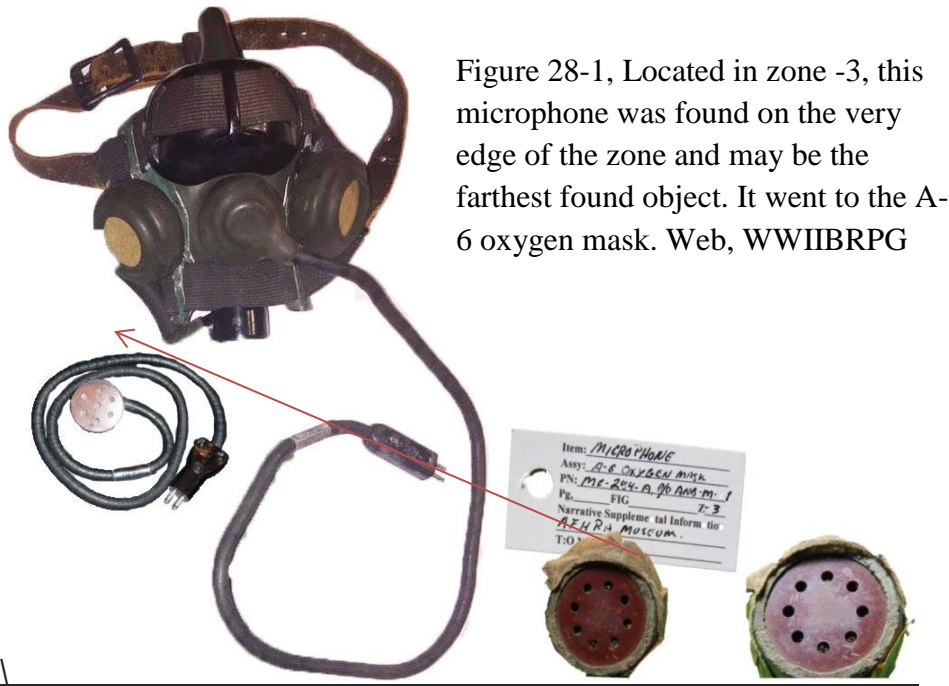
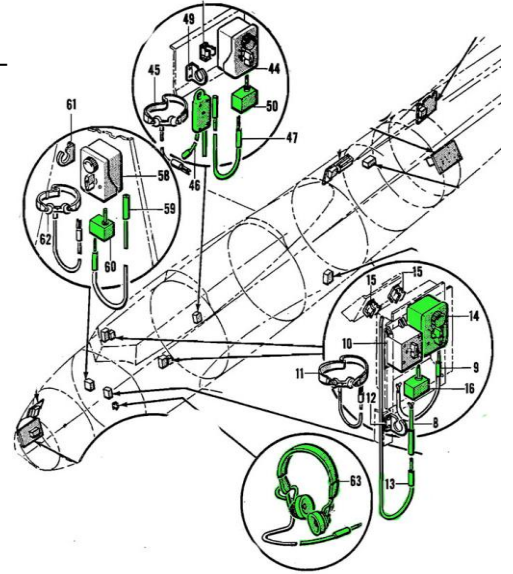


Figure 28-1, Located in zone -3, this microphone was found on the very edge of the zone and may be the farthest found object. It went to the A-6 oxygen mask. Web, WWIIBRPG



Jack Box BC-366

Chin strap buckle



Jack -26

HS-33 Headset bar

Switch/SW-141

Headset speaker HS-33

HB-7 Headset adjust

Headset adapter MC-385C

Headset speaker HS-33



Red shield plug 354

Figure 28-2, AN 01-20EG-4  
Here are some typical intercommunication equipment for all crewmembers, radio operator, pilot, and co-pilot. Crews could talk to each other while jacked into the system. The 354 male plugs coming from the headsets could be configured in several different combinations. Some sets were plugged into the MC-385C Headset Adapter, and sometimes it may have been jacked into the BC-366 Jack Box. Most crewmembers had the SW-141 Switch that hung around the neck, they could unplug and move about the cabin/fuselage and plug into communications BC-366 box along the wall in stations they were working.

Figure 28-3. Communications accessories, web, WWIIBRPG



Figure 29-1, on the left, is the remains of a BC-366 Intercom box (Insolation Co.) shown with a well-preserved example. Web, WWIIBRPG



Figure 29-2, some neat and interesting objects found are the pieces and fragments of headsets. They are represented by a couple of different types onboard to include the B-6 flying helmet with built-in speakers, the ANB H1 and HB-7 headset, and adjusters. Pieces of leather and snaps, as well as buckle strap, ends. We can only imagine who wore them and what conversations went through the headsets.

Helmet, Flying, Type B-6, web, WWIIBRPG

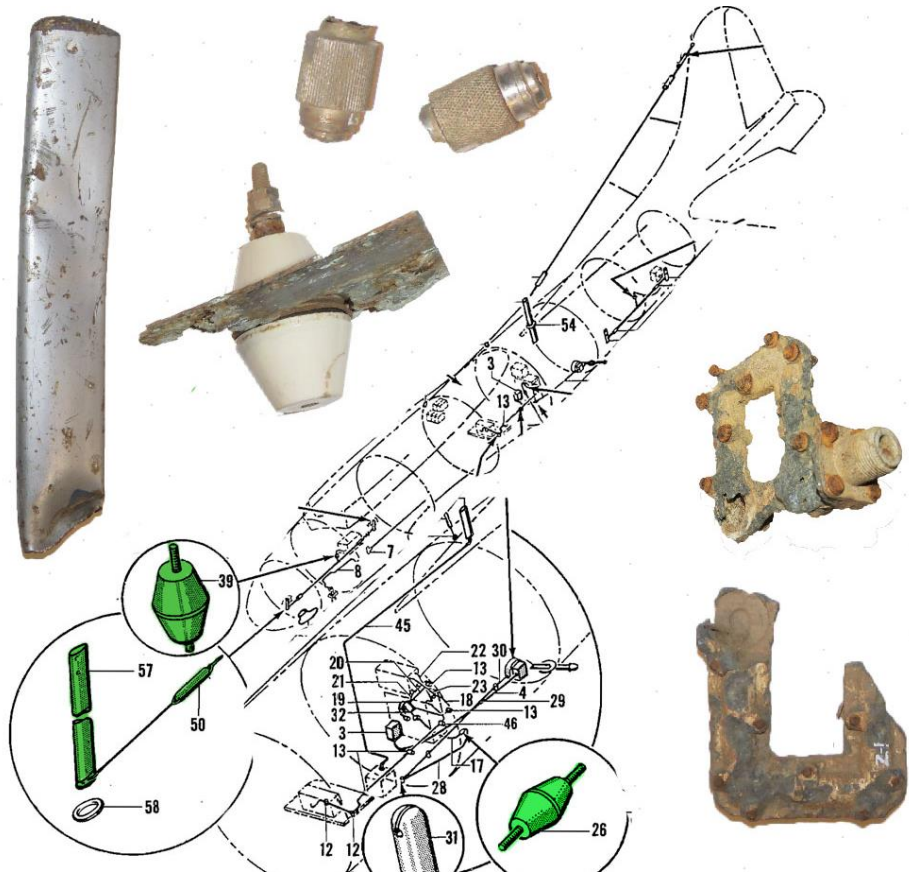


Figure 30-1, antenna assemblies were throughout the ship. Left was an antenna mast, a piece of the original antenna wire was still connected. Also shown is an isolator and two small antenna cable connectors. Right, is a highly sensitive (calibrated) feed horn for probably one of the Navigational inputs, similar to a modern-day satellite connection? WWIIBRPG, AN 01-20EG-4

30

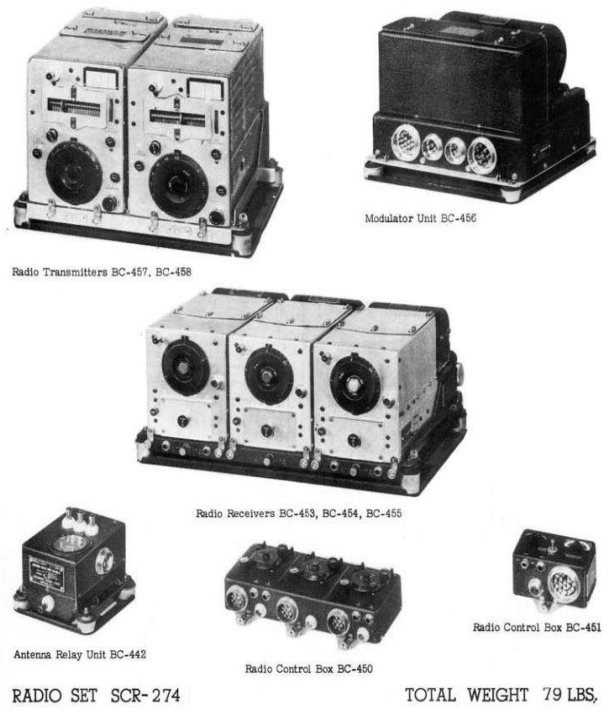
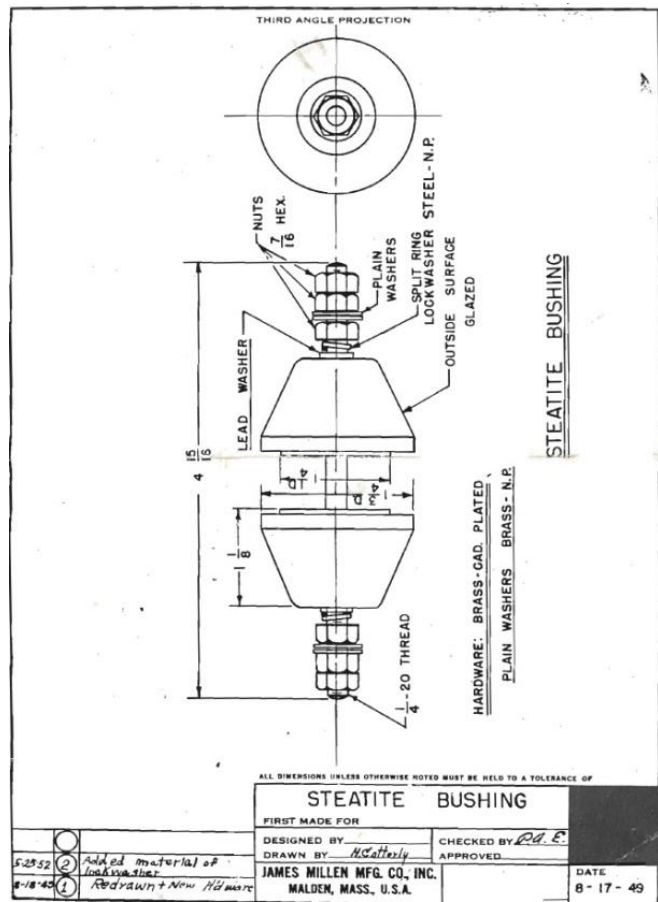


Figure 30-3, Radio systems configuration.

All and anything electronic and controlled needed to be connected in some way to a huge system of communications for equipment to talk to each other and for the operators. All this interconnecting was accomplished through the huge variety of Amphenol –American Phenolic Corp and Harwood cannon plugs and connectors.

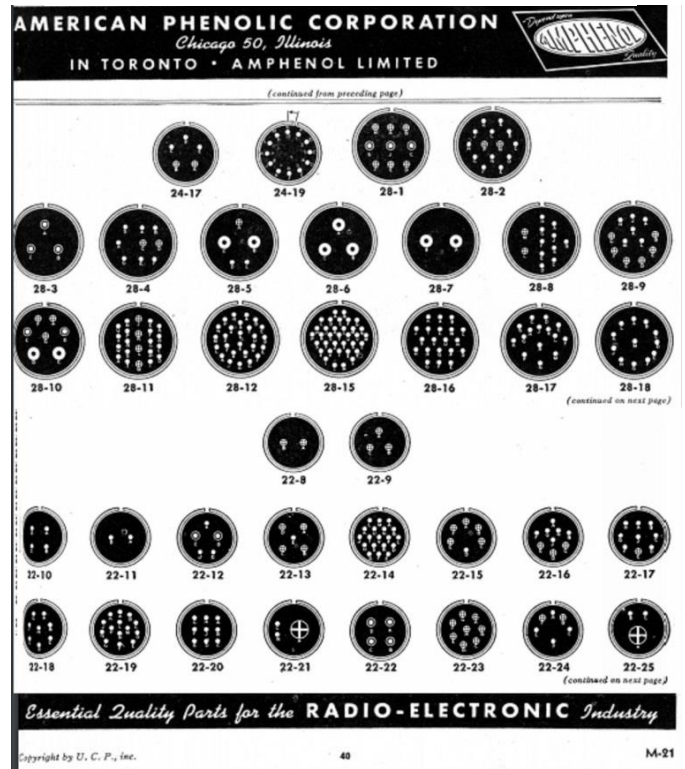


Figure 31-1, Web, WWIIBRPG

Figure 31-2, Amphenol

Figure 31-3, Fragments of the Radio Compass Loop (RDF Radio Directional Finder) LP-21-A Bakelite cover, the “Football” on the forward underbelly of the plane was also found. There was a variety of antenna on the plane for navigation- direction, Gyros, transmitters, receivers, beacon markers, and, of course, communications, SCR-269F

SCR-269-G UNCLASSIFIED

RADIO COMPASS SCR-269-G		TOTAL WEIGHT 98 LBS.	
Component	Nomenclature	Size	Weight
Radio Compass Unit	BC-433-G	20" x 12" x 8"	46 Lbs.
Radio Control Box	BC-434-A	8" x 8" x 4"	4 Lbs.
Loop	LP-21-A	25" x 9" x 15"	10 Lbs.
Indicator	I-81-A (Pilot's)	4" x 4" x 4"	1 Lb.
Indicator	I-82-A (Navigator's)	5" x 5" x 5"	2 Lbs.
Relay	RC-55-A or B	12" x 7" x 3"	6 Lbs.
Rectifier Unit	RA-55-A	7" x 5" x 4"	6 Lbs.

and includes cords, conduits, etc.

Key 1942

Armament

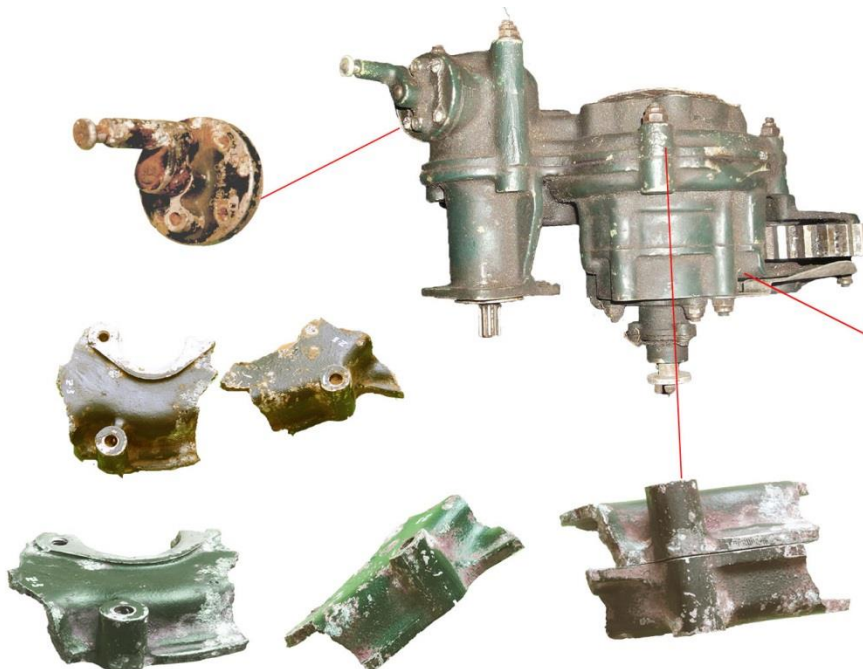


Chin Turret Assembly  
Arm hanger Pn# 82253



Figure 32-1. Here, this brace assembly part found in Z-1, Grid-D, and is located on "G" model aircraft to support the chin turret. web, WWIIBRPG

32



Fragments of A1 Top-Turret Azimuth gear assy. Z-3, 2019

Figure 32-2, Top Turret fragments found in Z-3, Web, WWIIBRPG



Figure 32-3, web, WWIIBRPG



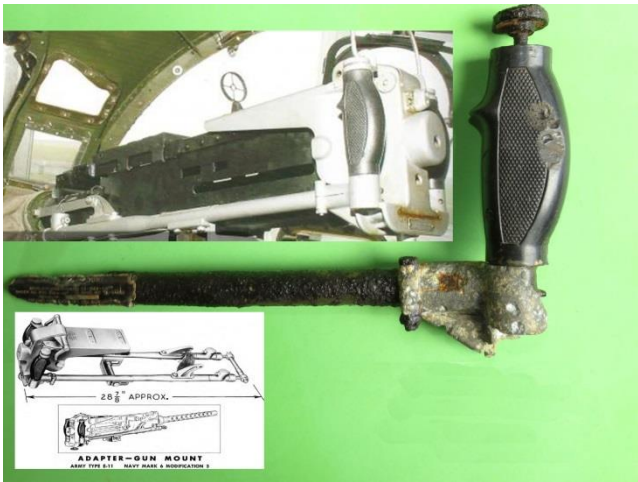


Figure 33-1, web, WWIIBRPG

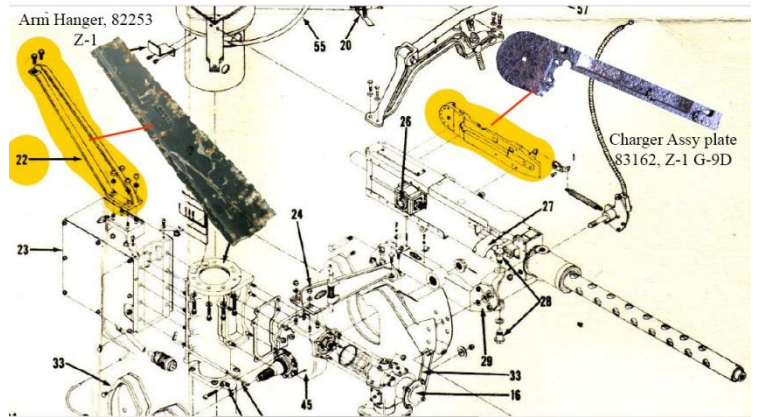
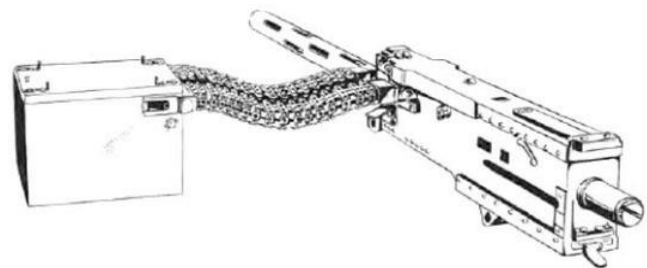


Figure 33-2, WWIIBRPG, Army-Navy Index of Aeronautical Equipment-Volume 5 – Armament Section 2.1\_Gunnery

The .50 caliber machinegun mount belonged to one of the cheek gun positions in the nose. Also found was the right side of a “chin” gun, the “charging plate”, that would have been in the chin turret, unfortunately, the right side has not been found, the *right side has the serial number of the gun and can be tracked to the aircraft in the paperwork.*

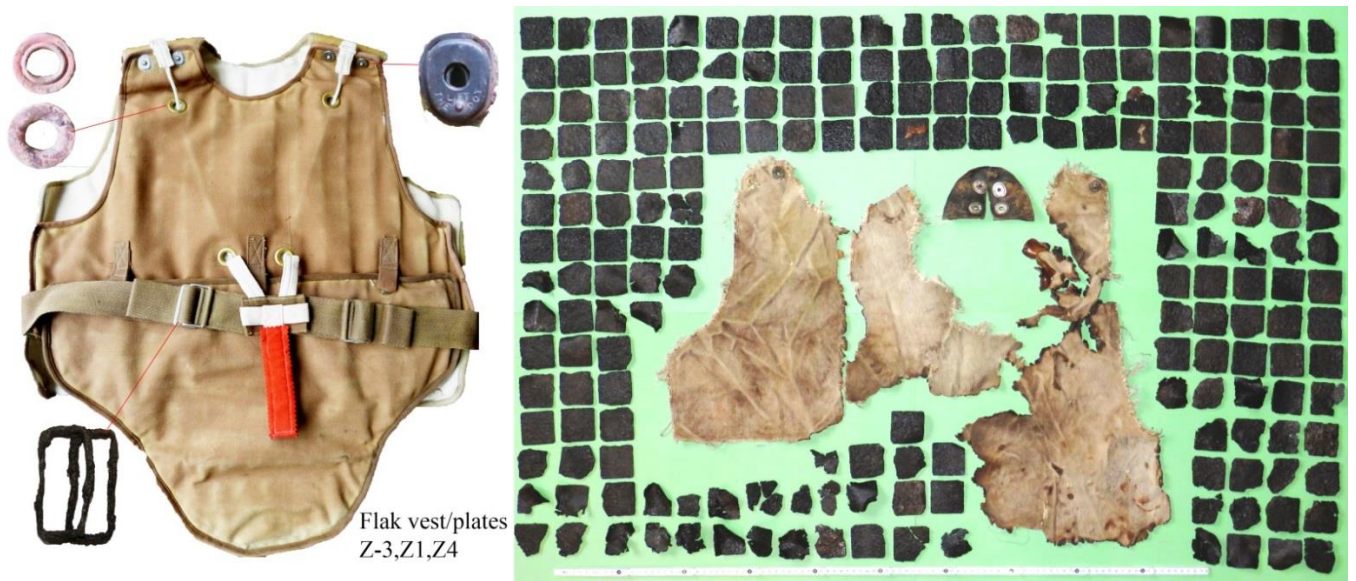
33



**ADAPTER-GUN END**  
ARMY TYPE L-1

Numerous fragments of Flexible feed chute for the .50s were scattered all over the 4 zones, this style is Lewis-Larson Type-A. Figure 33-3, Army/Navy Weapons, WWIIBRPG





Flak vest/plates  
Z-3,Z1,Z4

Figure 34-1, Flyers vest, M1. Web, WWIIBRPG

Also being picked up, are numerous flak plates in Zone-1, 3, and 4 along with parts of the vest. The majority (250+) plates are from Zone-3. These finds along with fragments of the dash from the cockpit, glove fragment, key engine parts, and pieces of instruments tell that pieces of the main cabin lay there, and therefore the main data plate of the aircraft could have been in the area; this would have provided a positive identity to the ship.

Ball Turret, built by Sperry and the K-4 Automated Gun Sight, components found amongst the debris where the aircraft first connected to the ground and began complete breakup



Ball Turret Section, found in Z-1

Figure 34- 2, Ball Turret Type A-2B or A-13A and fragments found, Web, WWIIBRPG

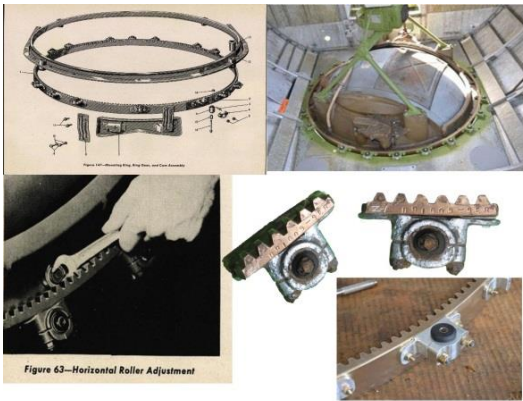
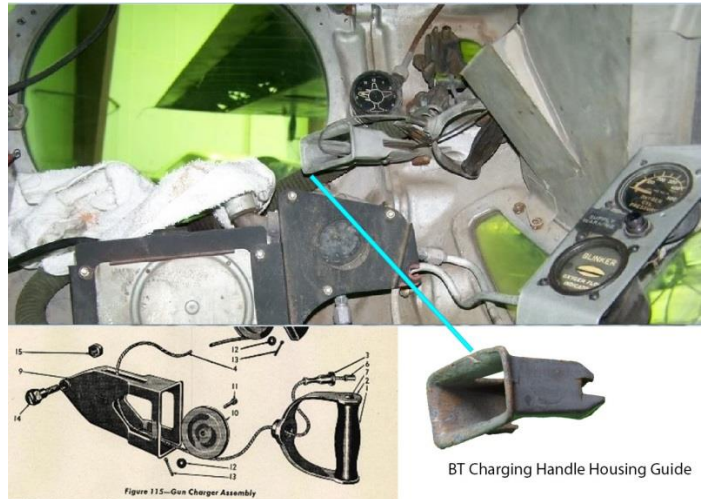


Figure 63—Horizontal Roller Adjustment  
Sperry Ball Turret Azimuth Ring/Gear and Lord Shock, Found Z-1 Sec D-11



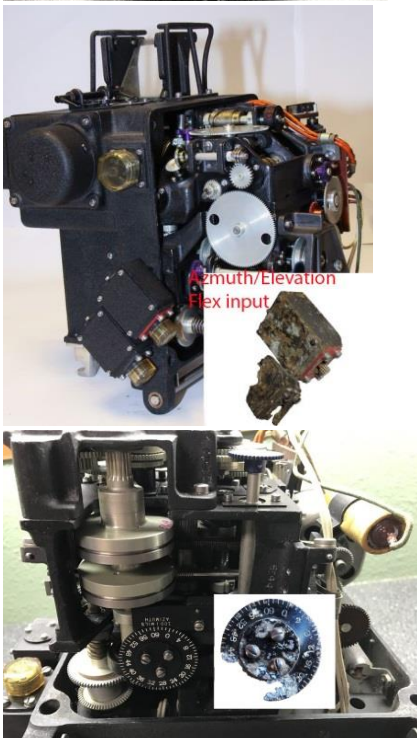
BT Charging Handle Housing Guide

Figure 35-1, web, WWIIBRPG

Figure 35-2, charging handle, Z-1, AN 11-45G-5, web, WWIIBRPG



35



BT Azimuth Gear Hand Crank, Z-1

Figure 35-4, WWIIBRPG

Figure 35-3, Ball Turret K-4 Automated Gun Sight, web, WWIIBRPG



Figure 36-1, Bomb shackle Type B7, 100 – 1100 pound bombs, WWIIBRPG

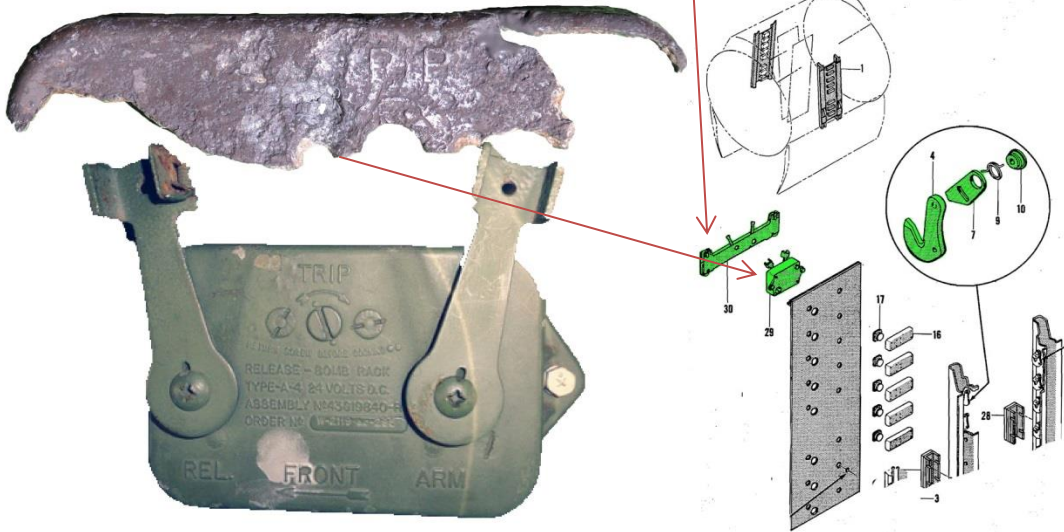


Figure 36-3, load hook, AN 01-20EG-04, WWIIBRPG

Figure 36-2, the electric bomb release switch, Type A-4, 24-volt, assembly No-43G19840-R. Web, WWIIBRPG

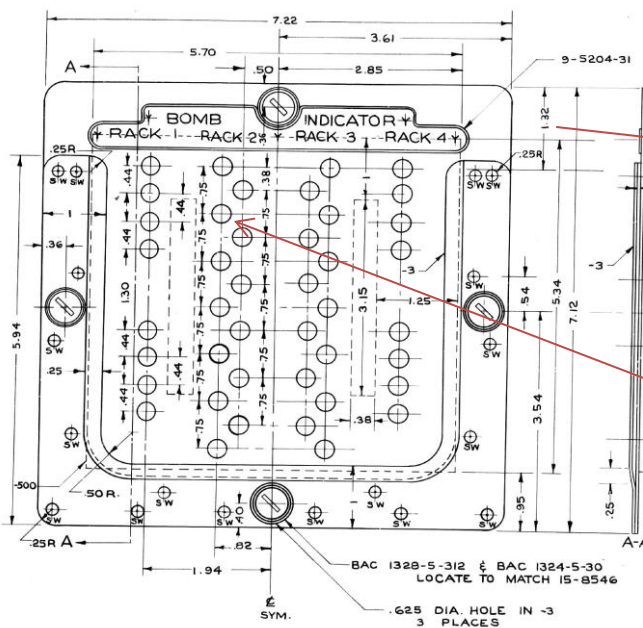


Figure 36-5, Bombardier station with the bomb load indicator. Zone-3. web. WWIIBRPG

Figure 36-4, Boeing Engineer sheet, 55-7351-1  
Copyright WWIIBRPG, 2020



Engines



There was a vast amount of engine debris. This shows the better parts found, as there is more, mainly fragments of piston cooling fins and supercharger casing. Items presented here represent ignition wiring, sparkplugs, intake pipe, valve covers, push-rod/covers, oil sumps, impeller fragments, many engine mount bushings, ring mounts, Stromberg carburetor parts, front crankcase cover, heat shroud, cowl mounts, cowl opening rod, piston block a piece of the piston head and more. Figure 37-1

37

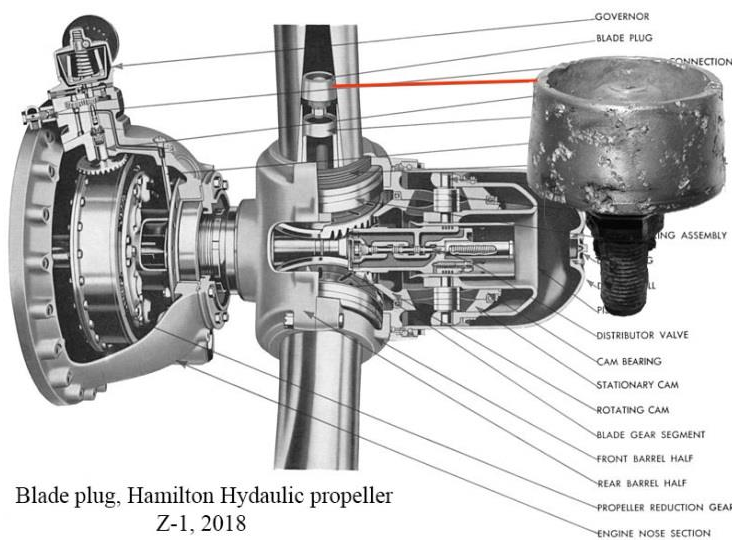


Figure 37-3, Engine mount, web, WWIIBRPG

Figure 37-2, a long-awaited mystery solved. Identified two Blade plugs, made by Hamilton Hydraulic Propeller maker, the plugs are part of the propeller pitch assembly. TO 01-20EF-2, WWIIBRPG Copyright WWIIBRPG, 2020

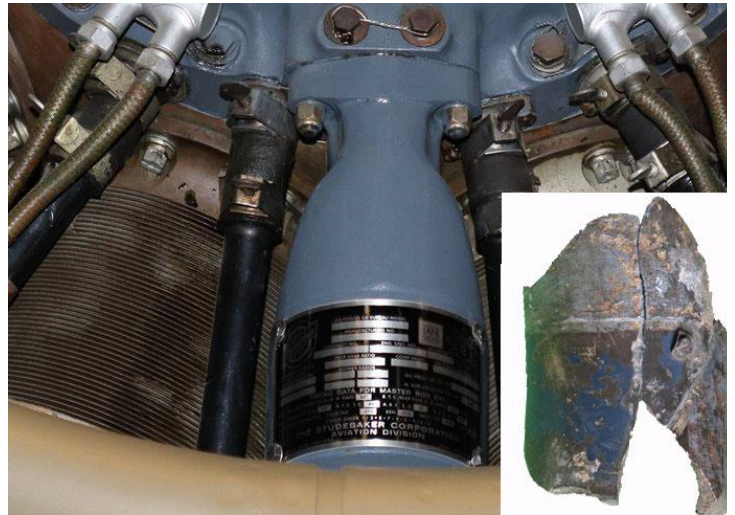
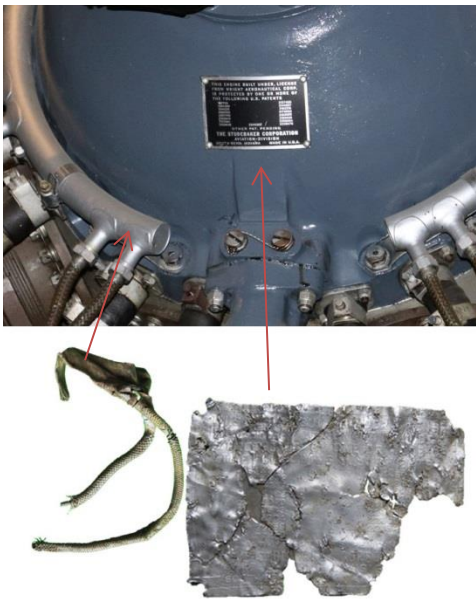


Figure 38-2, Engine oil sump between #5 and #6 cylinders, hot oil used by the engine, is then sent back to be cooled at the oil-cooler. For maintenance purposes, used oil could be purged here. Web, WWIIBRPG

Figure 38-1, The Patent plate listing all patent numbers for the engine, this data plate was found in 3 parts over a 2 month period and put back together, shown here is also shown a part of the ignition wiring harness. On the right is the engine oil sump, where the engine data information plate is and was located on this piece found. This data plate eventually found in 2019, but as mentioned did not match any listed in the MACR for 43-38911. Web, WWIIBRPG

38

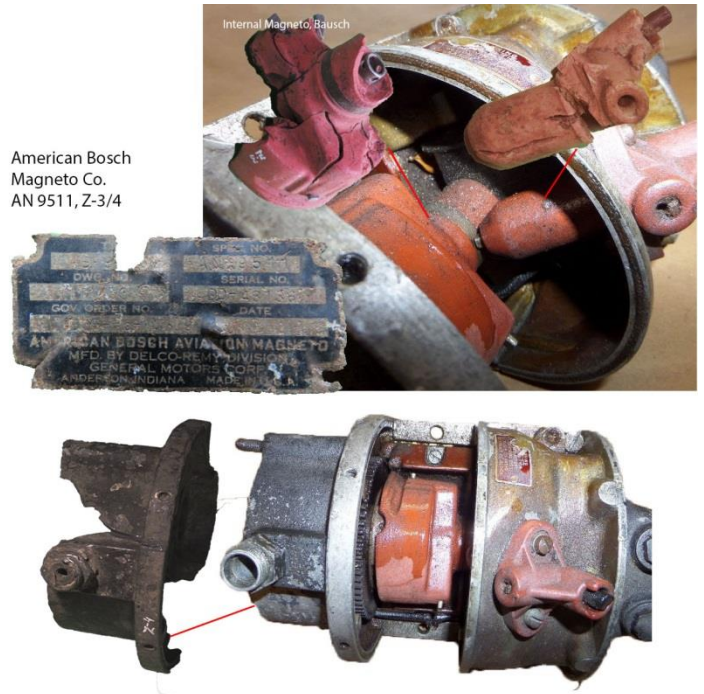


Figure 38- 3-4-5, Components of the engine include pieces of the Magneto, each engine had a left and right. The left magneto controls the firing of the rear spark plugs and the right controlling the front plugs. Web, WWIIBRPG



Figure 39-1, web, WWIIBRPG

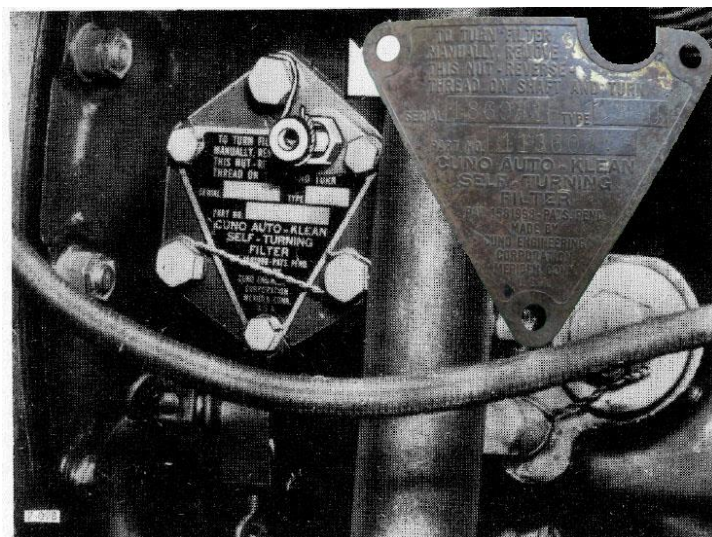


Figure 39-2, The Cuno oil filter screen, seen here is the cover for the filter. The data plate that was on the cover also provided guidance to changing out the filter screen, one has to wonder about the force it takes, to rip this plate away from the bolts with no damage, even as they were safety wired. B-17 Maintenance Engine Manual,

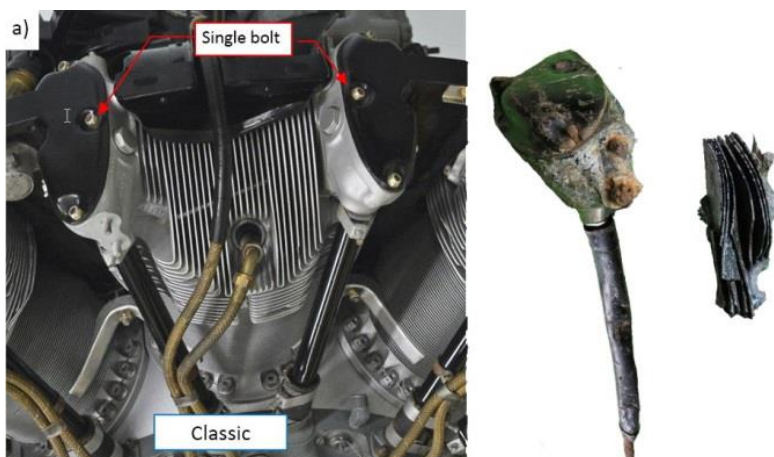


Figure 39-3, A composite of an engine part (right) to show where components articulate. A small example of one of the valve box with a cover connected to a push rod and a fragment of the center cooling fins. web, WWIIBRPG



Figure 40-1 showing several sparkplugs that were found along with ignition wiring. WWIIBRPG

Figure 40-2 is another composite made of the piston chamber, sparkplug, ignition wire, and intake.

Fig 41:

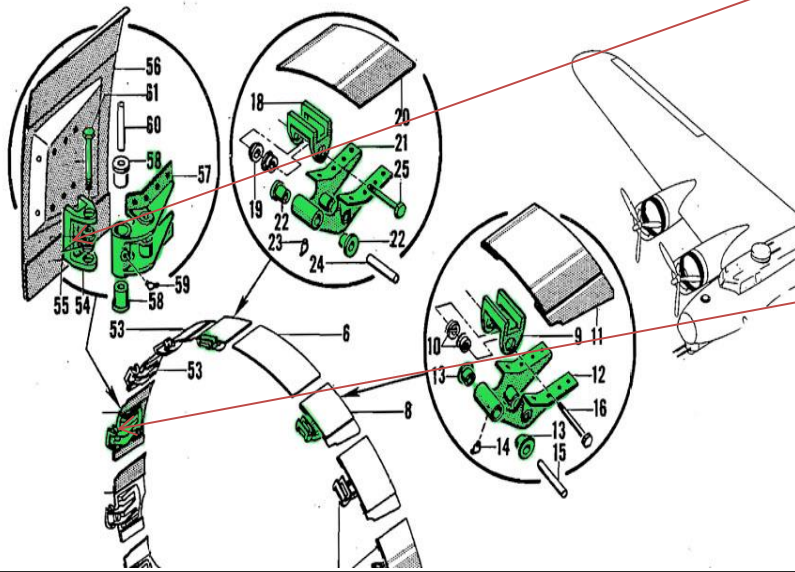


Figure 40-3, The cowl hinge assembly, the levers control the cowl flaps for opening or closing allowing cooler air in or keep it out, keeping the engine temperature stable during different altitudes. AN 01-20EG-4

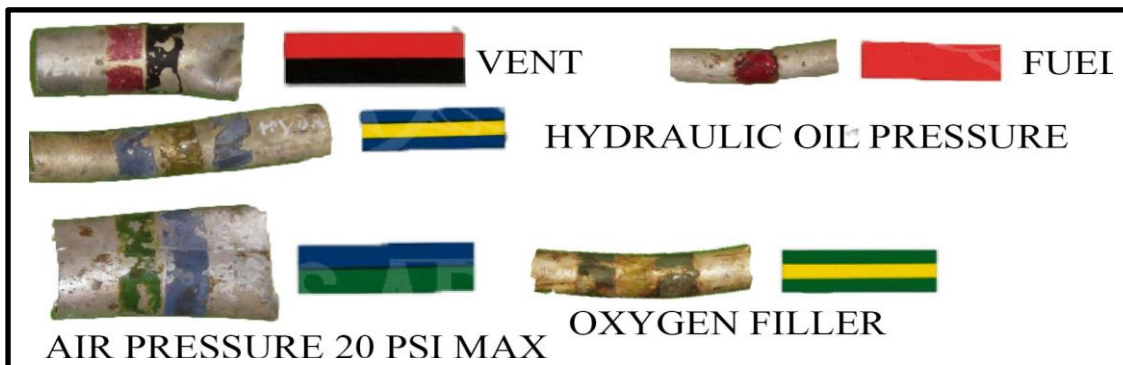


Figure 40-4, Miles of aluminum lines found throughout the plane, all have color-coding for maintenance to quickly chase down issues, and there are 24 different color schemes. Web, WWIIBRPG



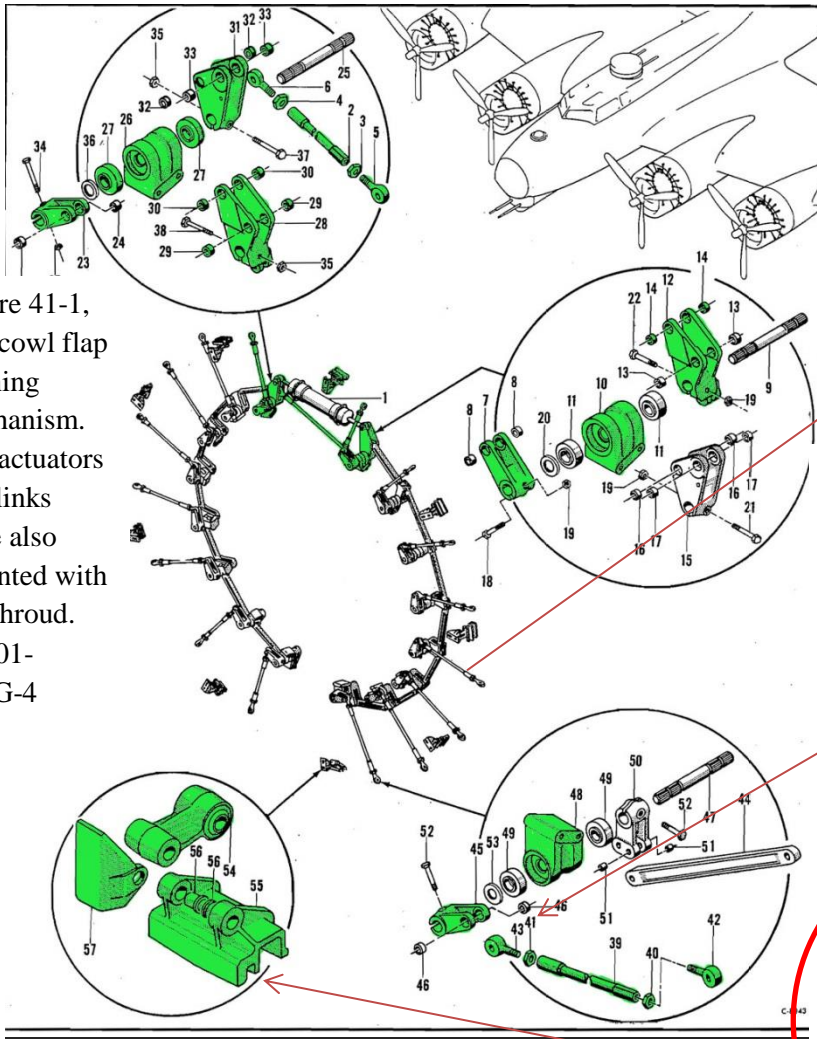


Figure 41-1,  
The cowl flap  
opening  
mechanism.  
The actuators  
and links  
were also  
mounted with  
the shroud.  
AN 01-  
20EG-4

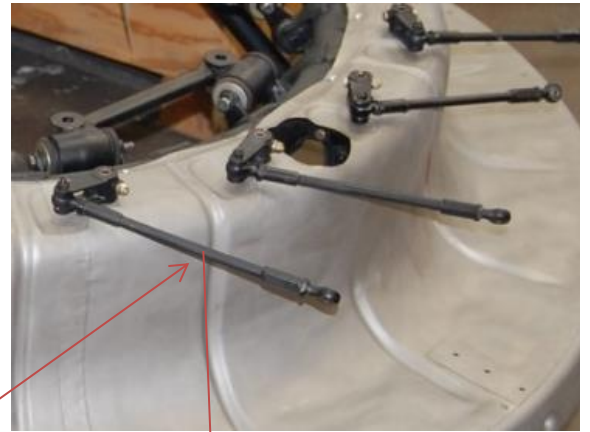


Figure 41-2, shroud, web

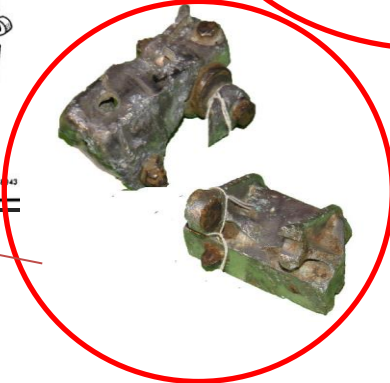
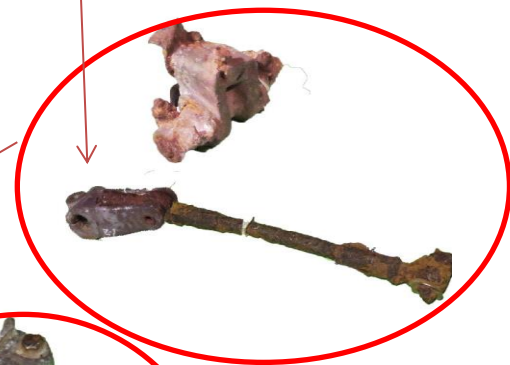


Figure 41-3,  
Engine mounts,  
Zone-1-4,  
WWIIBRPG

41



Figure 41-4,  
Found were  
more than a  
dozen of  
these quick  
fasteners for  
closing the  
segment  
cowl covers.  
On the left  
photo, the  
covers are  
off, web,  
WWIIBRPG



Figure 42-1, Push rods and covers above, to the left are valve rocker box covers, broken off are the extended wings that were on this version. Web, WWIIBRPG

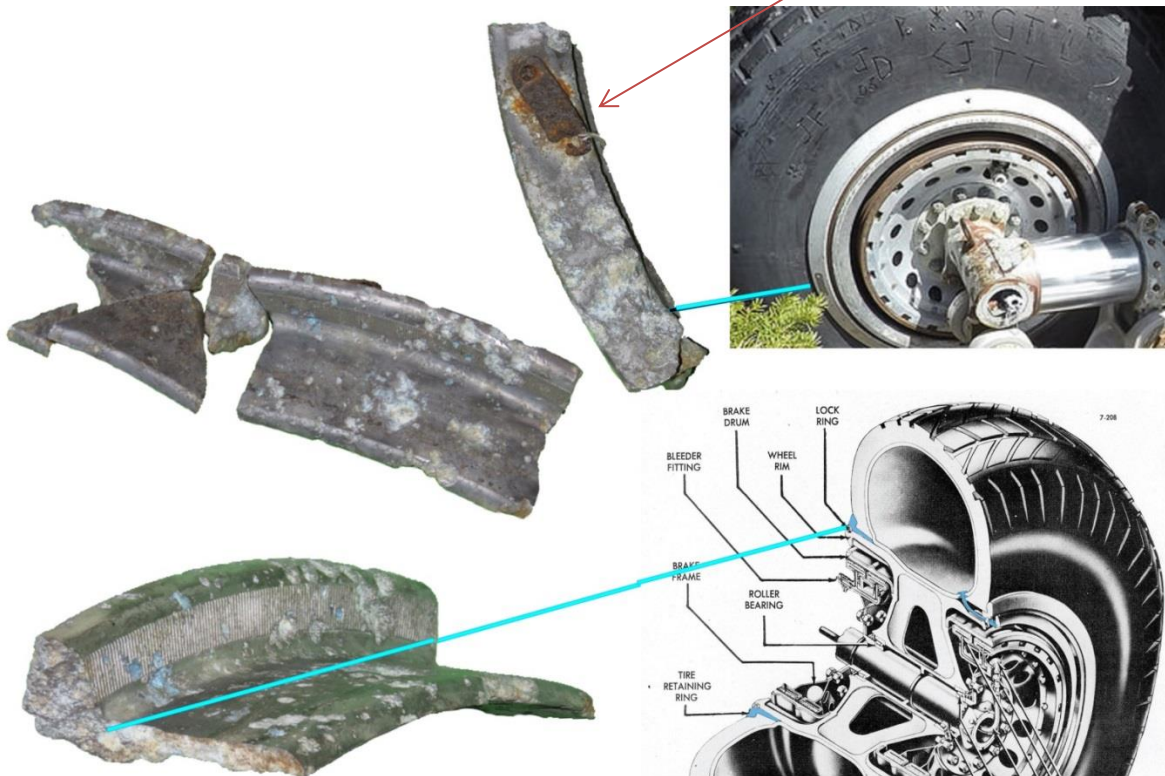
Figure 42-2, Internal engine parts found, here are some upper valve spring washers (PN 69271) and the Exhaust Rocker Arm (PN B9609), the latter compared to a new rocker



Figure 42-3, Three oil Sump pieces. This represents three different engines. Here in the squared area of the blue field is where the engine data plate attached. The complete sump is seen in Fig 39-2. WWIIBRPG

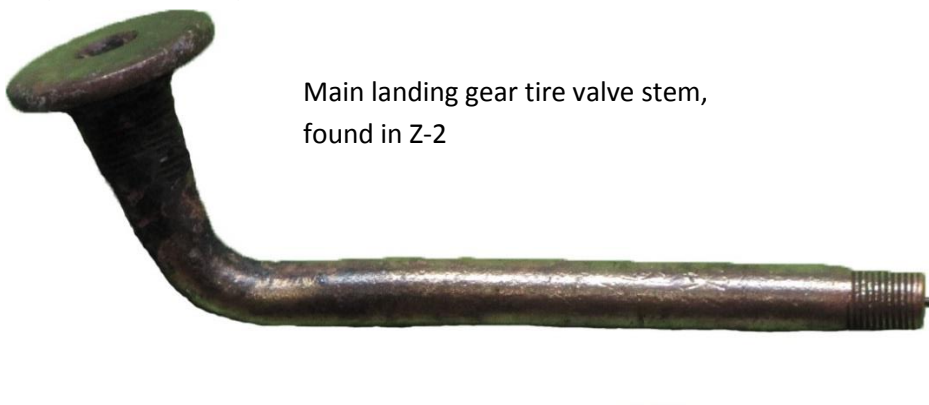
Landing gear

Fragments of the wheel rim from the main landing gear assembly. Pictured is the slippage mark on the rim, this mark must align with the mark on the tire, or it must be deflated and adjusted. This will show if the rubber tire has slipped off its mark after hitting the tarmac when landing so many times.



Lock Ring Rim LH Landing Gear, Z-1

Figure 43-1, AN 01-20EG-4, WWIIBRPG



Main landing gear tire valve stem, found in Z-2

Figure 43-2, The Schrader made valve stem.  
 from Wikipedia: The **Schrader valve** (also called the **American valve**) is a type of pneumatic tire valve used on virtually every motor vehicle in the world today. The Schrader company, for which it was named, was founded in 1844 by August Schrader. The original Schrader valve design was invented in 1891 and patented in the United States in 1893. WWIIBRPG

INSTRUMENTS, INDICATORS AND DATA PLATES

Cabin and Fuselage

Figure 44-1, IFF Radio Destruct box, Z-1, WWIIBRPG, web

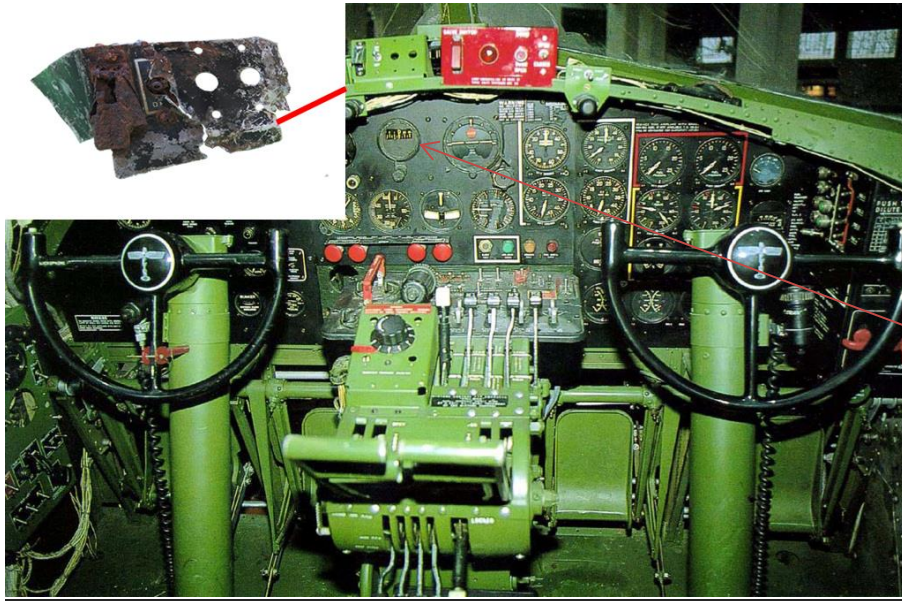


Figure 44-2, Morse code sheet (WWIIBRPG)



Figure 44-3, Fragment of the Directional indicator.

44



Figure 44-4, Co-pilot side of dash indicators, pieces found in Z-1, 3, web, WWIIBRPG

# BATTLEFIELD RESEARCH AND PRESERVATION GROUP

Figure 45-1, Fragments of the Co-Pilot side of instrument dash and some indicator lights. Here are 3 of 4 Fuel indicators, the carburetor temperature. Web, WWIIBRPG

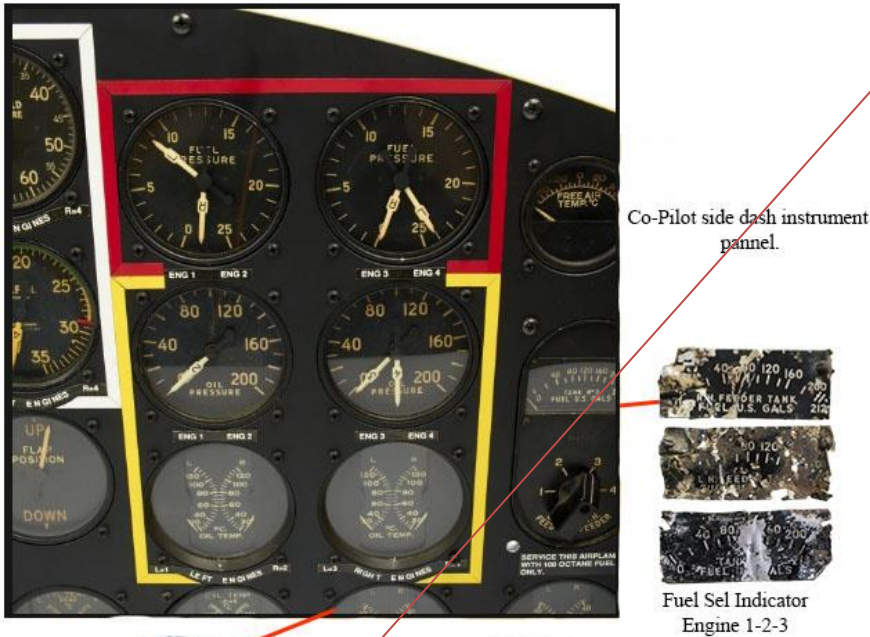


Figure 45-2, The BC-765 Switch Box is part of the SCR-595 Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) radio systems. In the event of potential capture of the aircraft by the enemy, the crew was to destroy the IFF system. Web,

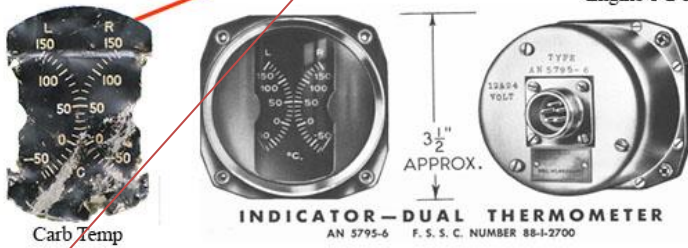


Figure 45-3, Radio Call plate, mounted on the dash in front of both pilots, WWIIBRPG

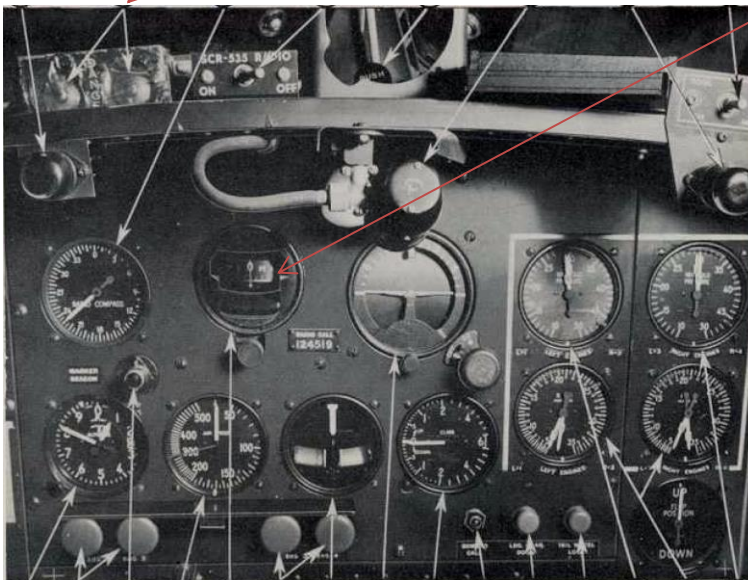


Figure 45-4, Pilots Manual, famerliarization

With a good fortune in June of 2020, the finding of the RADIO CALL plate solved the mystery of the identification as to the aircraft, therefore opening the flood gate of documentation and information about its mission. This plate is also located on the dash, just in front of the Pilot. The tag is stamped with the call

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number of the aircraft based on the serial number at the time the plane was being assembled in the factory, this one being aircraft # 44-6141, and the call plate showing 46141.

Figure 46-1, A fragment of the pilot side dash was found, but the data plate was not there, only the screw that held it. Web, WWIIBRPG

The data plate of the aircraft, if found will give 100% ID of the wreck.



Voltage meter



Gyro Directional Ind

Oxygen Ind  
Blinker



Bank and Turn Ind

46



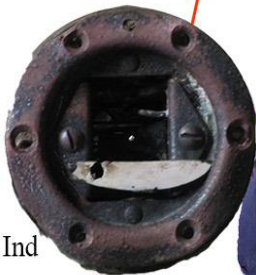
THE INTERNAL  
FLAPS I  
DO NOT  
BOMB RA



Altimeter



Oxygen Ind  
Blinker



Bomb release Lite



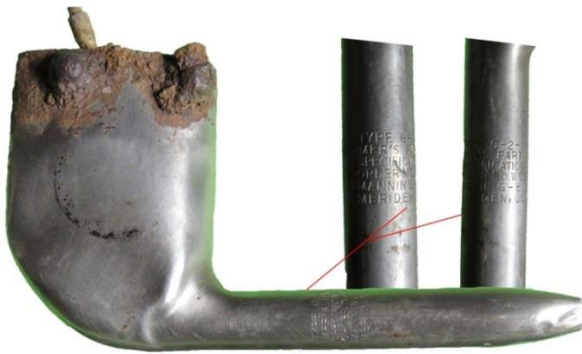
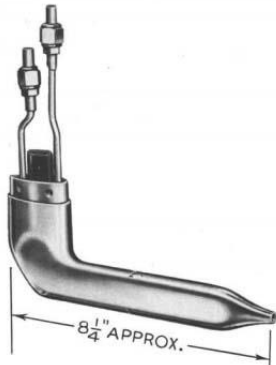


Figure 47-1, The speed pitot, used to indicate the aircraft's airspeed calculated with pressure values. Maintenance Manual, WWIIBRPG



**TUBE-PITOT-STATIC AIRSPEED**  
ARMY TYPE D-2 F. S. S. C. NUMBER 88-T-3310

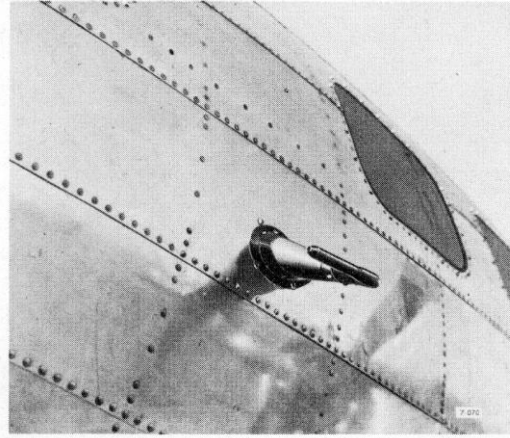


Figure 47-2,web



Figure 47-3, WWIIBRPG

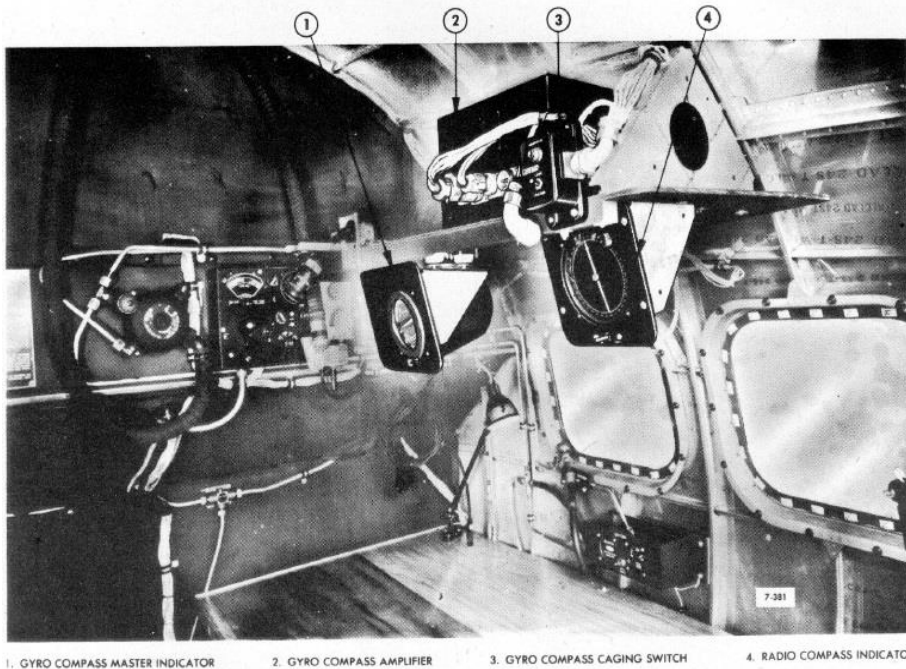


Figure 47- 3, Compass Indicator, I-82-A, of SCR-280-A & AN/ARN-7 System, Signal Corps US Army Radio was a component of the SCR-280-A and the AN/ARN-7 Radio Compass System. The radio compass, receiving a ground signal from a selected transmitter via its loop antenna mounted top or bottom of the fuselage (also called the football), provided directional indication (left or right) to the pilot and the navigator with respect to the source of the signal. The knob at the top right allowed the navigator to adjust for the desired course relative to the signal received from the radio compass. Handbook flight op and inst.

# BATTLEFIELD RESEARCH AND PRESERVATION GROUP

## Data Plates



Figure 48-1, Coll, WWIIBRPG



Controls



Figure 49-2, control cables, web

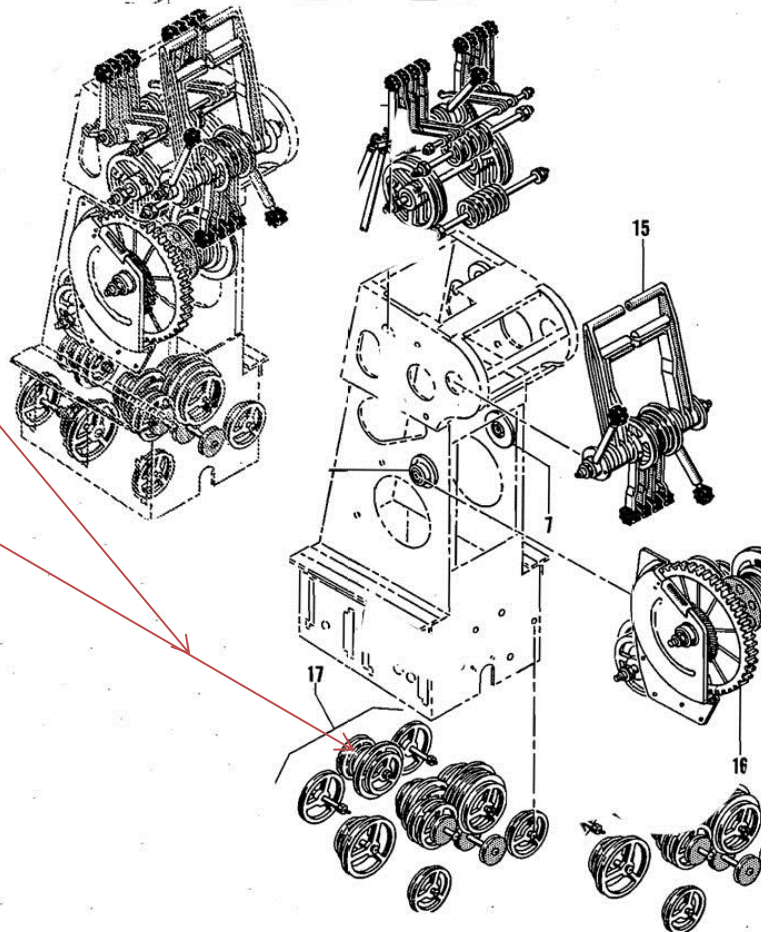


Figure 49-1, Throttle and Trim Tab controls, located in the center control stand, between the Pilot and Co-pilot. The pulleys here differ from the cable pulleys above and are made of aluminum instead of pressed Formica board. Also shown are a few cable connection joints, as shown in figure 49-2. WWIIBRPG, AN 01-20EG-4, web

Figure 49-3, Center Control Stand, AN 1-20EG-04

Figure 50-1, Rudder trim tab, found in Z-3, grid 13-L, AN 01-20EG-4, WWIIBRPG

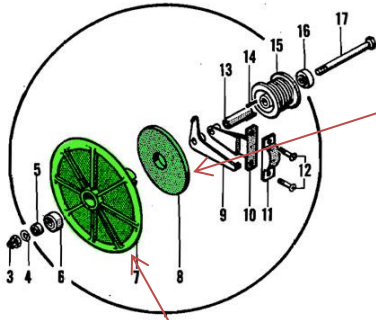


Figure 50-2, WWIIBRPG

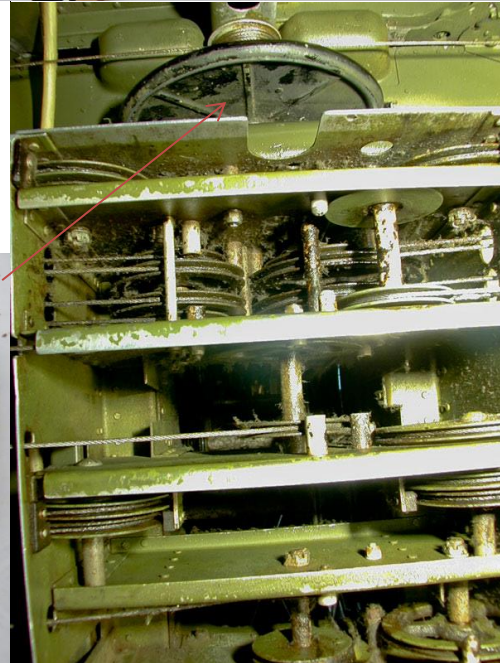
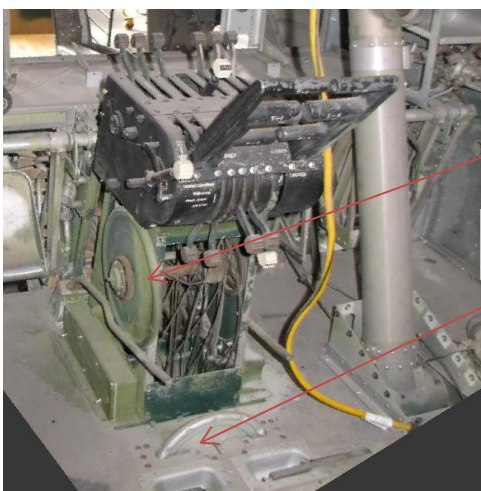


Figure 50-3,web

50



Elevator Trim tab

Rudder Trim Tab

Figure 50-4,web



Figure 50-5, Fragments of the Yoke "steering", WWIIBPRG

Fuel system

Figure 51-1-3, Fuel Bladder and strapping, web, WWIIBRPG



Figure 51-4 ,A profile photo of the self-sealing Fuel Bladder fragment, Z-3



Fuel Tank Control SW

Figure 51-5, Made by Gilfillan Bros, INC. Los Angeles Cal. WWIIBRPG, web

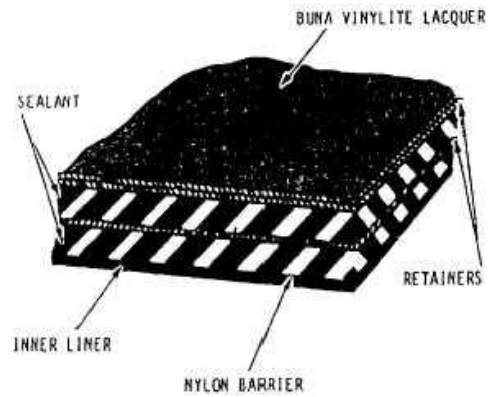


Figure 51-6, Bladder profile, web

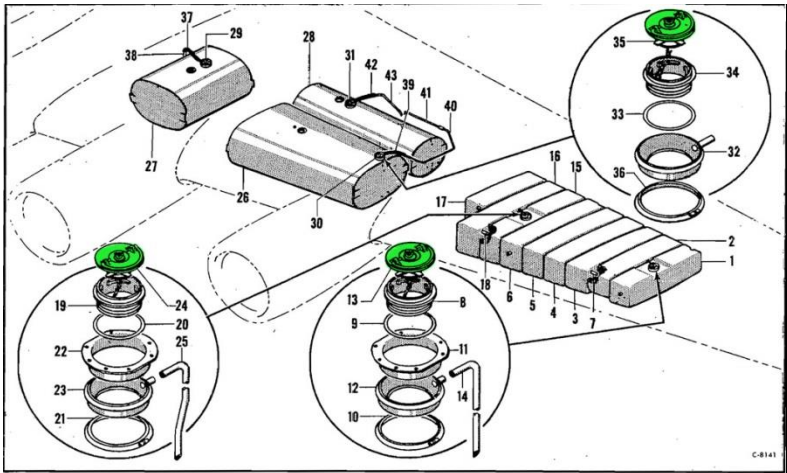


Figure 24—Wing Fuel Tanks



Figure 52-1, Fuel cap, Z-4, AN 01-20EG-04, WWIIBRPG

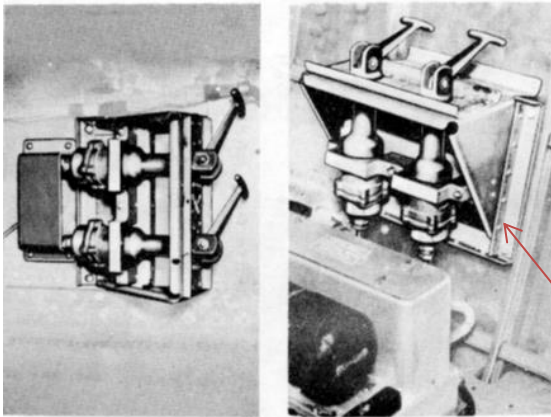


Figure 54—Tokyo Tanks Shut-off Valves (Type D-5 Valves—Late B-17G's)

6. TOKYO TANKS SHUT-OFF VALVES.

Remote control handles, operating shut-off valves in the lines from each group of outer wing fuel tanks, are mounted below the door at the aft end of the bomb bay. Refer to Section I, paragraph 4, for operating instructions.



Figure 52-2, Erection and Maintenance Manual

Figure 52-3, Tokyo tank handles, WWIIBRPG

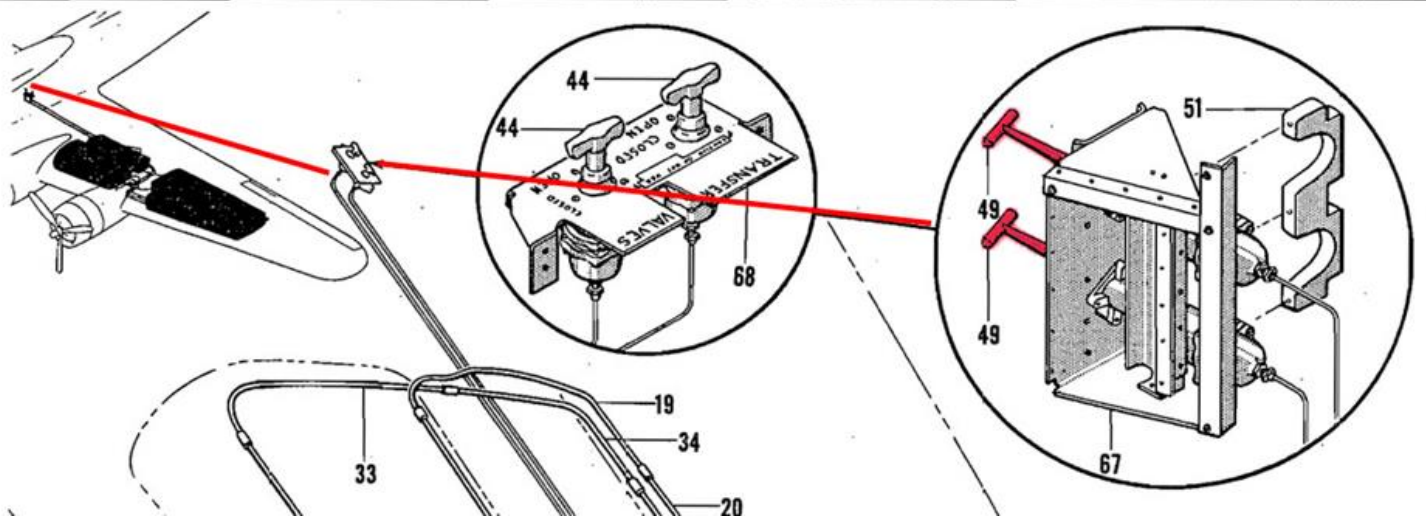
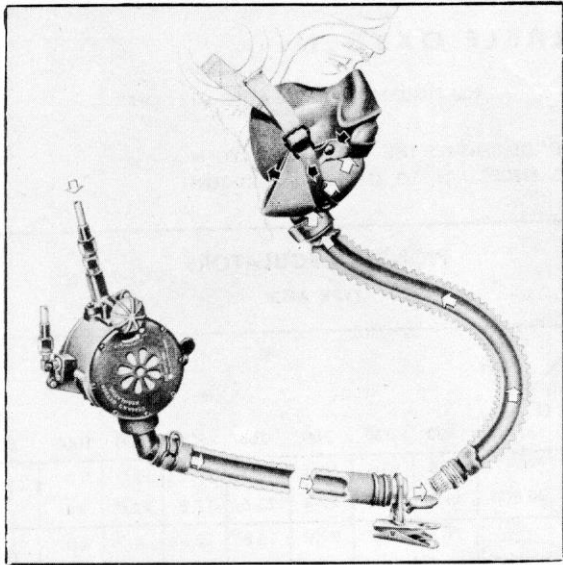


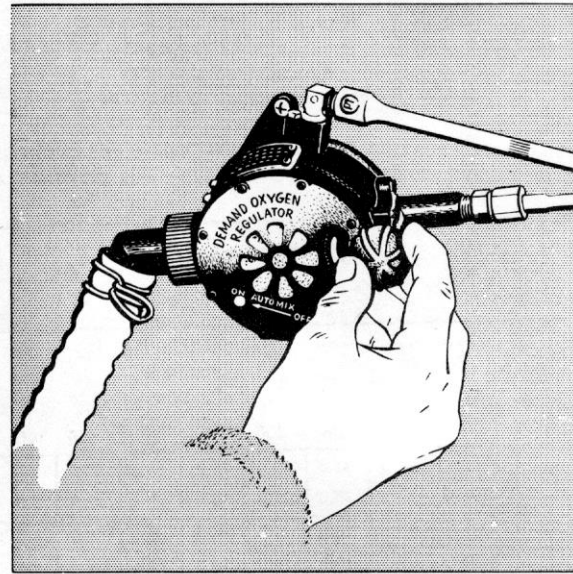
Figure 52-4, AN 01-20EG-4

Oxygen System



**Figure 13—Mask and Regulator**

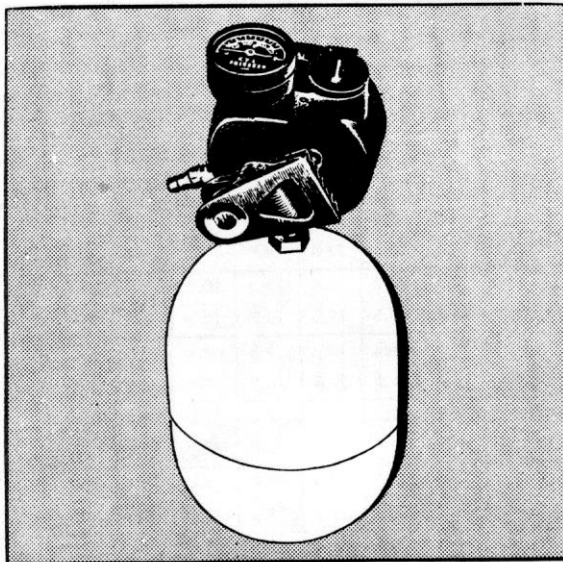
Each crew member has an oxygen mask and an A-12 demand regulator is placed at each crew station. The portable bottles also have regulators.



**Figure 15—Regulator**

When in "AUTO" the A-12 demand regulator supplies the proper mixture of air and oxygen. Altitude determines the percentage of oxygen.

53



**Figure 14—Portable Oxygen Bottle**

The portable oxygen bottles each have a mask hose coupling, a recharge valve, and an A-13 demand regulator with an attached suspension clamp.

*d.* USE OF OXYGEN EQUIPMENT.

- (1) Have your own mask which has been checked for fit by the oxygen officer.
- (2) Carry your bail-out cylinder charged to 1800 pounds.
- (3) Check to see that there is a portable "walk-around" unit at each station, filled to 400 pounds, and in working order.
- (4) Check system pressure before flight; it should be 400 pounds.
- (5) Check function of demand regulator in both "ON" and "OFF" positions. Flow gage should function when auto-mix is "OFF".
- (6) Check knurled collar on elbow connecting mask hose to regulator for tightness.
- (7) Open emergency valve to check flow; then close. This valve should not be open except in case of emergency.

Figure 53-1, Pilot familiarization manual



54

Figure 54-1, Oxygen Demand as seen in the Upper Turret station. Web, WWIIBRPG

Figure 54-2, \_A-14 Oxygen mask, Z-1, G-1. Web, WWIIBRPG

Safety Equipment

Figure 55-1, Walter Kidde Co Inc, 13-pound Fire Extinguisher, stock #4500-381924, (WWIIBRPG)

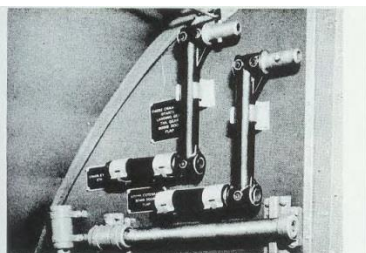


Figure 30 - Hand Cranks Stowed



Emergency hand crank, found Z-4 2018

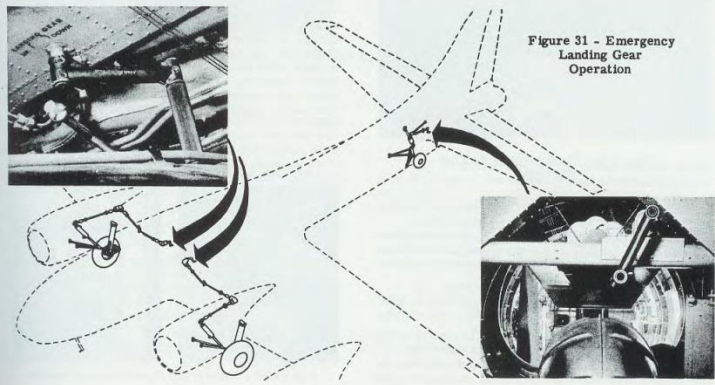


Figure 31 - Emergency Landing Gear Operation



Figure 55-2, Emergency Hand Crank .WWIIBRPG, Pilots manual



Figure 55-3, Compressed air release valve for Mae West Vest. Web, WWIIBRPG Copyright WWIIBRPG, 2020

Windows Plexiglas

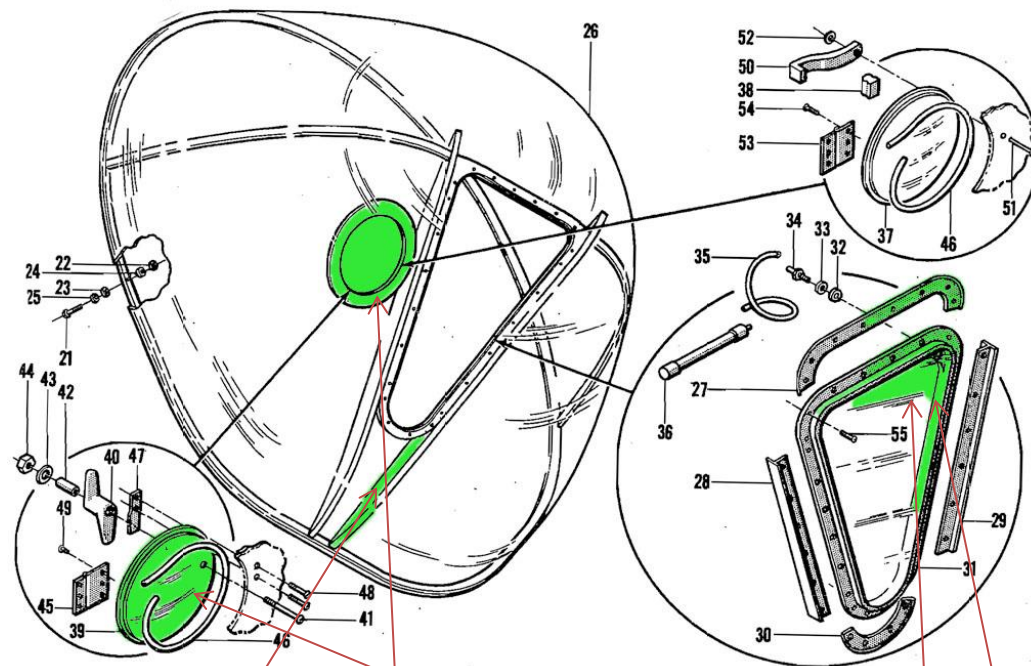


Figure 56-1. There were many pieces of Plexiglas and window frame/plastic found. Big thick pieces dubbed “ice cubes” probably came from the front nose section in front of the Bombardier station. The intriguing thing about Plexiglas and windows is, the feeling one gets as you see through a piece of the window that the crewmembers also last looked through. AN 01-20EG-4, WWIIBRPG

56





## Colors



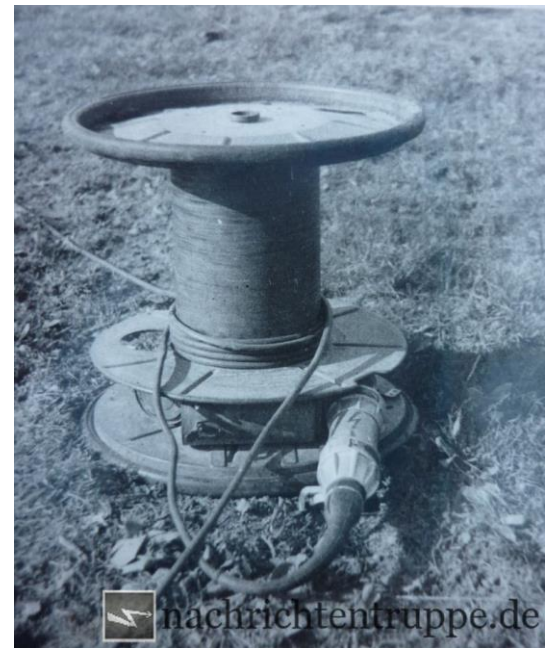
Figure 57-1, Several colors still clinging to the metal were found. Some red pieces appear to be bomb figures, most likely how many missions accomplished, according to records that would have been 64 since assigned to the 384<sup>th</sup>. Blue might come from the blue field with the star. There is also light blue, silver, and a mysterious mustard color, Squadron letters or camo?

Then there were a few warnings and cautions, these went in various places around the ship, inside and out.

## SOME ADDITIONAL FINDS, NON-WRECK LINKED

Although these are not associated with the wreck but contribute to the history of the battle around it. These objects were found in the zones, giving testament to the actions taken in and around the wreckage between December 1944 and January 1945.

Figure 58-1, Electrical connector, Z-4, web, WWIIBRPG



The German communications cable connector for power, called a Spulenmuffe - Pupinspule. Used by radio and spotlight teams to run up their equipment. Thanks to our German member and colleague Pascal for tracking down what this was, it was a mystery to both of us, as I was certain it did not belong to the aircraft, but was from the 40s and at the location, the Germans may have had a spotlight, radar or a communications team there?



Figure 58-2, German communication team deploying cabling. Web

# BATTLEFIELD RESEARCH AND PRESERVATION GROUP

One afternoon, a check of the field with a deep induction machine in hopes of finding something buried deeper began, maybe an engine or a .50 caliber machine gun was there so we could have something to identify the aircraft with. The survey began starting with walking the side of the field when a large signal sounded down the line, at first it was thought that there was a ground problem with the machine as nothing was expected in that area at the moment. Circling with another check of the ground, and again the machine indicated something. After digging down 45 centimeters a rust-colored ground showed, further checking revealed what looked to be an edge of something round. Having found a 500lb bomb in 2017 and other UXOs since caution lights went off. In 5 minutes, the mystery target was about to be identified; it was a 155mm artillery charge canister cover. Further recovery yielded 32 (37 kg) of them plus a couple of 155mm eyelet lifting plugs, also called “nose plugs” used to load the artillery shells on and off trucks or trailers.

Three weeks later, the same scenario as in Zone-4, this turned out to be 34 lifting plugs, weighing 38Kg. All items were donated to a local WWII club for displaying history. These may have belonged to an artillery unit assigned to the 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, pushing towards Clervaux end of January 1945.



Figure 59-1-2, WWIIBRPG

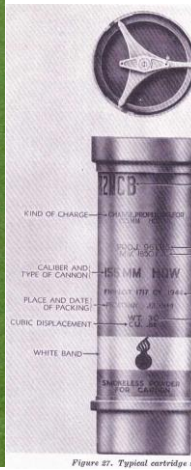


Figure 59. Typical cartridge case

Figure 59-3, a charge canister, Web



Figure 59-4, Found in an old trash site looking for engine parts, were this WWI canteen and mess top and WWII canteen cup. WWIIBRPG



Figure 59-5, M1 bayonet, found in the road bordering zone-4 may have been left behind by one of the field artillery men, or another unit doing recon for the 6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Group. WWIIBRPG



## INTEGRITY OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

While conducting scientific research is essential for shared human history, we have the utmost and profound respect for the heritage and culture preservation that goes with it. Respect for the land, both public, and private are imperative. The goal is to conduct research with full respect and cooperation with all parties of ownership. That said, the permission of private landowners through cadaster records, authorizations of permits with various government agencies and maintain heritage/historic integrity of the land is necessary. This statement has become a hallmark for the organization as previously mentioned.

WWIIBRPG is clearly aware and does not support trespassing without permission, or conducting illegal activities for monetary enrichment, non-historically motivated, or extraction of unexploded ordinance. There are always those out there that spoil it for all, leaving open holes, trash, or live ordnance laying around, not contacting the authorities, and souvenir hunting. We are in it for historical, heritage, and educational purposes, building on history, following scientific and operational protocols.

The Centre National de la Recherche Archéologique (CNRA) is always sought after and a primary resource for scientific guidelines and advice. As in the past, a pledge of full cooperation with, *landowners, Department of Forestry, Luxembourg Army SEDAL, Police, and US Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA)* is given.

We will do everything possible to ensure a modest profile and that all work is treated sensitively and confidential. In the case when munitions are discovered, the SEDAL team is called, and when evidence of remains are found, the police are the first contact, and procedures are initiated, followed by notifying DPAA if judged to be an American MIA. Contacting the community leadership and property owners always follows suit. We make every effort to maintain a discreet approach to public information getting out in the interest of all parties.

We express great appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Luxembourg for this opportunity and continued support for such important research activities and the chance that we may bring closure to grieving American families.

Patrick L. Murphy  
President, World War II Battlefield Research and Preservation Group  
G.D. Luxembourg

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As with any battle or war, a successful campaign is centered on a well thought out plan, this accompanied by leadership, training, and equipment united with good morale, motivation, and commitment of the armed forces involved. This case was a success as the identification is settled and now the story unfolds as to how the plane came to be on the location. A good deal of acknowledgment, appreciation, and well-deserved gratitude to all involved with this mission closure. As stated earlier, the bigger picture is still in process; to find the location of 43-38911 and recovery of two MIA Stephen P. Wulderk and Michael Holowaty, bringing final closure to both families after 75 years of dark emptiness.

I will try to cover as many people involved as possible that I interacted with that had a contribution. For first off I have to give my wife Edith a huge credit and thanks for putting up with my absence from the house for almost 4 months every summer, bringing me meals, resupplying the coolers, assisting in running the camp, and keeping it livable. She kept me in check when it was burning out from working until 03:00 – 04:00 so many nights when it was too hot to work days, and making sure, I did not become zombie spending hours into the morning on the computer getting the writing side done. I want to also thank my brothers in arms, Le Service de Déminage de l'Armée Luxembourgeoise (SEDAL), who I can count on whenever I call them and who have taught me much about unexploded ordinance (UXOs). Bless our two good friends taken from us too soon, L'adjudant-major Luc Dernelen and l'adjudant-chef Mike van de Berg in an accident, 14 February 2019. Gratitude to Paul Schroeder, Secretary, and Mayor Marcel Thomas of the Wincrange Community leadership. Thanks to Weicherdange history buff Guy Diederich for supplying great information on location, and details pertaining to events of the salvage recovery and local links. To my friend and fellow researcher John Dernelen, who without his research I would not even, have known about the wreck, as well as a driving force for where else to search. A huge thanks to my US side, WWIIBRPG member and stateside records researcher, Marilynn Rustand-Lieurance, daughter of Hanford "Rusty" J. Rustand, pilot of B-17 PARD, whose aircraft crash site I located in 2016, she has been a tsunami for getting archive material and contacts for Bassingborn and an expert editor. Big thanks to all family members of Bull Session contacted, and contributed personal input and insight on their brothers, uncles, and fathers who perished on 14 January 1945. Thanks to mom, Judy Murphy, that kept chipping away at Ancestry to hunt down connections to family members. To Mike Boehler of Luxembourg, Pascal Neuberger who is a go-to man for both data and resource on the web and provides another view on technical aspects of objects and theories, my friend Maurice Majerus –our drone pilot for super pictures and video of the search area. A big thanks to Henri Krischler and his family for aiding in details about the area and insight on artifacts found near Eselborn. Thanks to brothers in arms of the US Air Force Historical Research Agency. Thanks to the following organizations; the Nondestructive Inspection Unit on Spangdahlem AB, DPAA, ABMC, the Clervaux Military Museum, Patton Museum, W.W.II 385th Bomb Group Museum Perlé for allowing photos and comparison of objects, Andre Schoellen at the Centre National de la Recherche Archéologique (CNRA). A very big thanks to all property proprietors Schroder-Marianne, Meyers-Meisch Claude, Shanks-Steve, La Fabrique D'Eglise, Weicherdange, Lutgen-Nico, Sheckes-Romain, and numerous farmers who own the fields and forest parcels.

The primary mission to find 43-38911 is ongoing, and many of these people are still actively involved, we will solve this and bring home our lost heroes and bring well-deserved closure to the families.

## RESEARCH RESOURCES ANNEX - II

### Online sites

384th Bombardment Group (Heavy) in World War II website  
Boeing Flying Fortress Registry (2), data compiled by Joe Baugher  
LE GÉOPORTAIL NATIONAL - aerial photo and map of Luxembourg.  
Fold3 Research, Black and White and Color Photographs of US Air Force Personnel World War II  
Fold3 Research, Personnel files, draft records  
NARA, German KU files, Kampfflugzeug Unterlagen (combat aircraft documentation) “Abschließende Meldung über Anfall von Luftwaffe-Feindgerät und gegnerischen Flugzeugbesatzungen” RG-242  
The Luftwaffe Archives & Records Reference Group  
Wikipedia  
<https://www.boeing.com/history/products/b-17-flying-fortress.page>  
Vintage flying helmets  
Aviation Resources. tom.pilsch.com  
Aircraft Spruce & Specialty Company  
American phenolic Corp 1943 Amphenol connectors’ cables  
Amphenol catalog "Quality Components for Radio and Electronics" Courtesy of Chuck McGregor  
USASC-USAAS-USAAC-USAAF-USAF Military Aircraft Serial Numbers--1908 to Present,  
<http://www.joebaugher.com>  
Smithsonian NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM  
7tharmdiv.org  
Hangarthirteen.org/parts-drive/auxiliary-equipment  
Shootaviation.com  
coulthart.com  
worldwarphotos.info  
digital.nmla.metoffice.gov.uk  
Pinrest.com  
Flicker.com  
USMilitariaForum.com  
RadioMuseum.org  
Worthpoint.com  
aafradio.org  
44thcollectorsavenue.com

### In addition:

John Derneden;  
“CRASH” band I, 1999, B-17, 14 January 1945, Weicherdange “Gerbranntebierg” pg238.  
“CRASH” band II, 30/11/44, B-17 Weicherdange, pg250, and pg. 245 30-11-44 Weicherdange,  
“Gebranntebierg”  
E.T. Melcher’s BOMBENANGRIFFE AUF LUXEMBOURG IN ZWEI WELTKRIEGEN,  
pg. 280, 30-11-44, Eselborn, “Wolfshof”  
Musée de la Bataille des Ardennes Clervaux  
General Patton Museum, Eittlebruck  
W.W.II 385th Bomb Group Museum Perlé

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## Military Technical Orders and Catalogs

Operation, Bendix Turret, Bendix Corp.  
Parts Catalog, B-17G US Air Force Series AN 01-20EG-4  
AEROL .PARTS catalog FOR THE BOEING B-17, BOMBARDMENT AIRPLANE, MAIN LEG  
LANDING GEAR  
AN 01-20EG-2 Erection and Maintenance Instructions for B-17G  
Aeronautical Equipment Turrets  
Mechanics Notebook B-17F, 22 November 1943  
T.O. 01-20EF-1 Pilot's Flight Operating Instructions for B-17F and G  
Bendix 11-45AA-1 Chin Turret  
11-45G-1 Hand Book Instructions Ball Turret  
Aeronautical Equipment Oxygen Miscellaneous  
Instruction Book Wright Cyclone 9 Aircraft Engine  
Parts Catalog for Wright Cyclone Aircraft Engines  
Firestone War product Catalog  
Index of Army Aeronautic Equipment, vol 5,6,8 9  
Index of Army Aeronautic Equipment, Landing gear  
Training Manual, .50 cal M2  
C1 Auto Pilot Manual  
Instrument Flying with Radio Aids  
Instrument Flying without Radio Aids  
Handbook of Maintenance instructions, Interphone Equipment, RC-34, 35, 35-Z, 36 and 51.  
Radio Manuals  
- Radio Sets 522-A542-A  
- Radio Rcvr BC 224A TO 08-10-24  
- EO 35AB-5BC348-2C  
- AN 16-40BC224-3 21-Sep-51  
- AN 08-30ARC3-2 20-Dec-44  
- AN 08-10-209 1-Mar-44 Radio Rcvrs  
- AN 08-10-94 19-Aug-43-SCR 578A-B  
Handbook of Instructions with Parts Catalogs, For Hydraulically Operated Propellers, Models A642S-E, E1  
Pilots-Manual-for-Boeing-B-17-Flying-Fortress  
Identification and Assembly parts landing gear  
1943 B 17E parts catalog  
Familiarization Manual B-17F  
B-17F Flying Fortress, British Model IPC (Interchangeable Parts list)  
B-17 IPL (Interchangeable Parts list)  
Direction Gyro Horizon Turn and Bank, Army Type A-3

## Official Records

The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration  
The American Battle Monuments Commission: ABMC Burials and Memorials  
US Air Force Historical Research Agency  
Micro Film Reel 91<sup>st</sup> Bomber Group, 92 Bomber Group  
XIX Tactical Air Command- Third US Army After Action report, January 1945  
3rd Army After Action Report, Ardennes Offensive, January 1945  
After Action Reports, A/B Company, 25th Armored Engineers, 6th Armored Division

After Action Reports, 50th Armored Infantry Battalion

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Unit History of the 68th Tank Battalion, 6th Armored Division  
Unit History, Combat Command B "CCB", 6th Armored Division  
After Action Reports, 26th Infantry Division, January 1945  
Unit History of the 328th Infantry regiment, 26th Division  
After Action Reports, 2nd Battalion, 110th Regiment, 28th Division  
After Action of 6th Cavalry Group 1945 January  
35th Signal Company After Action reports, 35th Division, January 1945  
60th Engineer Combat Battalion After Action Reports January 1945  
110th Medical Battalion After Action Report January 1945  
127th Field Artillery Battalion After Action reports, 1945 1 January thru 31  
161st Field Artillery Battalion After Action Reports, 1945 1 January thru 31  
216th Field Artillery Battalion After Action Reports, 1945 1 January thru 31  
219th Field Artillery Battalion After Action Reports, 1945 1 January thru 31  
320th After Action reports 1945 January  
134th Regimental After Action Reports, 35th Division, January 1945  
137th Regimental After Action reports, 35th Division, January 1945  
134th Infantry Regiment Morning Reports, January 1945  
Missing Air Crew Report (MACR), 11772  
J2 POW/MIA Accounting Agency, Casualty Report, May 2007  
Individual Air Craft Record, Boeing Seattle, the record of 43-38911  
91st Bomber Group Morning report, 14 January 1945  
FOY burial list+X.PDF  
HENRI CHAPPELLE UNK FILES CHARGED TO MEM DIV.PDF  
xFiles Neuville En Condroz Liege Belgium.PDF  
N-AGRS-Neuville Cem Sec C-E-Y.PDF  
Disposition Instruction-QMCG345-1946-11-14, US Army Graves Registration  
Daily Weather Reports, 1 January -31 march 1945, Air Mistry Metrological Office