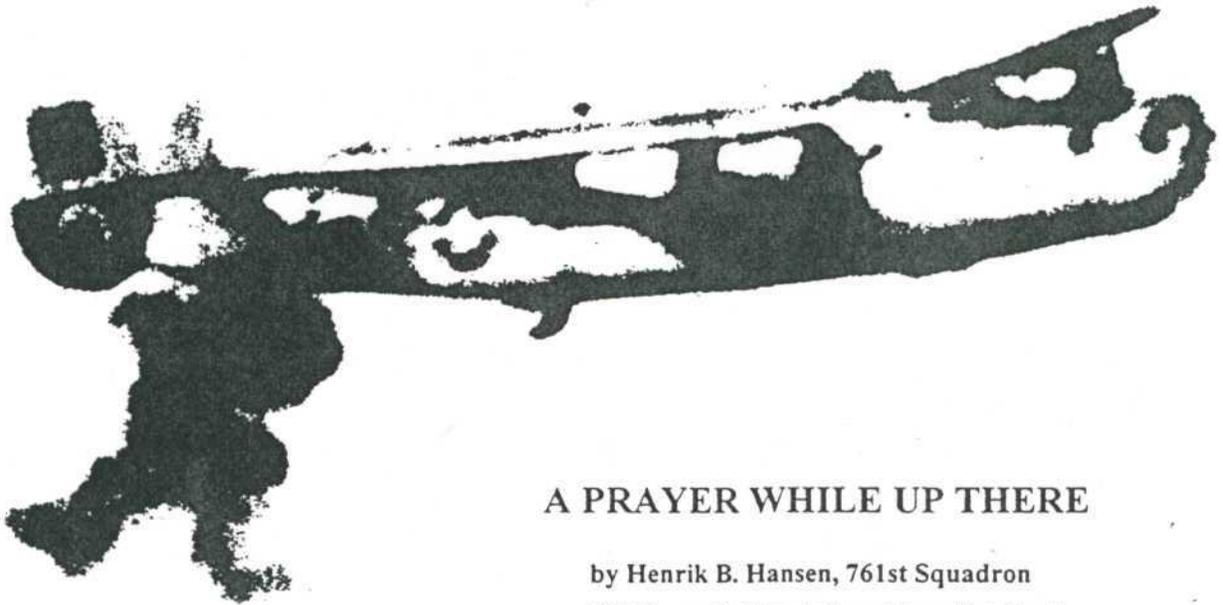


DATES AND LOCATIONS

1939 summer Caddied at the Canajoharie Country Club
 1940 summer part time job at Plancks grocery got drivers license
 1941 June graduated from CHS
 summer worked at A & P grocery store as stock clerk etc
 Sept started work in Beech Nut as mail clerk
 Dec 7 attack on Pearl Harbor by Japan Start of WW II
 1942 Mar 30 18th birthday
 Dec 10 Received notice from draft board to appear for physical Passed and sworn in
 1943 Jan 25 Received notice from draft board to report for active duty at Ft Plain 30 Jan
 Jan 30 sent by train in contingent of draftees to Camp Upton Long Island
 Feb 8 sent by train from Camp Upton to Miami Beach
 Mar 8 sent by train from Miami Beach to Buckley Field Colo
 May 3 sent from Buckley Field (Denver) to Lowry Field (Denver)
 Jul 3 sent from Lowry Field to Buckingham Field
 Sept 15 sent from Buckingham Field to Salt Lake AAB Utah
 Sep 24 sent from Salt Lake to Clovis Air Base New Mexico
 sent from Clovis Air Base to Chatham Field Ga
 sent from Chatham Field Ga to Mitchell Field NY (got 15 day delay in route went
 1944 Jan 22 my Pilot signed receipt for our new B-24 aircraft. We flew from Mitchell home
 to West Palm Beach and on to Trinidad to Dakar Brazil to North Africa to Tunis
 sent to Bari Italy alone from Army Hospital in Tunis to rejoin my crew
 Mar 30 first mission with my crew didn't amount to much
 Apr 3 second mission to Yugoslavia 5 hrs assigned to new crew
 Apr 6 third mission to Yugoslavia
 Apr 13 fourth & fifth missions to Hungary aircraft plant. Dangerous missions counted
 Apr 16 6th mission to Romania to support Russian troops twice
 Apr 23 7th & 8th missions to Weiner Airdrome
 Apr 29 9th mission to bomb harbor installations in Toulon France. Ran out of fuel and
 Apr 30 10th mission to marshalling yards at Castel Maggiore landed in Corsica Ita
 May 2 11th mission to bomb Parma marshalling yards in Italy
 May 13 12th mission to bomb marshalling yards at Modena Italy
 May 17 13th mission to bomb Piombino marshalling yards
 May 18 14th & 15th missions to bomb oil refineries at Ploesti (dangerous mission)
 May 22 16th mission to Valmontone Italy
 May 23 17th mission to Valmontone
 May 24 18th & 19th missions to Austria
 May 25 20th mission to bomb marshalling yards at Amberien France
 May 27 21st mission bomb marshalling yards at Nines France
 May 31 22nd & 23 missions to oil refineries at Ploesti
 Jun 2 24th & 25th missions to Romania
 Jun 5 26th mission to marshalling yards at Faenza Italy
 Jun 6 D Day 27th & 28th missions to Ploesti oil fields
 Jun 9 29th & 30th missions to Munich Germany motor works
 Jun 13 31st and 32nd mission to Milbertshofen ord nance works
 Jun 23 33rd and 34th missions to oil installations in Romania
 Jun 25 35th mission to oil refinery at Sete France
 Jun 30 36th and last mission to oil refinery in Germany. Shot down and taken prisoner
 at lake Balantone Hungary by german army soldiers
 1945 May 2 rescued by British Army and released from POW camp
 Jun left LeHarve France to America by ship
 Aug 4 married
 Oct 1 discharged from the Army





A PRAYER WHILE UP THERE

by Henrik B. Hansen, 761st Squadron

(Written on his 19th mission, at the radio table of
"Southern Belle", en route to Sete, France, 12 Aug 44)

What do you think about up there,
When you're soaring through the air?
What are your thoughts, when front and back,
Flak, in puffs, is bursting black?

I wonder if you feel as I,
When riding 'cross that flak-filled sky?
I say this prayer for plane and crew:
"Oh, Lord, our Father, see us through,

"Thy will be done. If thou seeist fit,
Let us emerge from this hell unhit.
May we return to fly again,
Till men are free, we pray, Amen."



OUTFIT

15th U. S. Army Air Force
460 th Bombardment Group (H) activated at Clovis AAB NM 29 May 1943
760 th Squadron

AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

U.S Army Technical School (Aircraft Armorer (Bombardment) course) 19 June 1943
AIR MEDAL (3 times)
GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL
AMERICAN CAMPAIGN MEDAL
EUROPEAN _ AFRICAN MIDDLE EAST CAMPAIGN MEDAL WITH 3 BRONZE STARS
WW II VICTORY MEDAL
PRISONER OF WAR MEDAL
PURPLE HEART

PROMOTIONS

Private to Private First Class (PFC) 8 Mar 43
PFC to SGT May 43
SGT to S SGT

1944 GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS

14 July 44 Telegram to Ralph Stevens Reported missing in action 30 June 44 over
15 July 44 War Dept letter to Ralph Stevens confirming telegram etc Austri
23 July 44 War Dept letter to Ralph Stevens said MIA over Hungary not Austria
11 Aug 44 Hq Army Air Forces letter To Ralph Stevens more info on missing plane &
8 Sept 44 War Dept letter to S W Planck reply to your ltr no new info airmen
23 Sep 44 Telegram to Mrs Ralph Stevens info from Red Cross says he is a POW
13 Oct 44 Hq Army AF letter to Ralph Stevens can now release info on crew
30 Sep 44 Provost Marshal ltr to Ralph Stevens Wounded and POW place unknown
20 Oct 44 Provost Marshal ltr to Ralph Stevens transfer to Stalag Luft 4
12 Jun 45 Telegram from Don to parents from Camp Kilmer- said be home in 4 or 5
12 Dec 44 Hq Army AF ltr to Ralph Stevens reply to Mrs Stevens ltr 4 Dec 44^{days}
said he is now a POW No 6692 in Stalag Luft 4 in Germany

Veteran receives medals 40 years after WW II

By Matt Shanley
C-S-E news writer

CANAJOHARIE — Forty years is a long time to wait for anything.

But the wait came to an end March 21 when Donald C. Stevens finally received the medals he earned in World War II.

Edward Walker, director of the Montgomery County Veterans Service Agency, presented the medals to the Canajoharie native during the regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors.

Ironically, medals were the furthest thing from his mind when Stevens called Walker about eligibility requirements for medical benefits at a Veteran's Administration hospital.

Stevens said all he needed were his discharge papers from the Air Force. Four decades ago, all he got was an authorization to purchase ribbons in place of the medals.

However, Stevens said he was not too concerned about pursuing the medals after the war.

"When you're younger, they don't mean that much to you," he said. "But I got to thinking about leaving something that shows I was alive in this world. I thought it would be nice to hand down to my grandchildren and great-grandchildren."

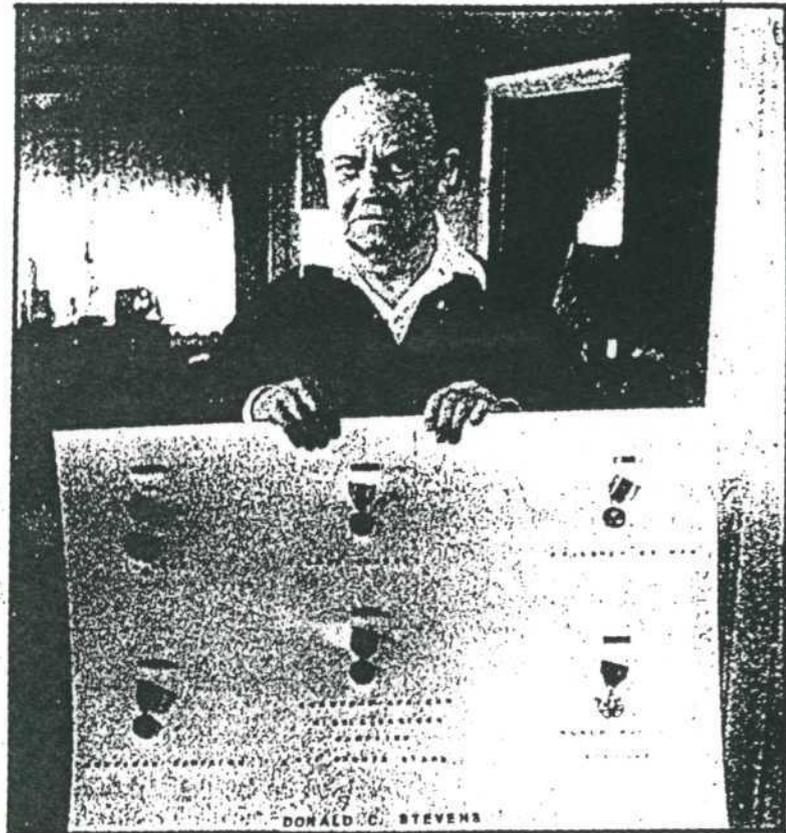
Stevens was a squad sergeant in the 760th Squadron, 460th Bomb Group of the 15th Air Force. He received the United States Air Medal three times for his excellent skills as a gunner on a B-24 airplane over enemy territory while bombarded from the air and ground by the Axis powers.

Stevens said his plane was shot down over Hungary while he was on his 37th mission. He was captured June 30, 1944, and became a German prisoner of war. Until his release on May 2, 1945, Stevens was held in Stalag Luft 4 in Germany.

At the supervisors' meeting, he also received the Army Good Conduct Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, the World War II Victory Medal, and three oak leaf clusters to mark each campaign in which he participated.

He was also awarded a special Prisoner of War Medal presented to veterans who served their country honorably while being held prisoner during World War I, World War II, the Korean Conflict, or the Vietnam Conflict.

Stevens encouraged other veterans who think they should have received medals to contact the Veterans Ser-



C-S-E photo/Matt Shanley

Donald Stevens displays the awards he received from the U.S. Air Force after a 40-year wait. The Canajoharie resident is a World War II veteran.

vice Agency. As for himself, Stevens downplayed the importance of the awards ceremony in Fonda. "These medals don't mean that much to me," he said. "I didn't do anything spectacular like saving someone's life, or anything that anyone else didn't do."

Medals recognize veterans

By JOHN R. BECKER
Recorder News Staff

FONDA — Two World War II veterans were moved to tears Tuesday night as they finally received medals earned in that war.

Pay pact
OKed, Page 14

The presentations took place during the regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors, held in the County Office Building on Broadway in Fonda.

Edward Walker, director of the county Veterans Service Agency, presented the medals, mounted on large sheets of posterboard for display, to Donald C. Stevens of Canajoharie and Nicholas J. Balestra of Amsterdam. Walker said both had contacted him for assistance in other matters,

After four decades of waiting

and conversations had indicated that they had not received medals they had earned.

Stevens was a staff sergeant in the 760th Squadron, 460th Bomb Group of the 15th Air Force. He was awarded the United States Air Medal three times for his outstanding performance as a gunner aboard a B-24 airplane on bombing missions over enemy territory "while under constant enemy ground and air fire," according to a presidential citation read by Walker.

Stevens' plane was shot down while he was on his 37th bombing mission over Hungary, Walker said.

He was captured June 30, 1944 and became a German prisoner of war. He was held in Stalag Luft 4 in Germany until his release May 2, 1945.

In addition to the three United States Air Medals, Stevens received the Army Good Conduct Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with three Bronze Service Stars and the World War II Victory Medal. He also was presented a special Prisoner of War medal given to those veterans who "performed their duty honorably" while held prisoner during World War I, World War II, the Korean Conflict

or the Vietnam Conflict.

"I'd like to thank the Board of Supervisors for its support of veterans' programs," Stevens said. "I'd like to thank Ed Walker, who led me through this [the paperwork and other efforts needed to get the medals]."

Stevens' voice broke momentarily as he also thanked the half-dozen members of his family who came to the meeting with him to witness the presentation.

Balestra, a private first class in the U.S. Army, received a Purple Heart June 14, 1944 because he was wounded in combat. He rejoined his unit and earned a Bronze Star five days later for "meritorious service" in connection with military operations against an enemy of the United States in Normandy, France," according to a citation read by Walker.