

In the middle '80's Rothrock began to wonder what happened to the project. Inquiry at Wright Field (Bill Elliott the AF Historian there) revealed no records at all existed about this project. Rothrock was able to find at least one officer who had saved records from the Clinton County Air Base. The Eglin AFB Historian told him he thought many of the records might be at Maxwell AFB where a large number of unsorted records rest.

Your office suggested I write, giving all data available to me, so that the AF Historian could look into this, if you thought it worthwhile. I quite obviously think it is worthwhile. It should help your historian to know that a file has now been set up at Wright Field at the AF Logistics Command on "The All-Weather Project"; and at the Smithsonian Institute where "blind landings" are cross-linked with Rothrock's name.

I have permission from Rothrock to write this. We both realize that this does not put him in the class with the Wright brothers, but in my opinion his was an effort worthy of recognition by the USAAF. Gen. Doolittle (Rothrock's life-long hero) did do the first blind landings, but his were with a hood & "safe pilot" in a probably a CAVU situation. Only Rothrock can claim the first blind landing with no possible safety net.

Can the USAF make a belated recognition of some sort? He did run the risk of losing life and B-17, but at that time both were expendable items for survival of our civilized world. And he also had to go without the promotions so common in the AF then, since the T/O of the base would not support another Captain.

Rothrock's home address is 309 Park Lane, Cantonment, Fl., 32533; phone (904) 968-6306. He has just returned there following convalescence from the last possible cardiac surgical intervention.

My interest in this? Simple: He's been my best friend for for more than 50 years and I think he was short-changed in the decoration/recognition department. He still lives and breathes B-17 life and air. And ante mortem sure as Hell beats post mortem recognition. I would be most interested in hearing the AF opinion on this.

Sincerely,

Lloyd B. Harrison, Jr.

*Some letters sent to C.C., USAF - just changed the heading*