

Strathman - Continued from Page 1

I can't possibly show everything in these articles that I scanned from Gene's scrapbook and items that were shared with me. We also won't use all of Gene's information in the Manning Veterans' book but will use as much as we can that won't prevent other Veterans from having their information featured.

As much information as I can get my hands on!!!

I am always looking for Manning information of all kinds. Unlike most genealogists and historians, I have no favorite subject or family...I want pictures and information for all Manning subjects that I can get my hands on and digitally scan.

While I realize that many people simply don't have a lot of information and pictures about everyone in their family history, I know those things are out there some where...another relative, a friend of the family, and information archived in official documents such as in court houses are just some avenues family members can go after to help out in the preservation of Manning and their family's history.

I don't have time to chase after all of those sources and most of the time I won't know who to contact in a family or how.

A few years ago a family member told me that it was good enough for them to know that their dad served in the military and they were proud of that service...and being in the Manning Veterans' book wasn't important.

To be proud of a family member's service is great, but my goal is to always find more information and pictures and then get that information digitized so that Veteran family member will be remembered and honored long after all of us who knew them are deceased.

While being currently proud of one's family member is honorable, there needs to be a way to carry on that honor and memories in books and databases. This is the only true way to preserve the memories and honor long-term those Veterans.

While I don't have time to go into all of the family connections for the Strathman family, the first step is to find the basic photos and fortunately Gene's family had this wonderful family picture in their possession.



Back: Joyce, Gene, Billie; Front: LeRoy, Donnarae, Clara (Petersen)



Gene Strathman in a buggy. The background of an individual's life experiences are endless. A photo as simple as this one gives insight into what influenced Gene. Young people today have absolutely NO clue as to how difficult and challenging their lives could be. They only know "right now" and most of them have no clue as to how, what we call history, has greatly influenced the freedoms they have and how easy they have it today.

I often try to impress upon people how they probably have a military picture of a Veteran I don't have, or pictures of non-family members who are connected to Manning. Many of the pictures I have of Veterans did NOT come from a family member but from a friend of their family member.

I write about this to hopefully inform everyone who has old Manning pictures that what they have could greatly increase the amount of history in the Manning database I'm building.

Here are just a few examples of non-Strathman family member pictures I found in the Strathman scrapbooks and collection I scanned a year ago. To me there was a treasure-trove of Manning history in those family albums. I very seldom run into so many Manning connected pictures of such a varied number of topics and fortunately of people I could identify.



Above: Delores Kuhse, Don "Cuda" Neal, Joyce Strathman



Right: Bob Kuhse, Louise Kuhl



Could be Larry Polking on left and probably Leo Kerwin in the middle. Manning Oil Company employees (later APCO) with the Priebe Hatchery in the background (today the old blood plant area)



Three unknown Navy men - could be Manning connected or friends of Bill Strathman who served in the Navy



Above: Unknown - possibly Amos Lohmeier on right
Left: Amos Misselhorn, Donald "Bonnie" Joens



Above: Leo Bruck
Left: Identified as Harold Kuhse but I cannot find Harold in my military database



Standing: Lt. R. Geatches, Navigator Lt. Chapman, Bombardier Lt. Lawrence, Co-pilot Lt. Robert Moss, Gene Strathman; Kneeling: Radio Operator S/Sgt. Oscar Windham, Engineer S/Sgt. Martin Woogen, Armorer Gunner S/Sgt. Llewellyn Thiel, Engineer Sgt. Johnny A. Eubanks, Engineer Sgt. Robert Smith



Gene practicing with a "hee hee" gun. I have been unable to identify what a hee hee gun is on the Internet - please help if you can.



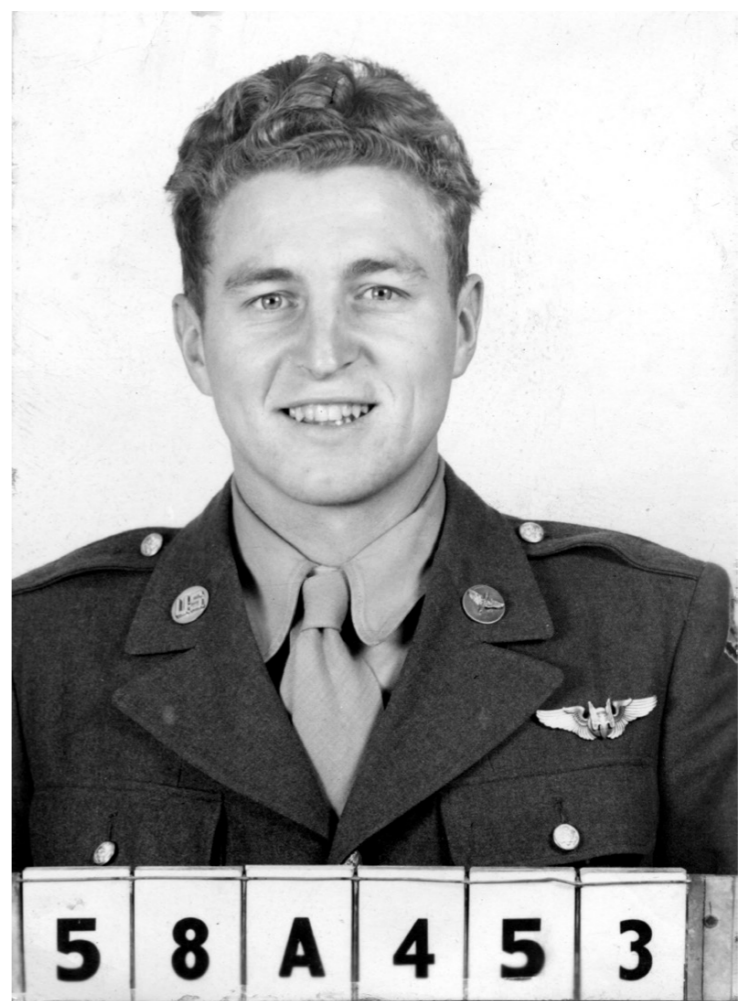
Gene Strathman posing for a photo



Practice sighting a moving plane



Gene Strathman displaying his parachute



Unique official photo of Gene Strathman

Gene Strathman was born at Manning March 29, 1923, a son of Lee and Clara (Petersen) Strathman. He attended the local schools and graduated in 1941. He was a member of the championship football and basketball teams at Manning High School.

Gene enlisted in the Army Air Corps and in February 1943, left for training at Sheppard Field, Texas. He later graduated from gunnery school at Kingman, Arizona, and from radio school at Sioux Falls, South Dakota. In December 1943, he was sent to Salt Lake City, then to Langley Field, Virginia, and spent about a week in Seattle, Washington, before being sent to Anchorage, Alaska, where he was stationed for two months. He was stationed at the Aleutian Islands at the time of his death.

S/Sgt. Strathman, a member of a Liberator bomber crew, was a radio operator on the plane which was enroute from Fort Richardson, Alaska, to Adak, Alaska, when it exploded at 20,000 feet over Mount Iliamna, Alaska, September 3, 1944. Six of the crew managed to parachute to safety, but Gene went down with the plane. His body was recovered later and buried in the army post cemetery at Anchorage, Alaska.



G. Strathman In "I Bombed Japan" Club

Eleventh AAF Headquarters S/Sgt. G. Strathman of Manning has recently been issued a membership card in the "I Bombed Japan Club," an organization composed of Eleventh Army Air Force combat personnel who have bombed Japanese positions in their home territory in the Kurile Island chain.

Sgt. Strathman obtained membership in the enviable club by virtue of participation in raids over the Kuriles Islands, target of a recently stepped-up aerial drive against the Kuriles from the Aleutians. Sgt. Strathman is a radio operator.

Members of the "I Bombed Japan Club" from the Aleutian Theatre have good reason to be proud of their membership as they become eligible by bombing the Kuriles in one of the most hazardous missions of any combat zone, due to the long flight over water so cold life can be sustained only a short time if forced down.