

B-24 Crew Chiefs

Daniel L Denny son of David E Denny sent this photo and caption from the May 13, Sortie, the newspaper of the wartime 15th Air Force. "War Weary" 42-95360 flew with the 827 Squadron. To attest to this ship's air airworthiness, my crew (Ben Guisbond's) flew this plane back to Bradley Field, CT, about 10, May 1945, Bud Markel.



Five Liberators under the care of these mechanics have compiled an average of more than 100 times over the target and more than 1000 hours of flight time each. They are from top left M/Sgt J F Malloy Jr and M/Sgt Harold E Bolton, bottom row: M/Sgt R P Wilson, S/Sgt H A Mason, and M/Sgt S M Rozycki.

Our Man, Russell Hayhurst Receives Purple Heart 55 Years Late

After 55 years of waiting and wondering if he had been forgotten, World War II veteran and Morgantown native Russell Hayhurst was awarded his Purple Heart for injuries he received during a bombing mission over Vienna, Austria, in February 1945.

The humble Hayhurst attributes this honor to the newly named West Virginia Military Order of the Purple Heart Department Commander George Katchur, who he said worked tirelessly for the long overdue medal.

"I'm just honored to be among the elite," the 74 year old Hayhurst said. "I knew I was entitled to it, but I didn't think it was going to come. After all this time, this is really a special thing. I owe it all to Commander Katchur of the Purple Heart Association of West Virginia for getting it for me."

Hayhurst now holds the, oldest U.S. military decoration in current use, which he proudly displayed in its velvet-lined case. The medal, attached to a purple banner and adorned with a profile of George Washington, brought a smile to Hayhurst with each glance.

During the American Revolution, George Washington, at Newburg on-the-Hudson on Aug. 1, 1782, issued an order establishing the Honorary Badge of Distinction, otherwise known as the Badge of Military Writ or Decoration of the Purple Heart. It is awarded to those who received wounds in action against an armed enemy of the United States of war of armed conflict, or who lost their lives as a result of action by hostile foreign forces.

"I think my wife is as proud of the award as I am." Hayhurst said, with a satisfied chuckle



Member Russell Hayhurst of the 827 Squadron holds his Purple Heart after 55 years for injuries received in February, 1945 during a bombing mission over Vienna, Austria