

43A

This has been filled out by J. B. Watson as a sample of information needed. This is a voluntary, non-governmental survey. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated. Give approximate information if you are uncertain about accuracy. Supply only that which you provide willingly. Use other side to extend remarks, such as stateside assignments, aircraft flown, decorations, anecdotes, questions, etc.

US Army Air Corps or US Air Force Cadet Information Sheet on Pilots

Cadet Class at start: 43A Cadet Class at end: 43A
Name: John Blair Watson, Jr. Birthday 2/19/16 SSN 049-10-1487
Home address 228 Putnam Street
at induction: Hartford, Conn.

Place of induction: Camp Langdon, Portsmouth, NH Date of 1/28/42

School grade completed by induction: 3 1/2 yrs BS College UNH

Pre-flight reporting date: 3/28/42 Place Maxwell Field, Alabama

Primary flight training at: Douglas, Georgia

from 7/5/42 to 9/07/42 Aircraft Stearman PT-17 60hrs

Secondary flight training at: Greenville, Miss.

from 9/08/42 to 11/11/42 Aircraft BT-13 75 hrs

Advanced flight training at: Craig Field, Selma, Alabama

from 11/12/42 to 1/22/43 Aircraft AT-6 67hrs

Commission date: 1/13/43 Graduation date (if other) _____

Officer serial no. 0-795673 Cadet serial no. 11025501

Operational or Replacement Training: Single engine X Multi _____

Place: Key Field, Meridian, Miss. 56th Sqd 48th Bomb Group (Dive)

Reporting date: 2/4/43 Type of training: A-24 transition divebomb

Completion " 4/16/43 Assignment: to A-36 training

Place: Harding Field, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 305th Bmb Sqd 85th Grp

Reporting date: 4/16/43 Type of training: A-36 dive bombing

Completion " 7/20/43 Assignment: overseas

African

Combat Assignment: Theater Mediteranian Air Force 12th AF

Squadron 525th FTR BMBR Group 86th FTR BMBR

Aircraft type(s) A-36s, and P-40s for a short while

A-24 30hrs; A-36 & P-51 358 hrs; P-40 347hrs; UC-78 18hrs; Cadet 202hrs

Active Duty Discharge Date 9/28/45 Grade at Discharge CAPT

Remain in Air Force Reserve? yes Date of retirement 2/76 Grade COL

Present address: J. B. Watson, Jr. Date 9/4/83

(603)643-2817 P. O. Box 270

Hanover, NH 03755

Active duty: 3 9 1 Reserve duty: 30 3 21
yrs. mos. days yrs. mos. days

September, 1983

Please return this form to: J. B. Watson, Jr., PO Box 270, Hanover, NH 03755

Decorations: Air Medal & 3 Oakleaf clusters, Distinguished Flying Cross

Aircraft downed: 1 confirmed, 1 probable ME-109s (from A-36s)
Combat missions: 85 in A-36; 11 in P-40; 10 in UC-78; Total 106
Transported Gen. Mark Clark from Anzio to Lago on one UC-78 mission.

Best reserve duty was as Air Force Academy Admissions Liaison Officer from 1964 until retirement in 1976; have served since and to date as Associate LO doing same work (counseling secondary school students who are interested in attending the Air Force Academy or AFROTC.

Have been active since 1952 as a Mission Pilot for the Civil Air Patrol, with additional duties as Commandant of Cadets, Information Officer, Safety Officer, Cadet Orientation Pilot, and have been Squadron Commander since 1980 flying L-3s, L-5s, L-16s and L-19s. We are awaiting the delivery of a re-built T-41B at present, promised by October. Have made three finds of crashes and one save of a lost student-pilot at night.

Civilian profession: Audiovisual education specialist (film producer, film distributor, film teacher, administrator) Dartmouth College 1945-81. Retired as Director-Emeritus Dartmouth College Films.

Although I left UNH in the last semester of my senior year for Aviation Cadet Training, the University granted me my bachelor's degree with the class of 1943, giving me needed credit for have gotten a second lieutenant's commission and for having become a pilot (as they did for a number of others). I later did graduate work at NYU, Indiana University and Syracuse University being awarded a Master's Degree in Education from the latter in 1952.

I barely got "under the wire" for my commission as a second lieutenant as I became 27 years of age in February, 1943. I had "lost" four years between high school and college during the depression years, 1934-38, working in a model airplane shop for several months and for Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Company in East Hartford for about 39 months.

I give the YMCA Young Men's Secretary (Donald McKelvie) most of the credit for talking me into getting out of the shop and into college. I decided to specialize in educational film work because I had learned the power of the medium in high school and in the YMCA, was aware that I knew more about photography and motion pictures than the average young man, and saw it as a growing field and profession. I could not have been more right nor chosen a better career for myself.

I was "lucky" in college to be there when the first Civilian Pilot Training Program was started and was in the first class of fourteen students during the summer of 1940. We flew from the Portsmouth Municipal Airport (now covered by the main ramp of Pease Air Force Base).

On or about July 21, 1943 I left with seventeen other pilots by ATC from Miami Beach in a C-46. We stopped overnight in Puerto Rico, Borinquen Field, then proceeded Trinidad, Georgetown (I think), Belem and Natal, remaining 3 or 4 days, then by C-54 to Dakar, W. Africa for 3 or 4 days, then by DC-3 to Marakech and Casablanca, August 3. Assigned to 12th Replacement Depot, we stayed in Casablanca 4 weeks approximately, moving by train in 4 days to Constantine, Algeria; at LeKroub Airdrome approx. 4 weeks, then flown to Sicily for 3-4 days, then to Salerno where we were picked up by the 86th PTR BMR GRP and taken to Sele River Strip near Paestum, on Oct. 8, 1943.

Left Foréttia Airfield, Corsica on Aug. 2, 1944 by air to Rome, then Naples. Departed Naples on Navy's GEN. BLACK Aug. 15, arrived Staten Island on 29th.

Assigned 396th PTR SQD, DeRidder, LA Oct. 9, 1944 which moved to Stuttgart, ARK circa March 45.

1931