

# LIBERTY AVIATION MUSEUM



Lawrence J. Van Malsen Collection

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## **Introduction**

This collection of papers was given to the Liberty Aviation Museum by the former Michigan Military Preservation Society in 2014 along with a large collection of military history objects. The MMPS is now defunct. They were in the process of opening a museum in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and the project never fully materialized. This collection of papers is a small collection of military papers of Lawrence J. Van Malsen who served in the US Army Air Forces during World War II and post war years in the Michigan National Guard. All papers were the property of Lawrence J. Van Malsen. Permission to use this collection for research purposes was granted by the donor.

## **Biographical Sketch**

This collection features archives of military records, personal correspondence, postcards, photographs, and personal papers from Lawrence J. Van Malsen who served in the US Army Air Forces during World War II. He was born 10 November 1924 in Grand Rapids, Michigan to Mr. James & Xaverine Van Malsen. After graduation from high school he entered the US Army Air Forces, upon completion of his basic training, he became a Flight Officer. He remained stateside for the remainder of the war as a pilot instructor in the USAAF. His station assignments during the war were at North Carolina State College Aviation School (cadet), Maxwell Field; Montgomery, Alabama (cadet), Door Field; Arcadia, Florida (cadet), GAAF; Greenwood, Mississippi (cadet), BAAF; Blytheville, Arkansas (cadet), TAAF; Panama City, Florida (flt. officer), and Memphis, Tennessee (flt. officer). He was honorably discharged from active service on 25 November 1945 at Patterson Field near Dayton, Ohio. Following his World War II service, he continued in the Air

Corps Reserves as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in Grand Rapids. In June 1947, he joined the Michigan Army National Guard as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant and served in Headquarters Company of the 126<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment. He was promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant in the early 1950s while still serving in the Michigan Guard (Second Michigan). While in the Guard, his duty included being a Platoon Leader, Executive Officer, an S-4, and a Company Commander. He actively served in the Michigan Army National Guard until the mid-1950s. Lawrence J. Van Malsen died on 7 October 1999 and was buried in Riverbend Cemetery in Grand Rapids.

### **Scope and Content**

This collection consists of several documents and records related to his military service during World War II and Reserves service in the Army Air Forces, following WWII. They include individual flight records December 1944 thru April 1948. He started as an Instructor Pilot and ended as a Liaison Pilot in the AAF. The records also include physical examination forms, property issue data forms, records while he was stationed in Memphis and Blytheville, Arkansas, and personal orders. There are thirty-seven (37) photographs of his military service and personal photographs of aviation related photography, i.e. airplanes etc... Finally, the collection consists of personal correspondence, i.e. letters, a Christmas card, and postcards; souvenir postcards, personal news clippings, photocopied news articles, and general information. A portion of the records deal with his service while in the Michigan Army National Guard as well.

Overall, the original order, has been preserved, however, the original folders and other loose papers were unorganized and were processed and arranged into five (5) single tab file folders. Therefore, the system of arrangement for this collection is by series into five (5) single tab file folders in one legal size archival storage box. The aggregate footprint of the records and documents measure at 1 cubic foot.

### **Inventory**

#### **Folder 1—Van Malsen, Lawrence J. (Form 5) folder & Personal Orders folder**

##### *Van Malsen, Lawrence J. (Form 5) folder*

Photocopy of “Record of All Military Service”

Pilot Flight Test Report

Thirty-One (31) “Individual Flight Record” forms, dated 1944 thru 1948.

“Aeronautical Rating Board” reports from the Michigan Army National Guard

“Special Orders” document, dated 1948

Physical Examination forms, dated 1948.

“Flight Status” document, 7 April 1948

“Removal of Flying Suspension” form, dated July 1945

“Suspension of Flying Duties” form due to hospitalization, dated July 1945

“Temporary Record of Compliance” certificates, dated January & May 1945

Return to flight duty form, dated February 1945

“Pilot Instrument Certificate Application and Flight Check” form, dated December 1944

“Actual Instrument Flying Time” form, dated January 1945

“Transition Flying Course Certificate,” dated December 1944

Course of Instruction Completion forms, December 1944

USAAF “Proficiency Card” form, dated 1944

USAAF Training Command “Twin Engine Pilot Training” course completion certificate, dated 23 December 1944

USAAF “Elementary Flying School” completion certificate, dated 27 June 1944

***Personal Orders folder***

Mailing address notification card (sent to families so they aware of where to send mail to their loved ones)

“Notification of Termination of Aviation Cadet Status” form, dated December 1944

Sixteen (16) “Special Orders” assignment documents, dated December 1944

“Appointment of Flight Officer” correspondence from Headquarters USAAF Eastern Flying Training Command, dated December 1944

**Folder 2—Blytheville Documents folder & Memphis Documents folder**

***Blytheville Folder***

Two (2) “Special Orders No. 166” documents, dated June 1945

Two (2) “Special Orders No. 143” documents, dated May 1945

Two (2) “War Finance, Reimbursement Travel” form, dated 3 August 1945 & 27 July 1945

“Personal Affairs Statement” form, dated 6 February 1945

“Special Orders No. 32” document, dated February 1945

“Special Orders No. 320” document, dated December 1944

“Special Orders No. 11” document, dated January 1945

“Operations Order No. 11” document, January 1945

“Special Orders No. 166” document, dated June 1945

“Special Orders No. 16” document, dated January 1945

USAAF property return (Officer’s Final Clearance) form, dated 9 February 1945

USAAF “Medical Statement” form

USAAF appointment to “Airdrome Officer” correspondence, dated 1 February 1945

“Special Orders No. 32” documents, dated February 1945

“B-25 Pattern” document

“B-25 Check List” document

“B-25—Preflight Outline on Class 5 Aircraft” document

***Memphis Folder***

“Assignment of Quarters” form, dated 20 June 1945

“Processing of Orders Reporting to Duty” form, dated 14 May 1945

“Special Orders No. 172” documents, dated June 1945

“Special Orders No.” documents, dated 1945

Ten (10) “Operations Orders No. 158” documents, dated July 1945

“Section 1—Records Check List” form, dated November 1945

“Telephone Clearances” form, dated September 1945

“Personal Memorandum No. 263” documents, dated September 1945

Memorandum for Separation of Service for G.I. Bill of Rights” form, dated September 1945

Three (3) “Request for Termination of Quarters” form, dated October 1945

Three (3) “Termination of Assignment of Quarters” form, dated October 1945

Ten (10) “Operations Order No. 244” documents, dated October 1945

“Property Adjustment” form, dated October 1945

Four (4) “Operations Order No. 247” documents, dated October 1945

Seven (7) “Special Orders No. 309” documents, dated November 1945

### **Folder 3—Property Issue Data folder**

#### ***Property Issue Data Folder***

“Application for Dependency Benefits” form, dated 23 April 1943

“Certificate In Lieu of WD AGO Form #41” form, dated 8 February 1945

“Insurance Beneficiary in Case of Death” form, dated ca. 1943

“Excess Leave Certificate” form, dated 23 November 1945

“Hand Receipt for Flying Equipment Issued” card, dated ca. 1944

“Property Issue Slip” form, issued at Tyndell Field, Florida

“Requisition and Shipping Ticket” form, dated June 1945

“Memorandum Receipt” form, dated September 1945

“Stores Charge” form, dated 3 March?

“Credit” issued property form, dated ca. 1944

“Memorandum Receipt” form, dated November 1945

“Memorandum Receipt” form, dated November 1945

“Memorandum Receipt” form, dated November 1945

“Property Issue Slip” form, issued at Blytheville, Arkansas, issued ca. 1945

Three (3) “Property Issue Slip” form, dated January 1945

Lost property forms concerning an A-4 Summer Flying Suit, dated April-May 1945

“Claim for Settlement—Unused Leave” form, issued ca. 1946

“Claim for Settlement—Unused Leave” form

“Veteran’s Application for a Refresher/Retraining Course” form, dated February 1946

“Veteran’s Application for a Refresher/Retraining Course” form, dated March 1946

#### **Folder 4—Photographs**

Photograph of cadet L. Van Malsen at Fort Custer Training Center in Western Michigan, dated 6 February 1943

Four (4) photographs of Lawrence Van Malsen, Aviation Cadet at Camp Blanding, Florida, ca. Feb.-June 1943

Photograph of L. Van Malsen sitting on a railing of barracks housing at Maxwell Field, Alabama, dated February 1944

Five (5) photographs of L.V.M. standing by barracks housing in his Class A's dress uniform, ca. 1944

Photograph of Recreation Hall & Game Room at Door Field, Florida, ca. 1944

Photograph of Mess Hall & Quadrangle at Door Field, Florida, ca. 1944

Photograph of Administration Bldg. at Door Field, Florida, ca. 1944

Two (2) Photographs of the swimming pool at Door Field, Florida, ca. 1944

Photograph of L.V.M. standing by a training airplane at Door Field, Florida, ca. 1944

Photograph of L.V.M. standing by a training airplane at Door Field, Florida w/ registration no. 265, ca. 1944

Photograph of L.V.M. sitting in a training airplane at Door Field, Florida w/ registration no. 265, ca. 1944

Two (2) photographs of L.V.M. dressed in everyday service uniform standing in an open field at Greenwood, Mississippi, ca. August 1944 (Reverse of photos have stamped text, "Bryan Studios, Greenwood, Miss., Clarksdale, Miss.")

Two (2) photographs of L.V.M. by and in a training airplane (BT-13A), uncertain of location, ca. 1944

Large photograph of a BT-13A at Greenwood, Mississippi, GAAF, ca. 1944

Large photograph of Squadron 7 at GAAF, Mississippi, dated July 1944 (handwritten text indicates location of L.V.M. in group)

Large photograph of Squadron 7 at GAAF, Mississippi, dated July 1944 (handwritten text indicates several names and location of individuals in squadron photograph)

Souvenir photograph of Officer's Club at Memphis, TN. Army Air Base, ca. 1945

Souvenir photograph of exterior of Officer's Club at Memphis, TN. Army Air Base, ca. 1945

Souvenir photograph of bar area in the Officer's Club at Memphis, TN. Army Air Base, ca. 1945

Souvenir photograph of dining room in Officer's Club at Memphis, TN. Army Air Base, ca. 1945

Souvenir photograph of relaxation area in Officer's Club at Memphis, TN. Army Air Base, ca. 1945

Photograph of L.V.M. in AAF uniform standing outside w/ snow on ground, uncertain of location, ca. 1943-45

Photograph of L.V.M. in his R.O.T.C. uniform, ca. 1942-43

Photograph of L.V.M. in his USAAF, Class A, uniform, ca. 1943-45

Photograph of L.V.M. in his USAAF service uniform w/ coloring on the cheeks and grass, ca. 1943-45

Photograph of Royal Air Force, Spitfire, MK923 in flight. Flown and owned by Jerry Billing from 1972-1995. Photo autographed by Jerry Billing in 1987.

Photograph of a B-24 Liberator in flight, ca. 1980s.

Photograph of the Gulf Coast Wing of the Commemorative Air Force's "Texas Raiders" B-17G, ca. 1980s

Photograph of US Air Force, C-5 Galaxy Cargo Plane in flight, ca. 1990s

#### **Folder 5—Correspondence & Postcards and Misc. Items**

Postcard w/ message to parents from L.V.M. while in Chattanooga, TN., postmarked 2 February 1943, Postcard Image: Lookout Mountain (color postcard)



Postcard w/ message from L.V.M. while in Camp Blanding, Florida, postmarked 27 April 1943, Postcard Image: College of Law @ University of Florida, Gainesville, FL. (color postcard)

Postcard w/ message to parents from L.V.M. while in Camp Blanding Training Facility, postmarked in Lake City, Florida in April 1943, Postcard Image: Post Office in Lake City, FL. (color postcard)

Souvenir Folder illustrated cards of landmarks in Daytona Beach, Florida sent to his parents while he was stationed at Camp Blanding, ca. 1943

Souvenir Folder illustrated cards of landmarks in Jacksonville, Florida sent to his parents while he was stationed at Camp Blanding, ca. 1943

Postcard from USO—National Catholic Community Service indicating that L.V.M. visited the U.S.O. club there and it explains all the amenities that were available to soldiers, postmarked April 1943 in Jacksonville, FL.

Correspondence from Riddle Aeronautical Institute at Door Field, FL. to L.V.M.s parents that he would receive his primary training there as a Flying Cadet, dated 20 May 1944

Christmas card from L.V.M. (while stationed in Blytheville, Arkansas) to his parents in Grand Rapids, Mich., dated 1 December 1944

Postcard of High School in Leesburg, FL., ca. 1943

Postcard of Venetian Gardens and Baseball Park on Lake Harris in Leesburg, FL., ca. 1943

Postcard of Radio City, N.B.C. Studios in Hollywood, California, ca. 1940s-50s

Collage of newspaper clippings remembering/recording L.V.M.s service updates on training and graduation from flight school in WWII, engagement, and marriage to Marjorie Read (ages 20 & 21), and birth of their daughter Janice Ann on 14

January 1947, a postcard from Pensacola, Florida, as well as newspaper clippings of Van Malsen's service in the Michigan National Guard, post WWII.

Two (2) Photocopies of a newspaper article of the death of WWII legend, Pappy Boyington

Poster or clipping of a B-25 Mitchell bomber from a WWII era periodical

Northern Air Service Apprentice Instructor Aids document, ca. 1940s.

\* Objects in relation to the Lawrence J. Van Malsen papers of the Michigan Military Preservation Society Collection, Accession 2014.63, can be viewed upon request, on site, at the Liberty Aviation Museum in Port Clinton, Ohio. \*