

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
AIR FORCE BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS

IN THE MATTER OF:

DOCKET NUMBER: 97-01253

COUNSEL: [REDACTED]

NO ES RE YES

E 11 1996

APPLICANT REQUESTS THAT:

His records be corrected to reflect award of the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal.

APPLICANT CONTENDS THAT:

The citations have never been issued. His records were lost during a hurricane on Ie Shima, Ryuku Island in 1945.

In support of his appeal, the applicant provided a statement from counsel, a statement from a former crew member, copies of recommendations for award of the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal, and other documents associated with the matter under review.

Applicant's complete submission is at Exhibit A.

STATEMENT OF FACTS:

A WD AGO Form [REDACTED], Enlisted Record and Report of Separation, indicates that the applicant was inducted into the Army of the United States (Air Corps), on 7 Jan 44 and entered active duty on 23 Jan 44 as an aerial gunner. He was honorably discharged from the Army of the United States on 28 Jan 46.

AIR FORCE EVALUATION:

The Recognition Programs Branch, AFPC/DPPRA, reviewed this application and recommended denial. DPPRA indicated that the DFC was awarded for heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight and serving in any capacity with the Air Force. Both heroism and achievement must be entirely distinctive involving operations that were not routine. The Air Medal was awarded for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight and serving in any capacity with the Air Force. The required achievement to warrant award of the Air Medal was less than that required for award of the DFC, but must—have been

accomplished with distinction above and beyond that expected of professional airmen.

According to DPPPRA, the applicant was being recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross for signaling with a mirror to the rescue unit while in the ocean. This was not "while participating in aerial flight" and, therefore, not a basis **for** awarding the Distinguished Flying Cross.

DPPPRA noted that the applicant was assigned to the 320th Bomb Squadron from 18 May 45 to 4 Jan 46. DPPPRA further noted that the applicant was being recommended for the Air Medal for the periods Mar-Jul 45 and Jun-Sep 45. According to DPPPRA, it is not normal to recommend an individual for an Air Medal for such a short period in the middle of a tour. Local commanders were allowed to set their own criteria for awarding the Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross during World War II. Some published their policy as an Air Medal for each five combat flight missions and a Distinguished Flying Cross for 25 missions. Other set different limits on the number of combat flight missions, but all were required to submit a written recommendation at the time. Recommendations do not contain two periods, much less overlapping periods, for a decoration. Furthermore, the present recommendation starts at Mar 45 and the applicant did not arrive at the 320th Bomb Squadron until 18 May 45. DPPPRA indicated that they can only conclude that the applicant was never recommended for the Air Medal during his tour with the 320th Bomb Squadron.

In DPPPRA's view, nowhere in this application is a justification for the inordinate delay in submitting the recommendations for these decorations. [REDACTED] does not state that the recommendations were actually written in 1945 and submitted into official channels or provide any justification or explanation for such a delay.

A complete copy of the DPPPRA evaluation is at Exhibit C.

APPLICANT'S REVIEW OF AIR FORCE EVALUATION:

By letter, dated 31 Jul 97, counsel requested that the case not be considered prior to the submission of additional documentary evidence (Exhibit E).

Counsel provided additional documentary evidence for the Board's consideration which is attached at Exhibit F.

THE BOARD CONCLUDES THAT:

1. The applicant has exhausted all remedies provided by existing law or regulations.

2. The application was not timely filed; however, it is in the interest of justice to excuse the failure to timely file.

3. Sufficient relevant evidence has been presented to demonstrate the existence of probable injustice. The applicant's requests for award of the DFC and Air Medal were noted. In the absence of evidence showing that the applicant's actions met the criteria for award of the DFC cited by DPPRA, we have no basis to favorably consider this portion of the application. However, the evidence provided has established to our satisfaction that the applicant's service during the period in question did warrant recognition by award of the Air Medal and that the recommendation for this award was submitted and lost. In view of the above and in recognition of the applicant's service to the Nation, we believe any doubt in this matter should be resolved in his favor. Accordingly, his records be corrected to reflect award of the Air Medal in 1945.

THE BOARD RECOMMENDS THAT:

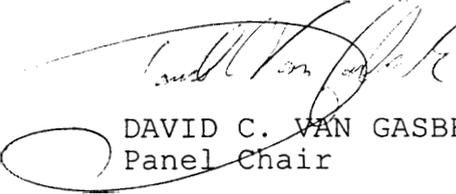
The pertinent military records of the Department of the Air Force relating to APPLICANT, be corrected to show that he was awarded the Air Medal for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight from May 1945 to September 1945.

The following members of the Board considered this application in Executive Session on 20 Oct 98, under the provisions of AFI 36-2603:

Mr. David C. Van Gasbeck, Panel Chair
Mr. Richard A. Peterson, Member
Mr. Jackson A. Hauslein, Member

All members voted to correct the records, as recommended. The following documentary evidence was considered:

- Exhibit A. DD Form 149, dated 8 Apr 97, w/atchs.
- Exhibit B. Applicant's Master Personnel Records.
- Exhibit C. Letter, AFPC/DPPRA, dated 13 Jun 97.
- Exhibit D. Letter, SAF/MIBR, dated 14 Jul 97.
- Exhibit E. Letter, counsel, dated 31 Jul 97, w/atch.
- Exhibit F. Letter, counsel, dated 14 Aug 97, w/atchs.



DAVID C. VAN GASBECK
Panel Chair



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE PERSONNELCENTER
RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE TEXAS



MEMORANDUM FOR AFBCMR

13 June 1997

FROM: HQ AFPC/DPPPRA
550 C Street West Ste 12
Randolph AFB TX 78150-4714

SUBJECT: Application for Correction of Military Records (DD Form 149)
[REDACTED]

1. REQUESTED ACTION. Applicant requests (through son of former crew mate) award of the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal for 1945.
2. BASIS FOR REQUEST. Applicant states the original recommendation ~~was~~ lost during a hurricane on Ryuku Island in 1945.
3. FACTS.

a. Applicant was on Active Duty 22 Jan 44-28 Jan 46, with duty in the Asiatic-Pacific Theater 18 May 45-4 Jan 46, serving with the [REDACTED] Bomb Squadron. He is entitled to the Good Conduct Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with 1 Silver and 1 Bronze Service Star, Purple Heart, American Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal, Philippine Liberation Medal with 1 Bronze Service Star, and Philippine Republic Presidential Unit Citation. The last award is not on his Report of Separation, and needs to be added.

b. The applicant is [REDACTED]. During World War II, he was a crew mate of [REDACTED] who received the Distinguished Flying Cross in 1955 for the 15 Jul 45 incident. [REDACTED] is the son of [REDACTED] and has been given Power of Attorney to act on behalf of [REDACTED] Captain Britton A. Stoney is supposed to have been the commander of the [REDACTED] Bomb Squadron during that time.

c. [REDACTED] signed proposed citations recommending the applicant for the Distinguished Flying Cross for "...saving the lives of himself and four of his remaining crew mates..." by the use of a "...hand held signaling mirror under very adverse conditions..." on 15 Jul 45. He recommends the applicant for the Air Medal for the periods Mar-Jul 45 and Jun 45-Sep 45. [REDACTED] has not submitted a statement to the effect that these recommendation were originally submitted into official channels in 1945 and lost through inadvertence or administrative error.

d. The Distinguished Flying Cross is awarded for heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight and serving in any capacity with the Air Force. Both heroism and achievement must be entirely distinctive, involving operations that are not routine.

e. The Air Medal is awarded for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight and serving in any capacity with the Air Force. The required achievement to warrant award of the Air Medal is less than that required for award of the Distinguished Flying Cross, but must nevertheless be accomplished with distinction above and beyond that expected of professional airmen.

4. DISCUSSION.

a. The applicant is being recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross for signaling with a mirror to the rescue unit while in the ocean. This was not "while participating in aerial flight" and, therefore, not a basis for awarding the Distinguished Flying Cross.

b. The applicant was assigned to the [REDACTED] Bomb Squadron 18 May 45-4 Jan 46. He is being recommended for the Air Medal for the periods Mar-Jul 45 and Jun-Sep 45. It is not normal to recommend an individual for an Air Medal for such a short period in the middle of a tour. Local commanders were allowed to set their own criteria for awarding the Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross World War II. Some published their policy as an Air Medal for each five combat flight missions and a Distinguished Flying Cross for 25 missions. Other set different limits on the number of combat flight missions, but all were required to submit a written recommendation at the time. Recommendations do not contain two periods, much less overlapping periods, for a decoration. Furthermore, the present recommendation starts at Mar 45, and the applicant did not arrive at the [REDACTED] Bomb Squadron until 18 May 45. We can only conclude that he was never recommended for the Air Medal during his tour with the [REDACTED] Bomb Squadron.

c. No where in this application is a justification for the inordinate delay in submitting the recommendation for these decorations. [REDACTED] does not state that the recommendations were actually written in 1945 and submitted into official channels or provide any justification or explanation for such a delay.

5. RECOMMENDATION.

We recommend disapproval of the applicant's request for award of the Distinguished Flying Cross for 15 Jul 45 and the Air Medal for Mar 45-Jul 45 and Jun 45-Sep 45.

FOR THE COMMANDER

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Georgia A. Wise".

GEORGIA A. WISE, DAFC
Recognition Programs Branch
Promotions, Eval & Recognition Div

cc: SAF/MIBR



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, DC

Office of the Assistant Secretary

AFBCMR 97-01253

DEC 11 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF

Having received and considered the recommendation of the Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records and under the authority of Section 1552, Title 10, United States Code (70A Stat 116), it is directed that:

The pertinent military records of the Department of the Air Force relating to [REDACTED], be corrected to show that he was awarded the Air Medal for aerial flight from May 1945 to September 1945.


JOE G. LINEBERGER
Director
Air Force Review Boards Agency