



John Wesley “Woody” Wood

Technical Sergeant, Army Air Corps

World War II

March 12, 1943 – March 26, 1946

From our hometown of Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, four brothers and I went into service, four of us in WWII. When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, I had two brothers in service. When the deferment of a third brother ended, he and I went to Scott Air Corps Base Field, St. Louis where we were inducted. After then days, my brother went to engineers and I was shipped to Mississippi.

After basic training at Keesler Field, Biloxi, Mississippi, I was promoted to Private First Class and sent to Love Field in Dallas, Texas, where I went to aircraft mechanics school. From there I went to Laredo to gunnery school and then to Shepherd Field in Wichita Falls, Texas. In December 1943 our unit was sent to Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio to await overseas assignment. During an epidemic of scarlet fever, I was hospitalized for 46 days and the Unit B-25 and B-26, which was a twin-engine-bomber unit, went to the South Pacific without me. At the 60th reunion of the group, I met the pilot for the first time since 1943.

I was transferred to Blackland Air Force Base to a B-25 and B-26 Twin Engine Advanced Training School where I was a crew chief instructor on B-26's for several

months. While stationed at Waco, I met Doris Buice and we married just before I got out of service in December, 1945.

For several months I trained at Chenute Field, Illinois, in a larger B-24 bomber unit. When the war ended, I was then transferred to Camp Atterbury, Indiana, but the basis for discharge was changed from points to months of service and I didn't get out until March 26, 1946.

My military service helped me mature, to grow up rather rapidly and realize what my responsibilities were. I enjoyed serving and, in those days, we all had a mission and an ambition to play a real active part in the war. I was so disappointed that I didn't get to go overseas as my three brothers did. We all came back by the grace of God.

After graduating from Baylor University, I worked in the construction business mostly. After several years, I opened up my own construction business, and we do commercial construction in about 26 different states. From Amarillo we moved to Tyler in 1964, but we didn't want to join GABC because it was too large of a church with almost 500 members.

I was a Christian when I went into service and had a very strong Christian mother and daddy. I shared my faith and groups of us would get together for Bible study and prayer. God has been very, very good to my wife and me, our two children and four grandchildren. He has blessed our lives richly.