

MISSOURI STATE SOCIETY DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Proudly Honors



FRANK IRVING YAWITZ
UNITED STATES ARMY AIR CORPS

as

PURPLE HEART PATRIOT
DECEMBER 2024

Honoring His Service and Sacrifice

Written by Cynthia Woller

Sponsored by: Olde Towne Fenton Chapter, NSDAR



Born March 17, 1916,
to Mr. and Mrs. Morris. Yawitz
Died September 24, 1944, in England



First Lieutenant Frank Irving Yawitz, the son of Russian immigrants Morris and Dora Yawitz, was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri. Frank grew up as the middle child with his older brother, Sidney, and younger sister, Florine. In 1934, he graduated from Central High School in St. Louis and worked as a salesman at Joe's Clothes Shop until he was drafted.

At age 24, Frank answered the call to serve, joining the United States Army Air Corps as a navigator. Assigned to the 391st Bombardment Group, 572nd Squadron, he operated out of Matching Field, a Royal Air Base in England, where he participated in numerous pivotal missions.

In preparation for the Allied invasion of Normandy, Frank and his squadron conducted critical bombing runs over France and the Low Countries, targeting airfields, rail yards, bridges, and V-weapon sites. As the campaign progressed, they continued their missions to support the Saint-Lô breakthrough and disrupt German retreat efforts. For his bravery and contributions, Frank earned the Air Medal for Heroism in Flight and received the Purple Heart for injuries sustained in combat.

Frank was admired at Matching Camp for his camaraderie and dedication. He spent his

downtime on excursions to London with fellow officers and was a valued member of the Baby Doll III crew.

On September 24, 1944, Frank and his crew embarked on a transport mission to relocate more than 2,000 men and their equipment across the English Channel. Poor weather conditions led the six B-26 aircraft in the unit to break formation and proceed independently. The Baby Doll III, without radio contact and navigating through thick clouds, lost visibility. At approximately 9:00 p.m., the plane crashed in a field, with only the tail remaining visible. Frank and his fellow crew members, First Lieutenant Richard Baehr, Staff Sergeant Edward Demyanovich, and Corporal John Myers, perished in the impact.

In a tragic outcome, only one of the six planes returned safely that night, with the rest either crashing or forced into emergency landings. It came to be known as “the night the weather won.”

10 Mon., Oct. 23, 1944.
ST. LOUIS STAR-TIMES

5 Men Dead, 4 Missing On Casualty List

Five more St. Louis area service men are dead, four are missing, 10 are wounded and one is a prisoner. Additional pictures are of men previously reported as war casualties in the Star-Times.

DEAD.

FIRST LT. FRANK L. YAWITZ, 28, bombardier, son of Mr. and Mrs. Morris Yawitz, 5773 Westminster pl.; died September 24 after plane crash in England.

Forgotten Final Flight of Baby Doll III

An Essex village rediscovers its
tragic wartime link to 500,000
American Airmen



Neil McCarthy

Frank's family worked tirelessly to have his remains brought back home. After four years in a temporary grave in England, he was finally laid to rest in Chesed Shel Emeth Cemetery in University City, Missouri.

It is with honor and gratitude that we recommend First Lieutenant Frank Irving Yawitz for the Purple Heart Patriot Award. His sacrifice exemplifies courage, commitment, and dedication to our nation.