

"Mi Amigo"

22nd February 1944, Endcliffe Park, Sheffield, England.
From an original oil painting by Paul Rowland



Mi Amigo crew: Back row L to R: 2nd Lt Robert E. Mayfield; Sgt. Vito Ambrosio; Sgt. Harry Estabrook; MSGT George M. Williams; Sgt. Charles Tuttle; Sgt. Maurice O. Robbins; Pilot near L to R: 1st Lt John G. Kriegshauser; 2nd Lt Lyle J. Curtis; 2nd Lt Melchor Hernandez; 2nd Lt John Humphrey.



Distinguished Flying Cross
Posthumously awarded to 1st Lieutenant John G. Kriegshauser - Pilot.
Citation: "During a mission over the North Sea, he skillfully landed the aircraft back to England. Although weather conditions were unfavorable, Lt. Kriegshauser attempted to locate a field in which to land. Despite adverse conditions over a heavily built-up area, he was able to crash-land. An engine failure with directly in the path of the landing, but Lt. Kriegshauser, exhibiting an exemplary decision to land, maneuvered the crippled airplane over the landing field and crashed approximately 100 yards away. The courage, coolness and skill displayed by Lt. Kriegshauser, reflect the highest credit on himself and the armed forces of the United States."



Air Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster
Posthumously awarded to 1st Lieutenant John G. Kriegshauser - Pilot, and Sgt. Maurice O. Robbins - Tail Gunner.
Citation: "For exceptionally meritorious achievement while participating in the multiple bomber missions over enemy occupied continental Europe. The courage, coolness and skill displayed by the awarded men upon these occasions reflect great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of the United States."



Purple Heart
Posthumously awarded to 1st Lt. John G. Kriegshauser - Pilot, 2nd Lieutenant Lyle J. Curtis - Co-Pilot, 2nd Lt. Melchor Hernandez - Bombardier, 2nd Lt. John Humphrey - Navigator, Sgt. Charles Tuttle - Tail Gunner, Sgt. Harry Estabrook - Engine/Top Turret Gunner, S/Sgt. Robert E. Mayfield - Radio Operator, Sgt. Vito Ambrosio - Right Waist Gunner, MSGT George M. Williams - Left Waist Gunner, Sgt. Maurice O. Robbins - Tail Gunner.



Just after 5pm on February 22nd 1944, ten young American airmen - the crew of B-17G 'Mi Amigo' - sacrificed themselves in an act of true heroism when they gave their lives to save the lives of children playing in Endcliffe Park, Sheffield.
The 'Mi Amigo' crew, some mortally wounded flew for four hours on their return journey back to England following a daylight bombing raid on Aalborg, Denmark. The crew struggled to get their badly damaged aircraft back to their base in Chelveston, Northamptonshire, England without navigation and radio communication after being mauled by Luftwaffe fighters over Denmark. Lost in low cloud, low on power and unbeknown to the crew, they were more than 100 miles off-course when they descended through the clouds and found themselves over the heavily built-up city of Sheffield, South Yorkshire.
Spotting the snow covered field of Endcliffe Park, Sheffield, eyewitnesses report that the pilot looked as though he was attempting a forced landing. However, upon seeing children playing football near the cafe and bandstand in the park the pilot aborted his landing and just as the children scattered into the trees, 'Mi Amigo' rose one last time into the air before crashing into the wooded hillside 100 yards behind the cafe. All ten American airmen aboard 'Mi Amigo' died at the scene.
The crew's sacrifice was recognised by senior officers of the 8th United States Army Air Force as one of "Exemplary Courage."
One of the school children playing football that day, Keith Peters, said: "The aircraft was heading straight for us, then suddenly rose up and crashed into the hillside behind where we were playing, with a huge bang."
A memorial to the ten American airmen was built behind the cafe in Endcliffe Park, Sheffield close to the crash site and every February a memorial service to remember the crew of 'Mi Amigo' is held there and at the nearby St. Augustine's Church by the people of Sheffield, attended by serving USAF personnel, the Lord Mayor of Sheffield and other local dignitaries.

B-17G Flying Fortress 42/31322 WF V

8th Air Force, 305th Bomb Group, 364th Bomb Squadron, Chelveston, Northamptonshire, England
Crashed Endcliffe Park, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, England following a bombing raid on Aalborg, Denmark

Keith Peters - Eyewitness
Paul Allanby - Author: 'Charge Above The Clouds: The True Story of the Heroic Crew of B17 'Mi Amigo'
Paul Rowland - Artist

1st Lt John G. Kriegshauser - Pilot (23) Missouri | 2nd Lieutenant Lyle J. Curtis - Co-Pilot (23) Ohio | 2nd Lt. Melchor Hernandez - Bombardier (23) California | 2nd Lt John Humphrey - Navigator (23) Illinois | Sgt. Charles Tuttle - Tail Gunner (20) Kentucky | Sgt. Harry Estabrook - Engine/Top Turret Gunner (23) Kansas | S/Sgt. Robert E. Mayfield - Radio Operator (21) Illinois | Sgt. Vito Ambrosio - Right Waist Gunner (24) New York | M/Sgt. George M. Williams - Left Waist Gunner (23) Oklahoma | Sgt. Maurice O. Robbins - Tail Gunner (20)