

AVIATION WALL OF HONOR



First Lieutenant Bobb A. Beauchamp Killed in Action

Bobb Beauchamp, the second of three brothers, was born in Ishpeming, MI in 1923 and was raised in Marquette with older brother Paul and younger brother Ray. Paul drowned in a boating accident at age 20. Ray joined the Navy when he was 17 and served in both World War II and the Korean War. He retired in Marquette after a career with Alcoa Corporation.

Bobb, a star athlete and a talented musician, enlisted in the Army Air Corps at the age of 18. After becoming a Second Lieutenant in August 1943, he married Fae Elliot of downstate Cheboygan. Shortly after this, the young couple moved to Pinellas Air Base in Florida where Bobb served as a flight instructor. His wife described his love of flying with one exception; he hated pulling a target for the other pilots to strafe. She said, "Some of the students were a little more than wild in their shots."

During a cross-country training run, he landed at Kalamazoo where he was able to visit his brother Ray who was attending Western Michigan University. Bobb was flying a P-40 Tiger Shark on that visit. It was the last time the brothers saw each other.

AVIATION WALL OF HONOR

Bobb was eventually sent to India where he delivered supplies and transported P-51 Mustangs over the "Hump" to China. At this time, he was promoted to First Lieutenant.

On one mission in February 1945, the exact date is unclear, Bobb and fellow pilots of the Fighting 304th were flying over the China Sea when Bobb's plane disappeared. A short time later, Fae received a visit from Don Sheridan, Bobb's friend and fellow pilot, who broke the horrible news. Bobb and a wingman collided in the fog and under the circumstances there was no hope of survival. Bobb was listed as missing in action for one year and then the Army declared him dead. Fae continues to visit a marker placed in the local Catholic cemetery next to Bobb's mother each Memorial Day.

TJ Mudge, Feb. 2004