

Tony L. Loncarich
Tail Gunner
390th BG – 571 BS
Distinguished Flying Cross
Air Medal w/4 Oak Leaf Clusters

By Name						
NAME	Position	CRW	Y_M_D	SER_NR	MSN	TARGET
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	67	440501	231041	098	Sarreguimines FR
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	67	440507	231041	099	Berlin GE
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	66	440508	297473	100	Berlin GE
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	66	440512	297473	104	Brux Czechoslovakia
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	66	440513	231041	105	Osnabruck GE
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	66	440519	231041	106	Berlin GE
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	66	440523	231041	108	Melun FR
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	66	440524	231041	109	Berlin GE
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	66	440525	231041	110	St. Valery FR
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	63	440528	2107070	113	Magdeburg GE
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	66	440530	231041	115	Troyes FR
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	66	440531	2107070	116	Osnabruck GE
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	66	440604	46007	119	Boulogne FR
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	66	440605	2102972	120	Boulogne FR
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	66	440606	2107070	121	Caen coast FR
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	66	440607	337555	124	Nantes FR
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	PPP	440615	46134	129	Misburg GE
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440618	2102972	130	Brunsbüttel GE
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440619	2102972	131	Corme-Ecluse FR
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440620	337519	132	Fallersleben GE
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440621	2102972	134	Ruhland GE
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440626	2102972	141	Drohobycz Poland
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440705	2102972	143	Beziers FR
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440711	2102972	147	Munich GE
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440724	2102972	156	Villedieu-les-Poêles
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440725	2102972	157	St. Lo FR
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440728	2102972	158	Merseburg GE
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440729	2102972	159	Merseburg GE
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440801	2102972	161	Area 13 FR
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440803	337519	164	Paris area-abandoned
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440806	2102972	166	Ragmel Poland
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440807	2102972	170	Trzebina Poland
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440808	2102972	171	Zilistea Romania
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440812	2102972	172	Toulouse FR
Loncarich, Tony L	Tail Gunner	81	440818	2102972	176	Pacy-sur-Armançon FR

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(This diary by Tony Loncarich was transcribed from Xeroxed hand-written pages by the 390th Research Department.)

1. Sarreguimines, Fr.

This was my first one and I was quite excited. On the take-off I caught my chute on the armor plating and it popped open. There were no spare chutes on the ship so Mac and I stuffed mine together and Bayer took it. I rode the waist that day and Robinson rode the tail. We never met much flak and we never saw any enemy fighters. We got back quite late and I was really glad to get to bed. I guess my chute would have opened if we had needed it. That is what the chute rigger told me, when I took it up to him that nite but I would have hated to use it.

2. Berlin, Gr.

They scrubbed this mission this morning in a row and I was glad of it but we had to go anyway. Everyone stops breathing when they see Berlin on the map. We saw no enemy fighters but the flak over the target was so thick that I could hardly see thru it. You have about 25 minutes of solid flak and it follows you all over the sky. I was so happy when we left Berlin and started our journey home. We had three flak holes in the wings so that wasn't so bad. It sure was good to see that English coast and better to see our own field and set down. Those missions are really a strain.

3. Berlin, Gr.

This was the second trip to Berlin in two days. I felt as tense when we left that morning and I know everyone else did to. We knew what it was like now and that made it all the worse. About 20 miles from the target our #2 engine blew a piston and we started to lose oil. The pilot should have feathered it but he wanted to make the run first. The flak was just as heavy but not as accurate. We left the formation and the two ships on our wing got shot down by fighters right after we lost them. We feathered the engine over Caens and came home on three engines. It was good to land in the field that night.

4. Brux, Czechoslovakia

This was really a long mission. We bombed a synthetic plant. We didn't get any flak because we evaded it. Fighters hit a group in front of us and there were ships going down all over the area. Whenever we looked we could see chutes going down and airplanes crashing. No one hit us tho due to our close formation. Such a mission is still a strain. We were on oxygen about 9 hours and that in itself is such a strain. It hasn't been too rough so far but it is not easy, none of it is.

5. Osnabruck, Gr.

Today we had another deep penetration and bombed a railroad yard. We again made a sharp turn and got rid of the flak. I hate the look of that stuff. It's a black puff and throws steel all over the sky. We never saw any enemy fighters again today but we never get any rest while in the air. You have to be watching continually because they can hit anytime. We had an awful good escort as we were quite safe with them flying right along beside us. It really feels good to see your escort right beside you all the time.

6. Berlin, Gr.

This was our first rough mission. The flak wasn't so bad but our escort was late and fighters hit us over Denmark. They hit us with at least three 20 mm. One went in the nose and hit our navigator in the chin. It took his whole chin off but Bayer stopped the bleeding. One shell exploded between the waist gunners and Mac got several small pieces in his leg. They made three passes at us and then left. There must have been about 50 of them. We came back okay after we left Denmark. The navigator went to the hospital and is doing quite well. Mac is out already. He wasn't hurt very bad. Those fighters are rough and now I wonder if I will ever get thru. It is rough and I mean really rough.

7. Melun, Fr.

This turned out to be an easy raid because we didn't get to drop our bombs due to clouds over the target. We circled for an hour and I don't like that, not over enemy territory. We never saw much flak tho and we never saw any enemy planes. We got credit for the mission though as that was all I cared about. That was a long way to carry bombs. Those bombs were all bought back to the field and not a thing was accomplished but getting credit is all that I care about.

8. Berlin, Gr

This mission was another one that had to be sweated out because going to Berlin is never an easy run. The flak was really heavy but we never got hit as we were quite lucky. I can't understand how we went thru all that flak and never got hit. I get more scared of that flak every dam run. It really can knock the hell out of a ship. I hope we never have to go back to Berlin. I think it is pretty well bombed out now so we may not ever have to go back there.

9. St. Valery, Fr.

This was really an easy mission. If they were all like this it wouldn't be so bad. The target was right on the French coast and we dropped our bombs before we even reached the coast. The mission was only 3 hours long so that was the shortest one we have ever had. All our bombs hit in the water and the bombing was really poor. I hope I can have about 10 of those in the row and be very happy about it. I know I won't have that much luck though.

10. Magdeburg, Gr.

I flew with another crew on this mission and it was rough. On the bomb run about 200 German fighters came through our group. They knocked the two ships down off of our wing but we never got hit once. There were enemy fighters all over the sky. They made two passes at us that day. We lost five ships from our group. We finally picked up our escort which was a relief. I sure was glad to get back that nite. My darn knees were still weak when we landed. I guess the strain causes most out of the nervousness.

11. Troyes, Fr.

This was a nice day for bombing and the sky was clear over the target. It was really the first target I have seen so clear from the air and we wiped it out completely. Every bomb hit right in the railroad yards. There wasn't very much flak and no fighters at all. We almost ran into another group of 17's tho. I don't know how we got thru without a crash. All in all the mission was fairly easy but the easy ones can't make up for all the hard ones you have to make.

12. Osnabruck, Gr.

This was our second time to this target and it wasn't as bad as I thought it would be. It really is a long mission and anything can happen on deep penetration. There was a lot of flak but our leader turned out of it. We never got any hits on this ship that day. That flak really goes thru a plane when it hits it. We never saw any enemy fighters and I was glad of that. I hate to see those jerries hit a formation. They always get at least one plane on every pass.

13. Boulogne, Fr.

This was an easy mission for us. We were bombing coastal defenses and there wasn't very much flak even tho it was accurate. The flak in France is always accurate because they figure they can knock down a lot of ships before they get to the target. We usually navigate around the flak tho, but sometimes they move the guns and we run into the stuff. Soon will be a happy day for me when I finish my tour. I never will fly again.

14. Abbeyville, Fr.

This was suppose to be an easy mission but we took the wrong route and went over Diepple. Those boys are really good with flak guns. They had the bead on us and were shooting hell out of our ships. I saw four planes go down right off our own wing. I think the men got out of one. Our waist gunner Robinson got hit in the neck and one piece hit his helmet and gave him a slight concussion. They were going to go back again but didn't, thank God. When we landed we counted 180 holes in the ship. I had one in the tail. The ammunition box saved my neck. That flak is rough and I sure didn't like it, especially when it is so dam accurate that every puff can be heard hitting the ship.

15. Caen, Fr. D-Day

This was the day that everyone was waiting for but it meant work for us. We were up at 11:00 that nite and when they told us it was D-Day everyone was quiet and solemn. We bombed coastal defenses that day. We did a good job but it was cloudy so we couldn't see any ground action. We saw a lot of conveyes and that was all. We bombed right in front of the landing troops. We never had any trouble on this trip. Never even saw any flak or enemy fighters. One of our engines went out but we stayed with the formation. We were suppose to go out that afternoon but they never had any ships left.

16. Nantes, Fr.

This was suppose to be a milk run but it turned out to be one of our hardest missions. We were bombing a bridge and ran into intense flak. We had two engines knocked out and dropped down to 8,000 feet from 25,000 in a few seconds. We were all by ourself and still losing altitude. We started throwing everything out of the ship. We dropped the ball turret and that saved us. We were able to hold our altitude. We then threw out all of our guns and ammunitions. If fighters would have hit us we would have been goners. We were suppose to have fighter support but it never arrived. Flying over France at 7,000 feet isn't a happy feeling. We soon left the enemy coast but we still had two hours of ocean to fly over and we were afraid we would have to ditch the plane. I did plenty of praying that day. Our bombardier was hit on the hand by flak but he wasn't hurt too bad. It was really good to see the English coast. We made a good landing but the brakes failed and we almost over-shot the runway. We also had a control cable out that day. I really sweat that mission out that day. We got back tho so that is all that counts. Hope I never have another one like that.

17. Hannover, Gr.

I flew this mission with another crew who was on their last mission. It really was a long one, lasting eight hours. I only had 15 minutes sleep so that made it worse. We were suppose to hit an oil field but the weather was bad as so we bombed Hannover. The flak was intense and accurate. We got one engine knocked out by flak but we stayed in formation. We all came back safely. We had good fighter support so we didn't see any fighters. It sure was good to land because I was really tired. As far as that is concerned it is always good to get down on your own field.

18. Hannover, Gr.

This was our second mission to Hannover in two days. Just before we got to the target we lost an engine so we had to drop our bombs before the target. We couldn't keep up with the formation so we were by ourself again over enemy territory. We called for fighters but never got any. The whole area under us

was on fire from the bombs that were dropped. We were soon over the North Sea and then I felt a lot better. We all moved to the front of the ship to save gas so we made it okay. We sure have lost our share of engines since we have been flying.

19. Bordeaux, Fr.

This was a long mission down in France. We bombed an airfield and really wiped it out. There wasn't a bit of flak so that made the bombing a lot easier. We expected enemy fighters because the Germans have moved all their fighters down in this area. We never saw any enemy fighters tho and we never even had any escort on the way back. We took a different route back so we missed our escort. Its not much fun flying over enemy territory without any escort in sight. We made it easy tho.

20. Fallersleben, Gr

We really had troubles this mission. The weather closed in over the target and we couldn't even keep up with our formation. We dropped our bombs on the city because we couldn't see the target. We came back with another Group because we lost ours in the overcast. Then we had to let down thru a heavy ceiling which is really rough when there are so many ships in the air. We made it okay tho so that is the important thing.

21. Ruhrland, Gr. – Shuttle to Russia

This was the first target we hit on our shuttle into Russia. We wiped out the target which was an oil refinery. The flak wasn't so bad. We continued on our way toward Russia. We ran into fighters outside of Warsaw. They only made one pass and never got any of us. We sure did have a long trip. It took eleven hours to fly this run and we were at 14,000 feet all the way across enemy territory. It's a funny feeling to look down on German airfields and see their planes all over the place. We soon passed over the lines. We couldn't see any fighting though due to clouds. We were short on gas but we made it okay. We had to move to another field because the jerry tried to bomb the field we were on. He did bomb a field close by. They really knocked the hell out of the field we landed there the next day and the whole field was covered with mines. Had to be careful where you walked. Destroyed planes were all over the place. They say the bombing was worse than Pearl Harbor. They bombed and strafed the field for four hours. I am glad I wasn't there. The Russians set off all the mines, I guess quite a few of them got killed doing it too. I sure was glad to get out of there. We know that the Germans were out to make our shuttle missions a failure. They almost succeeded too.

22. Drohobycz, Poland – Shuttle to Italy

We hit this oil refinery on our shuttle from Russia to Italy. This was an oil refinery and we destroyed it too. The flak was really accurate there and we got a few holes. We flew across Poland, Yugoslavia and Hungary. All this country was really mountainous. It took us eight hours to get to Italy. We never saw any enemy fighters on this trip. Italy sure did look good though. Friendly territory always looks good after spending 8 hours flying over enemy territory. This wasn't such a bad trip because we never got hit by fighters but 2 hours on oxygen is a strain in itself.

23. Beziers, Fr.

This was our final target on the shuttle run, We bombed a marshalling yard and we destroyed it. We had one fighter drop two bombs on us while we were over Corsica. He never hit anyone tho but he got away without any one getting a shot at him. We had to leave the formation at the French coast because our tanks were reading empty. Just as we hit the runway three of our engines cut out. We almost crashed but the pilot held it okay. We never had a drop of gas in those engines. We were lucky to make it back. Hope I live thru these last few.

24. Munich, Gr.

This was one of our longest missions. We were trying to knock out factories that build the flying bombs. The flak over the target was really heavy but we had an overcast so that saved a lot of ships. We dropped our bombs on the city because we couldn't see the target. There were about 500 planes over Munich that day so there wasn't much left when we started for home. Never saw a single enemy fighter on this mission. They must be saving their fighters for something else. I hope it isn't to stop the bombers.

25. St. Lo, Fr

We had an easy mission today. We were suppose to bomb German troops on the Normandy front. It was pretty cloudy so I don't know how good a job we did. Some of the bombs on our ship fell out within our own lines. Got hell for that. The whole 8th Air Force bombed the same target. The sky was full of bombers. Saw one blow up in mid-air due to a direct hit. The flak never bothered us very much tho. It was an easy mission but it was still long.

26. St. Lo, Fr

We expected this one to be easy because it was yesterday, but we went all the way down to 12,000 feet to bomb and flak at that altitude is to darn accurate. They really poured it to us but we got thru okay. I could hear all those bursts hitting the ship and yet we never had so many holes. The mission wasn't too bad because it was short and that is really nice. I would like about five in a row over there if they would just go up a little higher.

27. Merseburg, Gr.

We went after an oil refinery today and it was rough. The flak was so heavy that you could hardly see thru it. Mac got four holes. I heard a lot of flak right under us tho. I don't see how we got thru that stuff but we made it in fine shape. We never saw any enemy fighters but we expected them in this area. Hope we don't have to go back there but we will likely have to because we bombed through the clouds and most likely missed the factory. Lost Robinson today. His nerves crashed on him.

28. Meresburg, Gr.

I really sweated this one out and it was really rough. We were in flak for 10 minutes. It followed us where ever we turned and I could hear them all burst. I don't know how we all got thru that stuff. We also ran into some fighters. They didn't hit our group. They were after the stragglers. I saw them shoot five bombers down. Our 51's came and drove them off. These missions seem to get rougher every day. I think we knocked that factory out today tho so maybe we won't have to go back there. I hope.

29. Area 13, Fr.

Today we dropped supplies to the French in the Alp Mountains. We flew down a valley at 500 feet and dropped the supplies. You could see the French waving as we passed over. It was really a long mission but it was easy. We could even see Switzerland today. That country is really rugged and we could see Mt. Matterhorn sticking above the clouds. It really was a beautiful sight to see all those chutes going down. I could stand about six more of those missions so I could finish up. Really sweating these missions out now. Will really be glad to finish if I do.

30. Paris area, Fr.

There wasn't much to this mission because they scrubbed it as soon as we got to France. The weather was too bad so we turned around and came back. We got credit for the mission because we were over enemy territory and we also saw flak over the front lines. It was really easy and I could stand five more of these quite easily. This was one of those easy missions which there are so few of.

31. Ragmel, E. Poland – Shuttle to Russia

This was our first target on our shuttle into Russia. The target was a Folk Wolf factory and we knocked it out. The flak wasn't as bad at the target but we had fighters attacking us all the way across East Prussia. They were green tho and they never got any of our ships. There were 8 of them, came at our tail and I have them off with one burst. I think they were more afraid than I was. Russian lines were a lot closer this time than they were the last time I went over there. Flew the north Atlantic all the way to the target.

32. Trzebina, Poland

We made this mission out of Russia to bomb an oil refinery. We flew all over the country to find the target and we really hit it on the nose. Those oil refineries always leave a fire that you can see for miles. We didn't have any flak at the target. We did have a few fighters but they never bothered us. Even the Russians shot flak at us on the way back. It was pretty close too. The mission was an easy one tho and I could stand a couple more of those to finish up on.

33. Buzau, Romania

We bombed an airfield on our way to Italy. There were suppose to be 50 guns at the target but they were all poor shots because the flak was way down below us. Never even saw an enemy fighter on this trip. Really did expect a lot of them tho. Flew over quite a few German airfields. We really knocked out this target. You could see the hangers go up in smoke. I suppose we got quite a few planes also. It was a long trip from Russia to Italy but it was an easy target.

34. Toulouse, Fr.

This was our first target on the way home. It was an airfield right close to the Spanish border. The flak was heavy but it was all down below us. Could see the target very clearly and the bombing was good. Never saw an enemy fighter on this trip either. I hate to see them because they can knock a ship down every time they make a pass at us. Sure hope my last one is a milk run. I am really sweating it out now. Most likely be a rough one tho. Just by luck.

35. Pacy-sur-Ormancon, Fr.

Today was my last one and now I feel like a new man. We bombed an oil storage depot at 12,000 feet but there wasn't any flak. I still sweat out the mission. We almost got shot down because of poor navigation. We came right over the trapped Germans at Falaise and they shot the hell out of us but no one went down. Scared the heck out of me. Sure was good to set foot on that good old earth today. Hope I never do have to fly again. My tour is done, thank God.



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