

Collection #
M 0949
OM 0465

**DAVID E. TAVEL
WORLD WAR II COLLECTION, 1940–2007**

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Processed by

Paul Brockman
January 2008

Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 2 manuscript boxes; 1 oversize folder; 2 folders of photographs

COLLECTION
DATES: 1940–2007

PROVENANCE: David E. Tavel, Indianapolis, Indiana, August and September

2007

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2007.0217; 2007.0256

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

David E. Tavel (b. 1920) is a native of Indianapolis who graduated from Northern Illinois College of Optometry in June 1941. Tavel developed a love of flying in 1937 and in October 1941 he was appointed as an Aviation Cadet in the Army Air Force. Tavel attended Basic Flying School at Enid, Oklahoma from February–April 1942. After completing advanced flight training, he was assigned as a combat pilot flying Consolidated B 24 Liberators in Texas and Idaho as part of the newly formed 15th Air Force. Tavel served with the 456 Heavy Bomb Group 746 Squadron in Stanora, Italy from February 1944 until April 1945. He and his group flew missions in Italy, Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Yugoslavia. Tavel and his unit were part of the second raid on the oil refineries at Ploesti in May 1944. Tavel was awarded the Silver Star for the mission on April 22, 1944 to Bucharest, Rumania for his ability to save his plane and crew after sustaining heavy flack damage. In July, 1944 he was promoted to Captain and became deputy group operations officer and in March 1945 he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel.

Tavel returned to his optometry practice in Indianapolis but remained active in the Air National Guard as part of the 10th Air Force from the late 1940s until the early 1950s. Tavel has retired from optometry and now spends his time between homes in Indianapolis and Naples, Florida.

Source:

Information in collection.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection contains materials relating to his involvement in the Army Air Corps during World War II, 1941–45. Among the items is an unpublished 125 page personal account of his involvement in World War II entitled “Hard to Believe” written in 2007. Also included are many of Tavel’s military papers and related publications such as correspondence, training manuals, personnel records, and the official report recommending him for the Silver Star, 1941–45. There also are photographs of Tavel from pilot training to his crew and snapshots on leave in Foggia, Italy.

Other materials contain information about the 456th Bomb Group and the 15th Air Force including mission and statistical records, operations handbook, and commemorative books, 1944–45.

The collection also contains information regarding Tavel’s time in the Air Force reserve as part of the 10th Air Force. Most of this material consists of published sources, accident reports, training procedures, and various lectures, 1947–50. Many of these items are from the beginning of the Air Force and combining civilian and military pilots.

There is also material in the collection regarding reunion activities of the 456th Bomb Group and related World War II commemorative materials, 1989–2006. These include newsletter, reunions, correspondence and general printed materials about World War II and the B-24 Liberator.

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CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 0949).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.