

PRESS RELEASE:

50 years after WWII - son pays tribute to his father.

Nearly 50 years after airman Merrel L. Duncan from Dundee, Minnesota survived 30 hazardous missions over WWII Europe in a B-17 Flying Fortress bomber, his son Michael commemorates his father's war record in a uniquely memorable manner. T/Sgt. Merrel L. Duncan flew his 30 missions as a Group Lead Radio Operator with the 91st Bomb Group, 401st Squadron, based in Eastern England. In the first seven months of action, the 91st Bomb Group suffered 82% casualties and lost 41 of their original 48 aircraft.

Merrel Duncan, one of the few who survived, recorded every mission in a small 60 page, spiral-bound diary. His son, Michael, read the diary for the first time after his father's death on November 16th, 1989. The reprinted diary is now to play a key role in the memory of the B-17 Group Lead Radio Operator and the men who flew with him nearly half a century ago.

The son, Michael Duncan, who runs a family owned business in Lake City, Minnesota, commissioned aviation artist, Bryan Moon, to paint his father's B-17 in formation with other aircraft of the 91st Bomb Group. The recently finished work entitled THE LAST MISSION has been published by son Michael as a limited edition print. But the distinguishing feature is that each print is paired with a reprint of the hand-written diary of his B-17 bomber crew father.

On November 9th, 1992 Michael Duncan, artist Bryan Moon and retired Captain R.R. Goldsmith, the pilot of Duncan's original B-17 crew came together for the signing ceremony of the 850 limited edition prints. The gathering at Waterman's Restaurant in Lake City, MN brought together for the first time, Capt. Goldsmith who flew as Group Lead Pilot, with the son of his Lead Radio Operator crewman. The son has spent much of the last 36 months coordinating the memorial to his father, contacting several of his father's surviving crewmen who provided valuable data for the artist to accurately reproduce the wartime bomber in THE LAST MISSION art and print.

Michael Duncan's production of the print and diary is a unique epitaph not only to his deceased father, but to all the men who flew combat missions over German occupied Europe 50 years ago.