

The 484th Bomb Group Is On Display at the New England Air Museum, Bradley Field, CT



Member Bob Powers, 825 Sq (shown at right) arranged this display at Bradley Field, Windsor Locks, CT

The words that appear below are taken directly from the museum display.

Staff Sgt. Robert D. Powers, of New Britain, CT was accepted in August, 1943, for the Army Air Force Aviation Cadet Training Program at age 17. This program was canceled in January, 1944. Powers was sent to Aerial Gunnery School and then assigned to a flight crew for training with B-24 bomber aircraft.

In August, 1944, the crew flew to Italy and was assigned to the 484th Bomb Group, 825th Squadron as part of the Fifteenth Air Force. Powers flew his first 17 missions at age 18.

On his twenty second mission, on February 21, 1945, he was a waist gunner on the plane leading the 484th on a mission to Vienna, Austria. His plane was hit by anti aircraft fire directly over the target. The tail gunner was killed and several others including Powers were wounded. He bailed out at 25,000 feet, landed in the city, and became a prisoner of war. He was liberated by the Fourth Armored Division near Frankfurt, Germany.

Powers was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, Purple Heart and Prisoner-Of-War medals. His medals and memorabilia are displayed in the case below.

The B-24 Liberator was the most widely used heavy duty bomber flown, with over 18,000 built. Designed by Consolidated Aircraft, it was also built by Douglas Aircraft, Ford Motor Company, and North American. The Liberator was powered by four Pratt & Whitney 1200 hp super-charged R-1830 engines and Hamilton Standard propellers providing cruising speed of 160 m.p.h.

The Crew of ten consisted of pilot, co-pilot, navigator, bombardier, engineer/gunner, radio operator/gunner, armorer/gunner, nose gunner, top turret gunner, 2 waist gunners, ball turret gunner and tail gunner. All turrets carried twin 50 caliber machine guns. Each waist gunner manned a single 50 caliber machine gun. The ball turret had to be handcranked up into the fuselage before landing. At altitudes of 23,000 - 27,000 feet, interior temperatures reached 20 to 50 degrees below zero.