

**Collection #  
M 1034**

**PAUL W. DEPPERT  
PAPERS, 1943–1975**

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Processed by

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

[www.indianahistory.org](http://www.indianahistory.org)

## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 manuscript box; 4 folders photographs; 1 folder OVB photographs; 2 artifacts; 1 printed item

COLLECTION DATES: 1943–1975

PROVENANCE: Charles Deppert, Indianapolis, Indiana, April 20, 2010; May 13, 2011

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2010.0111; 2011.0134

NOTES:

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Paul William Deppert was born in Grammer, Indiana, on March 26, 1922. After having been found eligible to be an Aviation Cadet in the Air Force, Deppert was drafted, and assigned to active duty as a pilot in World War II on May 15, 1943. He was sent to Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, for basic training, before advancing to San Marcos Field in Texas to train as an aerial navigator, under the rank of 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant; on May 20, 1944, Deppert left San Marcos to travel to the European theater. Between October 15, 1944, and March 11, 1945 Deppert took part in at least thirty-five combat sorties as an aerial navigator for heavy bombers, almost all of which occurred in Germany (though at least one was in France); Deppert was stationed in Great Yarmouth in England for the duration. Deppert was released from active duty on September 20, 1945—during the tenure of his duty, Deppert was promoted to a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant. Deppert remained inactive for several years upon his return to Indiana, before being assigned to the 434<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Wing, nicknamed “the Hoosier Wing,” an Air Force Reserve unit based at Atterbury Air Force Base in Columbus, Indiana, on July 13, 1950. During his time off from the military, he was married to Vera, on June 28, 1947. He had two daughters, Paula born in 1948, and Lee, in 1952. On March 24, 1951, the 434<sup>th</sup>, and Deppert, were called out of reserve into active duty, for a term not to exceed twenty-one months—the 434<sup>th</sup> was to help with military actions in Korea. Deppert, however, was reassigned to the 108<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron and assigned to active duty in Bordeaux, France, a NATO-controlled, Cold War bastion; Deppert left for this tour of duty in October, 1951. Deppert stayed in Europe until January, 1953, when he was relegated back to inactive status as a Reserve Officer; Deppert was reassigned a place back in the 434<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Wing upon his return to Indiana. In August, 1953, Deppert was promoted to Captain. As a member of the Reserves, Deppert was frequently called up for short stints of active duty, typically lasting about two weeks at a time; in August, 1955, he was briefly suspended from active duty due to an acute case of torticollis. By 1964, Deppert had been promoted to Major, and had been given the designation of Master Navigator. On October 20, 1964, Deppert was designated as a Navigator for a Nuclear Aircrew with the 72<sup>nd</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron of the 434<sup>th</sup>. In 1967, Deppert was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, and was awarded the Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon. In 1970, program changes within Deppert’s unit eliminated the need for many of its navigators, so Deppert transferred to the Air Reserve Personnel Center to serve as an Academy Liaison Officer. Deppert joined the Retired Reserve Section in 1972, ending his Air Force career.

### Sources:

All information taken from records in the collection.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection was donated to the Indiana Historical Society in two parts between 2010 and 2011 by Charles Deppert, from Indianapolis, Indiana. The collection focuses on Paul W. Deppert, an Air Force pilot who started his career in World War II, and continued on until the 1970s. The contents mainly consist of military-issued orders and notifications, correspondence between Paul and Charles Deppert from World War II, and photographs; also included are a printed book devoted to the 389<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, and several artifacts from Paul Deppert's career in the Air Force. This collection has been broken into four series:

**Series 1: Wartime Correspondence, 1943–1945:** This series contains correspondence from Paul Deppert to his brother Charles, sent during World War II. Materials include both handwritten and typed letters, and v-mails.

**Series 2: Military Documents, 1943–1975:** This series contains documents related to Paul Deppert's career in the United States Air Force. Materials include orders, medical forms, discharge forms, general information forms, and other government-issued documents.

**Series 3: Photographs, [1944–1972]:** This series contains photographs related to Paul Deppert's career in the United States Air Force. Included materials mostly depict Deppert at work, but include also a copy of a photograph of an airplane manufacturing factory, a yearbook-style photograph of Deppert's class of WWII cadets, and two class photographs from Charles Deppert's time in high school.

**Series 4: Artifacts and Printed Materials, [1943–1972]:** This series contains personal objects from Paul Deppert's career in the United States Air Force. These include his uniform and hat, two Dead Reckoning Air Navigation devices, and a pictorial book devoted to the 389<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group.

## **SERIES CONTENTS**

### **Series 1: Wartime Correspondence, 1943–1945**

#### CONTENTS

Correspondence, 1943–1945

#### CONTAINER

Box 1, Folder 1

### **Series 2: Military Documents. 1943–1975**

#### CONTENTS

Military Documents, 1943–1953

Military Documents, 1954–1961

Military Documents, 1962–1965

Military Documents, 1966–1975

#### CONTAINER

Box 1, Folder 2

Box 1, Folder 3

Box 1, Folder 4

Box 1, Folder 5

### **Series 3: Photographs, [1944–1972]**

#### CONTENTS

Yearbook-style photo of Deppert with his WWII Air Force Cadet class in Texas, 1944

Group photo of Deppert with other soldiers, [194?]

Reproduction photo of an airplane manufacturing plant showing bombers and fighters in mid-construction, [n.d.]

Group photo of Deppert with other 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenants, some identified, [1944]

#### CONTAINER

OVB Photographs:  
Folder 1

OVB Photographs:  
Folder 1

OVB Photographs:  
Folder 1

Photographs:  
Folder 1

Photo of Captain Deppert making aerial calculations in his office, ca. 1953–1964	Photographs: Folder 1
Photo of Captain Deppert examining a map with surrounding soldiers, ca. 1953–1964	Photographs: Folder 1
Photo of Captain Deppert examining a map with another soldier, ca. 1953–1964	Photographs: Folder 1
Photo of Deppert making aerial calculations in an airplane, [n.d.]	Photographs: Folder 1
Photo of Captain Deppert examining a surface chart with another soldier, ca. 1953-1964	Photographs: Folder 1
Photo of Deppert working with another soldier, [n.d.]	Photographs: Folder 1
Photo of the 434 <sup>th</sup> T. C. Wing at Atterbury Air Force Base in Indiana, 1953	Photographs: Folder 1
Photo of the 108 <sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron Officers, ca. 1951–1953	Photographs: Folder 1
Photo of Deppert with several other officers, ca.1964–1972	Photographs: Folder 1
Assorted photos from Deppert’s WWII tour of duty, ca. 1943–1945	Photographs: Folder 2
Assorted photos from Deppert’s post-WWII tour of duty in Europe, ca. 1951–1953	Photographs: Folder 3
High-school photos of Charles Deppert and his class, some identified, 1958–1959	Photographs: Folder 4

**Series 4: Artifacts and Printed Materials,  
[1944–1972]**

CONTENTS

Air Force Officer's Uniform/Hat

Dead Reckoning Air Navigation Device (2)

389<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group Pictorial Book

CONTAINER

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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 1034).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.