

Group in Dearborn, Mich.

The award was requested 48 years ago by Goodell's commanding officer Vincent W. O'Shea, who subsequently returned to the United States without knowing the outcome of his request. Until recently O'Shea didn't know his request for the prestigious medal had been lost in the shuffle, nor did Goodell know one had been sought for him. On Aug. 6, 1944, O'Shea was command pilot on the B-24 and "Technical Sergeant Goodell was radio operator/gunner on our missions and returned to the United States and lost track of each other," he said. "I heard no more concerning the disposition of my recommendation. " Eight years ago Goodell and O'Shea began to meet at reunions of the combat group. They located Barber and he attended a recent reunion. It was only at that point that the medal came up in conversation.

"Sgt. Barber informed us that the recommendation had been approved and that he had been presented with the medal when he separated from the service in 1945," O'Shea said last week. "However, Sgt. Goodell had never been informed or awarded the medal." O'Shea went home and started writing letters to the U.S. Air Force .

"We received heavy anti-aircraft fire which severed our main fuel line almost causing fatal damage to our plane," O'Shea recalled. "In a very heroic effort Sgt. Goodell and our engineer-gunner, Technical Sergeant John F. Barber, squeezed into a small space over the bomb bay and held the fuel lines together by hand until we were able to get to a lower altitude where we could make temporary repairs.



After what O'Shea terms "extensive correspondence", the 100 octane gasoline story received approval for the medal. The medal was sent to O'Shea. Goodell's memory of the mission is as clear as his commanding officer's. "We were on a bombing mission to Southern France, which was occupied by the Germans. Over the target heavy anti-aircraft fire was encountered and we were hit with exploding flak shells. Goodell dismisses the incident as if it were an everyday occurrence. "We noticed gasoline leaking out, like a mist, flying around inside the compartment," he said. "Sgt. Barber found some old rags and we wrapped them around the pipes where they were leaking, and held them until the pilot landed in Corsica."Although it was midsummer the temperature at the altitudes at which they were flying was down to 15 degrees below zero and the two men exposed to freezing cold causing severe burns over their bodies," O'Shea said.

By their outstanding devotion to duty they not only assisted materially in the destruction of an important objec-

tive, they also made possible the safe return of our aircraft to its base in Italy. "O'Shea immediately recommended both men for the Distinguished Flying Cross. "With winter garb, heavy flying suits, metal flak-jackets, and leather helmets with oxygen masks. The compartment was cramped and low. They had to lie face down on the floor, holding the fuel lines. Asked if he suffered burns Goodell admitted he and Barber "had to put some salve on our arms" later on. "This was my last mission," he said. "I shipped out 10 days later and apparently the information that I received the Distinguished Flying Cross never caught up with me. "I never knew about it until three years ago when I went to a reunion and I was talking about how I had accumulated the various points needed to qualify for discharge and Sgt. Barber commented that it didn't hurt, points wise, to get a DFC.

"I told him I didn't have a DFC," Goodell said.

Glen Ellyn, IL

In 1940 I was in the Illinois National Guard Horse cavalry. We were federalized in November of 1940 and went to Camp Livingston, Alexandria, LA in January of 1941 to get our year of Federal Service over. I must have been slow because it took me 5 years of service to accomplish that, but then before we could pack to go home December 7th came. in 1943 I took the Air Corps test for pilot training and went to San Antonio, TX , but was washed out in primary at Muskogee, OK. They wanted me to go to Bombardier- Navigator school, but it was pilot or nothing for me so I ended up as a nose gunner.

After crew assembly in Salt Lake City and crew training in Harvard, NE we arrived at Cerignola in April of 1944. I flew my first mission on April 20, and my last mission was to Munich on July 19, 1944. At the time of my service the Germans were attacking head on making for a shortage of nose gunners. When my crew was not flying I was. That was how I ran up 50 mission credits in just 10 weeks. Some weeks I flew five or six times.

In the beginning the tougher missions counted as two, so in reality I had only 37 take offs, not counting aborts and early returns.

On a mission to Ploesti Rumania. May 31, 1944, we were hit with flak but good. I am not sure of how many holes we had, but I know we got some in our gas cells, we almost had to bail out over the Adriatic and got as far as the bomb bay doors when we were recalled back to our stations, but I found out why I could never be a paratrooper in a hurry.

*Robert J Person 825 sq.*

Fairborn, OH

I am enclosing a photo of ship #41 showing flak damage to the right rudder and elevator. In photo 2) my crew is standing in front of "Broad Abroad," a ship we flew often. From left to right: Bill Johnson -E, Jim Pool-N, Don Anderson-E, Elvin Bush-P. The three ground crewmen shown kneeling and bending over are not identified.

*Jim Pool, 827 Sq.*