



Newsletter Issue 46, January 2020

Flying the Hump to China

From April 1942 through November 1945, the US Army Air Force flew resupply missions from India to China in order to support the Chinese War effort against the Japanese. (The Japanese had successfully cut off resupply to China, and by resupplying the Chinese, we were helping them tie up crucial Japanese forces.) These missions originated from bases in India and had to fly over the mountainous jungle terrain of what is now Myanmar. In mostly non-pressurized cargo planes, flying long routes over rugged terrain that required cruising at over 15,000 feet, and through awful and unpredictable weather conditions, we experienced dreadful losses. Planes took off onto these audacious missions and were never heard from again, brought down by weather, inexperienced pilot error, or Japanese fighters. Countless planes went missing, and even today not all have been found. Approximately 600 planes were lost, and the total killed during the operation totaled over 2000. Today there is a monument in Nanjing, China, which includes the names of 2,197 Americans who gave their lives helping to defend China from their Japanese invaders from 1941-1945. We have recently completed an effort to research every one of those US names and construct a web page in our database for each one—thousands of stories of determined bravery in extreme conditions. A second monument outside of Kunming, China, also honors these pilots and crews, but no names are listed there.



Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images

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Hemingway Remembered



After the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps all turned him down, Ernest Hemingway signed up for the American Red Cross Ambulance Corps in Italy just a few months after he graduated from high school. He arrived in Milan, Italy in June 1918, and within a few weeks had secured an assignment on the front lines. On the night of July 8, 1918, an Austrian mortar shell exploded just feet away from Hemingway, severely wounding him with over 200 pieces of shrapnel in his lower body. He was then wounded again below the left knee while assisting a wounded Italian soldier and was awarded the Italian Silver Medal for Valor. He spent most of the rest of the war recuperating in various hospitals. His WWI service is remembered by memorials in Fagare and Fossalta di Piave, Italy and by the Hemingway museum in Bassano della Grappa. He kept a piece of shrapnel in a coin purse for the rest of his life. In WWII Hemingway returned to Europe as a war correspondent. He was present at the D-day invasion but did not come ashore un-

til July. He spent most of his time with the 22nd Infantry Regiment of the 4th ID. He accompanied them in the liberation of Paris, then observed heavy fighting in the Huertgen Forest. On December 17, 1944 he came to Luxembourg to cover the Battle of the Bulge, but spent most of the time hospitalized for pneumonia. He departed Europe for the US in March 1945. In a small ceremony in June 1947 at the US Embassy in Cuba, Hemingway was awarded the Bronze Star for his service as war correspondent. His WWII service is marked by memorials in Libin, Belgium and Rodenbourg, Luxembourg (pictured) as well as by a plaque in St Hubert, Belgium.

