



**Alfred  
Murphy**  
*Army*

## **Alfred Murphy**

**Sep 29, 1924 - Jul 28, 2016**

**BIRTHPLACE: EI Dorado, KS**

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### **SOLDIER DETAILS**

**DIVISION: Army**

**THEATER OF OPERATION: European**

**SERVED: Nov 14, 1942 - Nov 18, 1945**

**HONORED BY: Wife, Norma Arlene; children,  
Raymond Lynn and Karen Lea**

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### **BIOGRAPHY**

It was November 14, 1942 when I enlisted in the Army Air Corp. Trained as a four engine B-17 pilot, I was sent to the 15th Air Force and stationed at Foggia, Italy, from where 35 missions were flown over Europe in the following countries: Italy, Austria, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Germany and Poland. The Battle of the Bulge occurred during this period and we were wondering who would prevail. Luckily, it was the Allies. My most exciting mission occurred on my 10th mission to Vienna, Austria, where we were to go over at 30,000 feet. At 29,500 feet, a cylinder head blew out on number 2 engine and while trying to feather the prop, number 1 engine blew a cylinder head. Turning around the heading back we jettisoned our bombs, added full power on the 2 remaining engines and crossed the snow packed Alps at 15,000 feet. Gradually, altitude was being lost in order to maintain flying speed. We were now down to 7,500 feet and just above the overcast, with mountains protruding above the clouds. Number 3 engine blew a cylinder head and altitude decreased, putting us in the clouds with the mountains. I gave the order to bail out. All 11 men landed safely. I was close to being shot until the Yugoslavs found out I was an American. We spent 10 days getting out of Yugoslavia. We walked, took a bob sled, rail car, truck, river boat and finally a DC 3 airplane. When returned to Italy, we found we had been reported missing in action. The plane that we were flying was an F model, all the rest were G models. Upon returning to the base, the crew chief told me he was not surprised at losing the engines as all had over 500 combat hours, but he was not allowed to replace one until shot out or mechanical failure occurred. Other experiences included coming home on 3 engines six times, landing with an engine on fire. On the longest mission, I came home alone on three engines, a bomb exploded about 500 feet below our plane, had all our gas tanks shot up, landed with a load of bombs and the brakes shot out. Landed with a flat tire, my left wingman was hit by 105 mm flak, destroying the plane and killing all. A hole was shot in the astrodome just after the navigator was looking out of it. A plane in front of us crashed and blew up during takeoff. The nose of our plane was nearly torn off by another plane that landed and over shot the runway. On another mission, flak badly damaged our instrument panel. For my services, I was awarded the WW 2 Victory Medal, the Presidential Unit Citation, the

African European Campaign Medal, four Air Medals and the Distinguished Flying Cross. This period of life all occurred before my 21st birthday.