

AVIATION WALL OF HONOR



First Lieutenant William Thomas

William Thomas, son of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Thomas, was born in Menasha, Wisconsin before moving to Marquette. He graduated from Baraga High School and attended Northern Michigan College of Education for one year before enlisting in the Army in September 1940. After three years in the Army and 13 months in the U.S. Army Air Force, he received his commission at the age of twenty-one.

In January 1944, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross "for extraordinary achievement" while participating in 200 hours of operational flight missions in the Southwest Pacific area during which hostile contact was probable and expected, according to the announcement from Allied Headquarters in that theater of war.

The award was presented by Lieutenant General George C. Kenney, Commander of the Allied Air Forces in the Southwest Pacific, and was made "somewhere in New Guinea".

Following this award, he was on active duty with a bombardment squadron of the Fifth Air Force playing a major role in General Douglas MacArthur's offensive against the Japanese in the South and Southwest Pacific. He was also the recipient of the Air Medal.

TJ Mudge, May 2004