

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS  
AIR FORCE BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS

IN THE MATTER OF:

DOCKET NUMBER: BC-2012-00730

(DECEASED)  
APPLICANT:

COUNSEL: NONE

HEARING DESIRED: NO

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APPLICANT REQUESTS THAT:

Her late husband be awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) for bombing missions during World War II (WWII).

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APPLICANT CONTENDS THAT:

She believes that her late husband was not awarded the DFC due to an administrative error. He flew 46 combat missions between August 24, 1944 and April 21, 1945. In researching this information she found there was a lot of confusion regarding the criteria for awarding the DFC by various commands at that time. She believes her late husband met the necessary criteria prior to departing England in 1945.

In support of her request, the applicant provides copies of documents extracted from his military personnel record, a copy of his death certificate, a copy of the "*Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal Criteria in the Army Air Forces in World War II*" by Barry L. Spink, Archivist, Air Force Historical Research Agency, and other supporting documents.

The applicant's complete submission, with attachments, is at Exhibit A.

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STATEMENT OF FACTS:

Documents in the decedent's Military Personnel Record indicate he served in the Army Air Corp from 8 February 1944 to 30 October 1945 in the grade of Captain (Capt). He was awarded the Air Medal with six oak leaf clusters (AM w/6 OLC) for his service in the European Theater from 27 July 1944 to 7 June 1945. Information submitted by the applicant reflects the decedent died on 6 December 1999.

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AIR FORCE EVALUATION:

HQ AFPC/DPSIDRA recommends denial. DPSIDRA states the applicant did not provide a signed recommendation from someone within the chain of command who has firsthand knowledge of the incident, a proposed citation, chain of command endorsement(s), nor eyewitness statement(s); furthermore the request was not submitted through congressional channels. Over the years the decedent and the applicant have placed numerous requests for entitlement to the DFC. Each request yielded no official documentation verifying entitlement to the DFC. On 3 December 1994 the decedent wrote to their office requesting entitlement to the DFC and on 10 March 1995, they advised him that they were unable to verify his entitlement to the DFC. On 20 November 1998 the applicant wrote to the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and on 11 December 1998 the Assistant Director, Veterans Benefits Policy, National Veterans Service advised her that a written recommendation must be made from someone who has firsthand knowledge of the act or achievement. In August 1999 the applicant submitted a request through congressional channels and in their response dated 14 September 1999, DPSIDRA provided the applicant a copy of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) rules along with a checklist of documentation needed to submit the DFC request and a list of potential sources of information.

The DFC may be awarded to any persons who, after 16 April 1917, while serving in any capacity with the United States Armed Forces, distinguished themselves by heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight. Heroism or achievement must be entirely distinctive, involving operations that are not routine. The DFC is not awarded for sustained operational flights.

The complete DPSIDRA evaluation is at Exhibit C.

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APPLICANT'S REVIEW OF AIR FORCE EVALUATION:

A copy of the Air Force evaluation was forwarded to the applicant for review and comment (Exhibit D). To date, this office has not received a response.

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ADDITIONAL AIR FORCE EVALUATION:

The SAFPC recommends denial. SAFPC states although the criteria for award of the Air Medal (AM) and Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) changed numerous times during the decedent's period of service, it is clear by the award of the AMs that he was appropriately recognized with the AM in a timely manner

following or just prior to each period of qualifying mission completion. There is no evidence in the decedent's military personnel record nor that provided by the applicant that indicates that the decedent was (or should have been) recommended for the DFC.

The complete SAFPC evaluation is at Exhibit E

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APPLICANT'S REVIEW OF ADDITIONAL AIR FORCE EVALUATION:

A copy of the Air Force evaluation was forwarded to the applicant for review and comment (Exhibit F). To date, this office has not received a response.

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THE BOARD CONCLUDES THAT:

1. The applicant has exhausted all remedies provided by existing law or regulations.
  2. The application was not timely filed; however, it is in the interest of justice to excuse the failure to timely file.
  3. Insufficient relevant evidence has been presented to demonstrate the existence of error or injustice. We took notice of the applicant's complete submission in judging the merits of the case; however, we agree with the opinion and recommendation of the Air Force office of primary responsibility and SAFPC and adopt their rationale as the basis for our conclusion that the applicant has not been the victim of an error or injustice. The personal sacrifice the decedent endured for our country is noted; however, insufficient evidence has been presented to warrant award of the DFC. Therefore, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, we find no basis to recommend granting the relief sought in this application.
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THE BOARD DETERMINES THAT:

The applicant be notified that the evidence presented did not demonstrate the existence of material error or injustice; that the application was denied without a personal appearance; and that the application will only be reconsidered upon the submission of newly discovered relevant evidence not considered with this application.

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The following members of the Board considered Docket Number BC-2012-00730 in Executive Session on 18 December 2012, under the provisions of AFI 36-2603:

Panel Chair  
Member  
Member

The following documentary evidence pertaining to Docket Number BC-2012-00730 was considered:

- Exhibit A. DD Form 149, dated 30 January 2012, w/atchs.
- Exhibit B. Applicant's Master Personnel Records.
- Exhibit C. Letter, AFPC/DPSIDRA, dated 27 April 2012.
- Exhibit D. Letter, SAF/MRBR, dated 7 May 2012.
- Exhibit E. Letter, SAFPC, dated 27 November 2012.
- Exhibit F. Letter, AFBCMR, dated 28 November 2012.

Panel Chair