

Arthur Hamilton Bridge collection

AFC 2001/001/34223

Guides to the Collections in the Veterans History Project



**Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
December 2010**

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/vhp.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2015655280>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/eadvhp.vh017001>

Prepared by Aron Swan and Rachel Telford

Finding aid encoded by Rachel Telford, February 2017

Collection Summary

Title: Arthur Hamilton Bridge collection: Veterans History Project (U.S.)

Inclusive Dates: 1941-2005

Call No.: AFC 2001/001/34223

Creator: Bridge, Arthur Hamilton, 1917-2001

Extent (items): 1071 items

Extent (recording): camera master.: 1 videocassette of 1 (VHS) (90 min.) : sound, color ; 1/2 in.

Extent (photographs): 190 photographs.

Extent (manuscripts): manuscripts: 58 items.

Extent (negatives): graphic materials: 538 photographs : film negatives, black and white ; 35 mm.

Extent (slides): graphic materials: 278 slides : black and white, color ; 35 mm.

Extent (artifacts): artifacts: 5 items.

Extent (computer disc): 1 computer optical disc ; 4 3/4 in.

Language: In English.

Location: Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2015655280>

Summary: Proxy interview with the veteran's wife, Catherine Vail Bridge, was conducted by Athena Chiera for the Veterans History Project in 2005. Collection includes a biography of Arthur Hamilton Bridge by his wife, books, civilian papers, clippings, correspondence, diaries and journals, maps, memoirs, military papers, periodicals, printed matter, unit histories, a transcript, digital prints, negatives, original photographic prints, photocopies of photographic prints, slides and a VHS video recording of the 2005 interview. The collection also includes a transcript of an interview with Arthur Hamilton Bridge conducted January 18, 1980.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Bridge, Arthur Hamilton, 1917-2001.

Bridge, Arthur Hamilton, 1917-2001.

Bridge, Catherine Vail, 1920-1922--Interviews.

Bridge, Catherine Vail, 1920-2022

Chiera, Athena

Organizations

American Folklife Center

California. National Guard.

United States. Air Force.

United States. Army Air Forces.

Veterans History Project (U.S.)

Subjects

Pilots--Interviews.

World War, 1939-1945--Personal narratives, American.

World War, 1939-1945--Veterans--California.

Form/Genre

Filmed interviews.

Manuscripts.

Negatives.

Oral histories.

Photographs.

Slides.

Arrangement

Arranged in five series: Manuscripts, Photographs, Moving Images, Computer files and Artifacts.

Manuscripts are arranged alphabetically by type of material.

Acquisition

Accessioned, 2006.

Related Material

Catherine Vail Bridge collection, (AFC/2001/001/34158), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/vh017001.34158>

Copyright Status

Duplication of collection materials may be restricted.

Access and Restrictions

Collection is open for research; access restrictions apply. To request collection materials, please contact the Veterans History Project at <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/vhp.contact>

Preferred Citation

Arthur Hamilton Bridge Collection (AFC/2001/001/34223), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.

Biographical Note

Arthur Hamilton Bridge was born on June 4, 1917, in Pomona, California, and grew up in the farming community of Alta Loma, California. He graduated from Chaffey High School in 1935, and attended Chaffey College before transferring to the University of California, Berkeley, where he studied invertebrate paleontology. He planned to enter the Marine Corps once he received his degree, but after meeting flying enthusiast and fellow student Catherine Vail, he developed an interest in aviation and entered the Civilian Pilot Training program. Upon completing his degree in May 1941, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps. In January 1942, he was called up and sent to San Antonio, Texas, to begin training as a pursuit pilot.

Bridge graduated from cadet flight training in August 1942, and was immediately ordered to San Francisco, to await transportation for service in the Pacific Theater. He was assigned to Stanley Field, Hawaii, initially with the 78th Pursuit Squadron, and then the 45th Pursuit Squadron, 7th Air Force, flying the P-36 and the Curtiss P-40k. Bridge continued his training until the 45th Pursuit Squadron was ordered to the Central Pacific, to fly fighter attacks against the Gilbert and Marshall Islands while stationed on Midway Atoll, Baker Island, Funafuti, Nanumea, Tarawa Atoll, Abemama Atoll, and Makin Island.

In June 1944, the squadron left Makin Island for one month of leave in the United States. Bridge returned to California, and he and Catherine Vail, who was serving as a Women Airforce Service Pilot (WASP), were married on June 11, in Upland, California.

In August 1944, Bridge returned to Hawaii to serve as an instructor, training new pilots in fighter tactics. In early 1945, Bridge deployed to the Western Pacific as Commander of the 45th Fighter Squadron, moving into the North Field of Iwo

Jima, even as fighting continued on the other half of the island. While stationed at Iwo Jima and Tinian, Bridge flew fighter air attacks against Japan. During his service, he flew a total of 92 combat missions with 182 combat hours. In July 1945, Bridge rotated back to the United States and was on leave when he learned that the war had ended. He chose to resign from active duty with the rank of Major.

In November 1946, Bridge returned to military service with the California Air National Guard, serving as operations officer of the 196th Fighter Squadron, which was then forming at Norton Air Force Base. On October 10, 1950, the unit was activated for the Korean War, and in February 1951, Bridge served as Detachment Commander of fighters at Eniwetok Atoll for Operation Greenhouse. Following this assignment, his unit deployed to Japan where he served as Operations Officer for the 116th Fighter Bomber Group. On January 26, 1952, Bridge became Commander of the 196th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, and on June 9, 1952, he returned to the California Air National Guard as Base Commander, Ontario Air National Guard Base. He was also assigned to Headquarters, 146th Fighter Interceptor Wing, as Wing Director of Operations. He went on to serve as Commander, 163rd Fighter Group, Air Defense. In 1968, he resigned his position as Base Detachment Commander and transferred to the Air Force Reserve in order to pursue a civilian career in the management of citrus farming. He returned to active Guard status in 1970 to serve as Deputy Chief of Staff for Air, California Air National Guard. In June 1972, he retired with the rank of Colonel.

Following his retirement from the military, Bridge continued his career in citrus farming as manager of the Hamilton & Bridge Citrus Ranches, and served on the San Bernardino Flood Control Advisory Council, San Bernardino County Airport Commission, the Rancho Cucamonga City Council, and the Board of the Cucamonga County Water District. Arthur Hamilton Bridge died on July 8, 2001.

Scope and Content

Proxy interview with the veteran's wife conducted for the Veterans History Project in 2005. Collection includes a biography, books, civilian papers, clippings, correspondence, diaries and journals, maps, memoirs, military papers, periodicals, printed matter, unit histories, a transcript, digital prints, negatives, original photographic prints, photocopies of photographic prints, slides and a VHS recording relating to the veteran's service in the United States Army Air Forces during World War II, and in the California Air National Guard and the United States Air Force during the Korean War and the Cold War.

Description of Series

Container

Series

Series I: Recordings

Series II: Manuscripts

Series II: Photographs

Series III: Artifacts

Series IV: Computer Files

Container List

Container	Contents
	Series I: Recordings
BOX VHS395	Interview with Catherine V. Bridge, August 5, 2005 1 VHS ID: AFC2001/001/34233 MV01 MV01: Interview with Catherine V. Bridge about her activities in the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) program and the veteran's service.
	Series II: Manuscripts
BOX-FOLDER MSS2207/1	Biography, undated 1 folder MS08: Account of the veteran's World War II experiences in the Central Pacific written by his wife, Catherine V. Bridge; Topics covered include: enlisted in the Army Air Force after graduating college; deferred while taking Advanced Civilian Pilot Training Program; "called up" after finishing program; sent to San Francisco and eventually the Pacific; relieved not to be going to Europe; flew P-36 and Curtis P-40k; wrote often; excerpts from veteran's letters to his wife and mother; practiced combat flying; became very good at bombing missions; close calls landing and taking off from carriers; discussion of the importance of controlling the Pacific; friendship with George Dunlap; "Pineapple Air Force"; shot down on a mission in the ocean; saved by his fellow pilots; came home on leave to get married; instructor in Hawaii training new fighter pilots; discussion of training "yard birds" to become fighter pilots; change to P-51 Mustangs; commentary on backing up Marine island invasions; description and censorship of missions; excerpts from the veteran's letters; bad weather and its affect on losing planes; discussion of the atomic bomb and its affect on the war and Japanese nation; return to America; stationed in Texas; decision to resign or stay in the military; appendix of resources; recollection by George Dunlap about Jack Thomas; includes photographs and a summary of veteran's post-war service in the Air Force reserves. MS09: Account of veteran's experiences with the California National Guard written by his wife, Catherine V. Bridge; Topics covered include: joined the 196th Fighter Squadron; flew T-33 and F-80C the "Shooting Star"; called to active duty in October 1950, during Korean War; unhappy about change of location and command; volunteered to participate in "Greenhouse" project; patrolled skies during atomic testing for signs of Soviet activity; excerpts from letters describing surveillance missions while stationed in Eniwetok atoll; commentary on being exposed to radiation; letter received from the Air Force about Greenhouse Project and radiation; family life. MS10: Account of veteran's experiences in the Korean War and in Japan, written by his wife, Catherine V. Bridge; Topics covered include; background on the Korean War; traveled on the Sitka to Yokohama, Japan; commentary on commander's ambition and use of the 196th Fighter Group; request to return home was turned down; moved to 45th Infantry Division; coordinated practice mock attacks; sent to Korea in 1952; returned without any loses or damages; received orders to return home; federal military ended and civilian career began; bought a citrus farm.
BOX-FOLDER OVZ136/1	Book, 1942 1 folder MS03: <i>Hawaiian Life As Seen Through the Lenses of Hawaii's Cameramen.</i>

Series II: Manuscripts

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER MSS1659/1	Book, 1990 1 folder MS04: <i>The Pineapple Air Force: Pearl Harbor to Tokyo</i> , by John W. Lambert (1990).
BOX-FOLDER MSS1659/2	Book, 1947 1 folder MS05: <i>Wings Over the Pacific: The Seventh Air Force presented in an album of photographs of its men and bases, its planes and targets</i> , edited by Stewart Fern and Lee Fern (1947).
BOX-FOLDER MSS2207/2	Book, 1982 1 folder MS11: <i>The Long Campaign: The History of the 15th Fighter Group in World War II</i> , by John W. Lambert.
BOX-FOLDER MSS2207/3	Book, 1978 1 folder MS12: <i>Seventh Air Force Story</i> , by Kenn C. Rust.
BOX-FOLDER MSS2207/4-5	Book, undated 2 folders MS13-MS14: Two copies of <i>Ceiling and Visibility Unlimited (CAVU)</i> , by the class of 42-G United States Army Air Corps.
BOX-FOLDER MSS2207/6	Civilian Papers, October 1982 1 folder MS15: Farewell address by veteran to the City of Rancho Cucamonga City Council (10/1982). MS16: Handwritten notecards for Farewell address by veteran to the City of Rancho Cucamonga City Council (10/1982). MS17: Copy of MS15: Farewell address by veteran to the City of Rancho Cucamonga City Council (10/1982). MS18: Veteran's resume (undated).
BOX-FOLDER MSS1659/3	Clippings, May 8, 1945 1 folder MS06: "Convoy to Tokyo: Mustang pilots had a personal grudge against the Japs which they settled on the first escort flight to Tokyo," by Staff Sergeant Tom Hall and Sergeant Roger Angell.
BOX-FOLDER MSS2207/7	Clippings, 1945-1996 1 folder MS19: copy MS06: "Convoy to Tokyo: Mustang pilots had a personal grudge against the Japs which they settled on the first escort flight to Tokyo," by Staff Sergeant Tom Hall and Sergeant Roger Angell. MS20: "Local veterans recall victory over Japan today 40 years ago," Daily Report (04/15/1985). MS21: "Air Guard to arrive tomorrow," Daily Report (08/18/1961). MS22: "Pacific war dates--from Pearl Harbor to end," Los Angeles Times (08/15/1945). MS23: copy of MS21: "Pacific war dates--from Pearl Harbor to end," Los Angeles Times (08/15/1945). MS24: Map of Pacific of major and secondary fleet and air bases, Los Angeles Times (undated). MS25: "Battle: U.S., Japanese Vets Return to Iwo," Los Angeles Times (02/20/1985). MS26: "The Marshalls: Another step on the road to Tokyo," by Admiral William V. Pratt, Los Angeles Times (undated). MS27: Map of Marshall Islands, by Charles H. Owens, Los Angeles Times (undated). MS28: "Officials work on plan to open Midway atoll," Inland Valley Daily Bulletin (undated).

Series II: Manuscripts

Container	Contents
	MS29: "The island that time forgot," by Pete Thomas, Los Angeles Times (12/21/1996). MS30: "War of Words" by James Risen, Los Angeles Times (12/19/1994).
BOX-FOLDER MSS2207/8	Correspondence, April 4, 1951 1 folder MS31: Letter to veteran from his mother (04/04/1951).
BOX-FOLDER MSS2207/9	Diaries and journals, 1941-1943 1 folder MS72: Pilot's flight log from 03/10/1941-04/29/1943.
BOX-FOLDER MSS2207/10	Diaries and journals, 1941 1 folder MS32: Student pilot rating book from Pomona College (1941).
BOX-FOLDER MSS2208/1	Diaries and journals, 1941 1 folder MS33: Student pilot rating book from University of California (1941).
BOX-FOLDER MSS2208/2	Map, undated 1 folder MS34: Map of Japan with veteran's duty stations marked.
BOX-FOLDER MSS1092/1	Memoir, undated 1 folder MS01: A manuscript by George Hunter, a member of the 45th Fighter Squadron, on the first fighter escort mission of B29 bomber aircraft to Japan by his squadron on 4/7/1945.
BOX-FOLDER MSS2208/3-7	Military Papers, 1941-1984 5 folders MS35: Original memos regarding the veteran's rate of pay (08/29/1952-02/27/1957). MS36: Copies of memos regarding the veteran's application for, acceptance in, missions, service and separation with the California National Guard, Separation qualification record, military record; original copy of appointment to California National Guard, and promotions and assignments (07/20/1942-01/02/1948). MS37: Completion of training certificate (12/12/1950); meritorious service award (undated); ten year service award certificate (01/28/1954); federal service ribbon (undated); certificate of rank (05/28/1958); certificate of rank (09/04/1947); certificate of rank (12/24/1947); certificate of rank (07/10/1952). MS38: Photocopy of cover of personal records folder which originally housed MS35-MS37. MS39: Photocopy of cover of personal records folder which originally housed MS40-MS44. MS40: Original memos regarding veteran's special orders (1950); copy of special orders (1950). MS41: Original special orders (1943-1947). MS42: Original special orders (1951-1952). MS43: Original personnel orders and actions (1951-1957). MS44: Original military status (1942-1955). MS45: Copies of special orders (1942-1945). MS46: Memo regarding veteran's retirement and benefits (12/15/1976). MS47: Letter from the Air Force regarding veteran's participation in Project Greenhouse, nuclear testing in the Pacific (01/18/1984). MS48: Letter from Major General Glen Ames regarding veteran's retirement (07/23/1968). MS49: Letter thanking veteran for participating in a Department of Defense oral history interview (02/15/1980); letter asking veteran to participate in Department of Defense oral history interview (undated). MS51: Two copies of communication reading "airraid on Pearl Harbor x this is no drill" (12/07/1941).

Series II: Manuscripts

Container

Contents

	MS52: Two copies of veteran's enlistment record (12/16/1941).
	MS53: Copy of military record and report of separation; certificate of honorable discharge (08/04/1942); copy of certificate of honorable discharge (08/04/1942); medical recommendation for flying duty (02/10/1975)
	MS54: Application for retired pay benefits and paperwork (1977).
	MS55: Copy of air medal notice of award (03/28/1944); duplicates of MS37: completion of training certificate (12/12/1950); meritorious service award (undated); ten year service award certificate (01/28/1954); federal service ribbon (undated); certificate of rank (05/28/1958); certificate of rank (09/04/1947); certificate of rank (12/24/1947); certificate of rank (07/10/1952).
BOX-FOLDER OVZ181/1	Military Papers, 1942-1971 1 folder MS50: Veteran's individual flight records [1950]-1971; 1955-1959; 1942-1955.
BOX-FOLDER MSS2208/8	Periodical, 1989-2004 1 folder MS56: Sunsetter's Gazette (02/1989); Sunsetter's Gazette (08/1989); Lightning Strikes (05/1993); 20th Air Force Association Newsletter (2003-2004).
BOX-FOLDER MSS1659/4	Printed Matter, November 10, 1943 1 folder MS07: Pilot's flight operating instruction, Army Models P-51B-1, P-51B-5, and P-51C-1 airplanes, British model Mustang III.
BOX-FOLDER MSS2208/9	Printed Matter, 1943-1996 1 folder MS57: Awards and decorations page from Air Force Magazine (05/1996). MS58: Two copies of "Chapter 13 - Baker Island" from an unknown source (undated). MS59: Two copies of an excerpt, "45th Fighter" from unknown source (undated). MS60: Subject bibliography of military history from U.S. Government Printing Office (06/25/1993). MS61: Ephemera with cartoons about Army paperwork on one side and "You Never Know" campaign reminding soldiers not to talk about military matters (undated). MS62: Story by Glenn Woodfin describing Japanese attack on the west coast of the United States after the attack on Pearl Harbor (06/1995). MS64: "The Marshall Islands" by unknown author, describing the history and culture of the region (undated). MS65: Two copies of an article published in a newsletter about the Battle of Palmdale, by Marv Bridges (undated).
BOX-FOLDER OVZ184/1	Printed Matter, undated 1 folder MS63: Poster of military medals (undated).
BOX-FOLDER MSS2208/10	Regimental/unit histories, undated 1 folder MS66: Two copies of "History of the 163rd Fighter Group" by unknown. MS67: "All this had led to", history of 196th Fighter Squadron by unknown. MS68: Description of 45th Fighter Squadron markings on P-51 Mustang jets.
BOX-FOLDER MSS2209/1-3	Regimental/unit histories, 1944 1 folder MS69: 7th Air Force fighters in Marshall Campaign (01/04/1944-03/11/1944).
BOX-FOLDER MSS2209/4	Regimental/unit histories, 1941-1989 1 folder

Series II: Manuscripts

Container	Contents
	MS70: Air Force and California Guard rosters (1941-1989).
BOX-FOLDER OVZ181/2	Regimental/unit histories, undated 1 folder MS71: 45th Fighter Squadron confidential packet, includes missions, maps and roster (undated).
BOX-FOLDER MSS1092/2	Transcript, January 18, 1980 1 folder MS02: Air National Guard Oral History Interview: Arthur H. Bridge, Col, CAANG (RET). A transcript of an interview with the veteran by Staff Sergeant Theresa Bruce, historian of the 163rd Tactical Air Support Group, about the veteran's career in the Air Force and the California Air National Guard.

Series II: Photographs

BOX-FOLDER MSS1659/5	Photographic Print, undated 1 folder PH06: Planes flying in formation.
BOX-FOLDER MSS2209/6	Photographic Print, 1943-1989 1 folder PH356: Bridge standing by a plane (undated). PH357: Planes in formation, text on photo, "78th Fighter Squadron, Midway Island, Feb. 1943". PH358: 45th Fighter Squadron reunion, pilots and their wives (undated). PH359-PH360: Group photograph from the 45th Fighter Squadron reunion in San Diego (1989). PH361: Bridge and another pilot on the P-40 "Miss Cappy," named after Catherine Vail Bridge [1943-1944].
BOX-FOLDER MSS1092/3	Digital Prints, 1944-1972 1 folder PH01: A portrait of veteran in uniform, Hawaii (1944). PH02: An image of veteran's medals and unit insignia in a shadow box (1972). PH03: Veteran (left) and two members of the 45th Fighter Squadron standing next to a P41 aircraft, Hawaii (1944). PH04: Veteran (left) and Bob Love standing in front of a F80 aircraft of the 196th Fighter Squadron, Enewetak Atoll, Marshall Islands (1951). PH05: A group of P51s fighters escorting a B29 on a mission to Japan (1945).
BOX-FOLDER MSS2209/5	Digital Prints, 1951-1952 1 folder PH286-PH355: A slideshow of photographs taken in Chitose, Japan by the veteran between 1951-1952; including photographs of jets; Chitose Base in Japan; local Japanese civilians and soldiers; Bridge; fellow soldiers Frisbie, Moorman, Coates, Warren, Pounds, Hunter, Allen, Vautherot, Lundberg, Moran, Wright, Fortner, Nelson, Webster, Van Salter, McHenry, Whitey, Donahue, Hernandez, Hayman, Love, Galbreath, Dayberry, Rew, and Fuller.
BOX-FOLDER MSS2209/7	Digital Prints, 1944-1989 1 folder PH362: Bridge with three pilots standing by a P-40 named "Miss Cappy" [1944]. PH363: P-51 Mustangs flying in formation taken by Bridge [1945]. PH364-PH368: Portrait of Bridge. PH369: Group portrait at the reunion of the 45th fighter squadron (09/1989).

Series II: Photographs

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER OVZ148/1	Digital Prints, undated 1 folder PH370: Bridge, George Hunter, George Dunlap, Bruce Campbell standing in front of a P-47 in Hawaii (undated).
BOX-FOLDER MSS2209/8	Digital Prints, undated 1 folder PH371-PH467: Bridge's collection of pictures of the 196th Squadron, California Air National Guard.
BOX-FOLDER MSS1659/6	Slides, 1941-1971 1 folder PH07-PH285: Sideshow documenting Bridge's service.
BOX-FOLDER MSS1659/7-10	Negatives, 1941-1989 4 folders PH470-PH471: Woss Brown, Don Stateman and unknown, 45th Fighter Group reunion in Las Vegas, Nevada (10/1984). PH472-PH502: 45th Fighter Group reunion in Kansas (11/1986). PH503-PH553: 45th Fighter Group reunion in La Jolla, California (1989). PH554-PH1008: Images documenting Bridge's service with the Seventh Fighter Command. Includes portraits, clippings, candid and posed images of Bridge and his fellow airmen on duty and off duty.
BOX-FOLDER MSS2209/10	Negatives, 1984-1989 1 folder PH470-PH471: Woss Brown, Don Stateman and unknown, 45th Fighter Group reunion in Las Vegas, Nevada (10/1984). PH472-PH502: 45th Fighter Group reunion in Kansas (11/1986). PH503-PH553: 45th Fighter Group reunion in La Jolla, California (1989).
BOX-FOLDER MSS2209/9	Photocopy of photographic print, 1954 1 folder PH468: Group portrait of pilots in front of a plane (undated). PH469: Planes in formation (07/1954).

Series III: Artifacts

BOX-FOLDER MSS2209/11	Artifact, undated 1 folder AF01: plaque dedicated to men of the 47th Fighter Squadron (undated). AF02: napkin from Operation Greenhouse Eniwetok Officers Mess with a picture of a cartoon soldier and A Bomb (undated). AF03-AF04: 2 copies of a decal for the California Air National Guard 196th Fighter Squadron (undated). AF05: plaque for the California Air National Guard 196th Fighter Squadron (undated).
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Series IV: Computer Files

BOX CDDVD34	Electronic file of photographs, undated 1 CD ID: AFC2001/001/34233 CF01 CF01: Contains photographs (PH286-PH355) in JPEG format, with playable slideshow.
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