The Descriptive Finding Guide for the Wagner Melching Personal Papers. SDASM.SC.10199

San Diego Air and Space Museum Library and Archives
2001 Pan American Plaza, Balboa Park
San Diego 92101
URL: http://www.sandiegoairandspace.org/
Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: San Diego Air and Space Museum Library and Archives
Title: Wagner Melching Jr. Personal Papers.
source: Melching, Wagner
Identifier/Call Number: SDASM.SC.10199
Physical Description: .25 Cubic Feet
The collection contains one photo album, photographs, roster, and personal papers dating from 1942 to 1945. The material is not in individual folders, but in plastic bags and sleeves.

Date (bulk): bulk
Abstract: This collection belonged to Wagner Melchun who served in the 483rd Bombardment Group. The 483rd was a B-17 group that fought with the Fifteenth Air Force in Italy from April 1944 to April 1945, mainly taking part in the strategic bombing offensive.

Physical Description: Description: The collection is housed in one archival box measuring 12.5x9.5x3. The material is not in individual folders, but in plastic bags and sleeves.

Biographical / Historical
This collection belonged to Wagner Melchun who served in the 483rd Bombardment Group. The 483rd was a B-17 group that fought with the Fifteenth Air Force in Italy from April 1944 to April 1945, mainly taking part in the strategic bombing offensive. The group was activated in the US on 20 September 1943 and moved to Italy in March/April 1944. Combat operations with the Fifteenth Air Force began in April 1945 and the group spent most of its time attacking strategic targets across much of occupied Europe and Germany. It received two distinguished unit citations for its strategic bombing. The first was awarded for an attack on a German airfield at Memmingen on 18 July 1944 carried out without a fighter escort. The second was for an attack on tank factories at Berlin on 24 March 1945. The group also flew a number of tactical missions. In the summer of 1944 the group destroyed two spans of the Casarsa Bridge, cutting the Tarvisio railway line, one of two main lines that linked the German front line to north-eastern Italy. In August 1944 it supported the Allied invasion of southern France (Operation Dragoon). In April 1945 the group supported the Allied armies during their final offensive in the Po valley. After the end of the war the group was used to fly American personnel from Italy to North Africa on the first stage of their journey home to the US. It was inactivated in Italy on 25 September 1945.

Conditions Governing Access
The collection is open to use by appointment, some restrictions may apply.

Immediate Source of Acquisition
The collection was donated to the museum.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress Family
483rd Bomb Group
World War, 1939-1945
Melching, Wagner

Series I: Personal Papers

Copy of the Deteriorata (parody of the Desiderata) “Certificate Necessary for Packages that do not contain War Trophies”

Series II: Military-related Documents

483rd Bombardment Group ‘H’ Association Newsletter 1984
483rd Bombardment Group (H) Italy 1944-45 Year Book

Series III: Map

United Air Lines Dated Events War Map

Series IV: Photographs
Photo Album 1942 - 1945 and 8X10 Photographic Portrait

Series V: Miscellaneous

Four Sea Shells
One piece of metal (shrapnel)
One leather strip w/name embossed in gold letters “Lt. Marvin W. Stone”