



Albert "Red" Tessier was born on 29 August 1923 in Lansing, Michigan, and grew up in Detroit and in the neighbouring Canadian city of Windsor. His father worked in the coal mines during the Depression, but



died in his forties. His older brother joined the US Coast Guard, and his younger sister joined the Canadian Women's Army Corps, but Red chose flying. He attended the San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center in southern Texas, where he passed his submachine gun training course with a score of 90%. After further training at several locations in the US, he was sent to England in October 1943. He sent home a photograph of a Flying Fortress showing his assigned position as Ball Turret Gunner. He was the youngest member of the crew, and died on his first mission.



Albert Griepentstroh & Albert Tessier in front of their plane a few days before the flight

Albert Allen Griepentstroh was born on 26 October 1920 in the small town of Lamar in southern Indiana. His father was a second-generation immigrant from northern Germany. After graduating from high school Albert worked at the Farm Bureau and on various farms including his father's, and he also worked at the Lincoln Park Memorial as a welder and steam fitter. He was a friendly young man with a jovial smile. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps only 5 months after war was declared, helping to repair and salvage planes. He was then trained in Florida to be a gunner/engineer, after which he was stationed in Mississippi, Washington, Nebraska, Delaware, New York, and finally Maine. While in Maine, his plane was involved in an accident that destroyed the aircraft, but no one was hurt. Albert was assigned to the 306th Bombardment Group in England in late October 1943, and to Buttercup as waist gunner. The mission to bomb Bremen would have taken him within 70 miles of his ancestral farmland.