

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Edgar B. Gottschalk

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Veterans Remember Oral History project

Interview # VR2-A-L-2011-010

Edgar Gottschalk, who served with the 13th Air Force in the Pacific during WW II, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Veterans Remember* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: March 31, 2011 Location: Gottschalk residence in Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Bob Young, ALPL Volunteer

Transcription by: Audio Transcription Center, Boston, MA

Edited by: ALPL Volunteers Betty Workman and Rozanne Flatt

Total Pages: 19 + 21 = 40 pgs Total Time: 0:56 + 1:08 / 0.93 + 1.13 = 2.06 hrs

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The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in
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Abstract

Edgar B. Gottschalk, *Veterans Remember*, VR2-A-L-2011-010

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Edgar Gottschalk was born in Springfield, Illinois on December 13th, 1923. Gottschalk graduated in January 26th, 1943 from Springfield High School; he had received a draft notice on January 20th, and was inducted into the U.S. Army Air Force on the 27th. He attended basic training in Miami, Florida, and continued his training in three other locations. Following his training, Gottschalk was assigned the 72nd Bomb Squadron, 5th Bomb Group, 13th Air Force, and sent to the South Pacific. He served as a flight engineer and top turret gunner on a B-24 Liberator, and completed forty-five combat missions. The missions were primarily flown over the Southwestern Pacific Ocean islands. The squadron was constantly on the move, stationed first in the Solomon Islands and ending up in the Philippines, some 2,500 miles and ten months later. The unit became known as the Jungle Air Force, since its equipment never seemed to catch up to the unit. The primary mission of the squadron was to destroy Japanese airfields, oil refineries and shipping. Targets included Truk, Yap, Peleliu, Borneo, and numerous other islands on the way to Japan.

Gottschalk received the Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters. He was discharged from the service on September 3, 1945. After his return to Sangamon County, he married Delores Heingardner on September 26th, 1946. Edgar joined the Plumbers and Steamfitters Union and worked for Edwards Plumbing and Heating. He later worked at St. John's Hospital, where he retired as the head of mechanical maintenance. They have no children, and both are now retired.

Subject Headings/Key Words: 72nd Bomb Squadron, 5th Bomb Group, 13th Army Air Force; B-24 Liberators; turret gunner on a B-24; Jungle Air Force; Truk Island; Pandansari Refinery, Balikpapan; Borneo bombing raid; Palau Islands (Pelelie, Ngesebus, Babelthau)

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