

# COLORS OF WAR

DELVING INTO THE CHALLENGE HISTORIC ARCHIVES, WE PRESENT A FURTHER SELECTION OF WORLD WAR TWO COLOR IMAGES BY MICHAEL O'LEARY

Classic shot of a pilot maneuvering his Lightning from the ramp area onto the active runway. One can almost hear the deep rumble of the turbosupercharged Allison as the pilot manipulates the throttles. This Lockheed F-5G Lightning was assigned to the 7th Reconnaissance Group and was photographed by Robert Astrella as it headed out for a high-altitude flight over Occupied Europe. Unfortunately, the aircraft's serial has been stripped from the vertical tails and there is no way of identifying the photo-recon craft. Besides the national markings, the only cosmetic features are the bright red rudders and a red stripe on the cowlings of the V-1710s. During WWII, Chalgrove was used by the RAF and USAAF primarily as a photo-recon base. Today, it is home to the vintage Gloster Meteors operated by Martin Baker for ejection seat testing. Unfortunately, there is now a strong move by the British government to convert the historic airfield to housing for the homeless and illegal aliens.



Boeing B-17G-45-BO 42-97229 was named *Hi-Ho Silver* and was assigned to the 524th Bomb Squadron, 379th Bomb Group, with the code WA\*Q. Based at RAF Kimbolton, the Fort received extensive damage while on a mission over Germany on 23 March 1944.



With D-Day invasion stripes freshly applied, Lt. Harvie J. Arnold looks on as his crew services his 336th Fighter Squadron, 4th Fighter Group, P-51D 44-13307/VF\*J prior to another mission over France during early June 1944. Although it is a bit hard to read, the plane has the name *Butch* painted in white with a yellow outline on the forward lower cowl. On 18 June 1944, Arnold took off from Debden for a fighter sweep. At 9:10 that morning, the Mustang received multiple *flak* hits, damaging the coolant system. He jolted up on the other Mustangs departing the target area but the Merlin began to fall. Attempting a belly-landing near Dol-de-Bretagne, France, the Mustang's right wing caught a tree and the aircraft crashed and exploded.



The type of photo beloved by public relations officers. Waist gunner S/ Sgt. Frank Lusic was pulled aside and wrapped in belts of .50-caliber ammunition for a publicity shot. The aircraft is B-17F-55-BO 42-29524/RD\*D "*Meat Hound*" and was assigned to the 423rd Bomb Squadron, 306th Bomb Group. The bomber was transferred to the 358th BS, 303rd BG, with codes VK\*K. On 26 (also noted as the 11th) January 1944, the Fort was hit by an attacking *Luftwaffe* fighter over Oschersleben and most of the crew balled out over Holland's IJsselmeer (Inland sea). Unfortunately, four drowned, four became POWs, and one evaded. Second Lieutenant Jack Watson flew the aircraft home alone and crash-landed at Metfield, Suffolk.