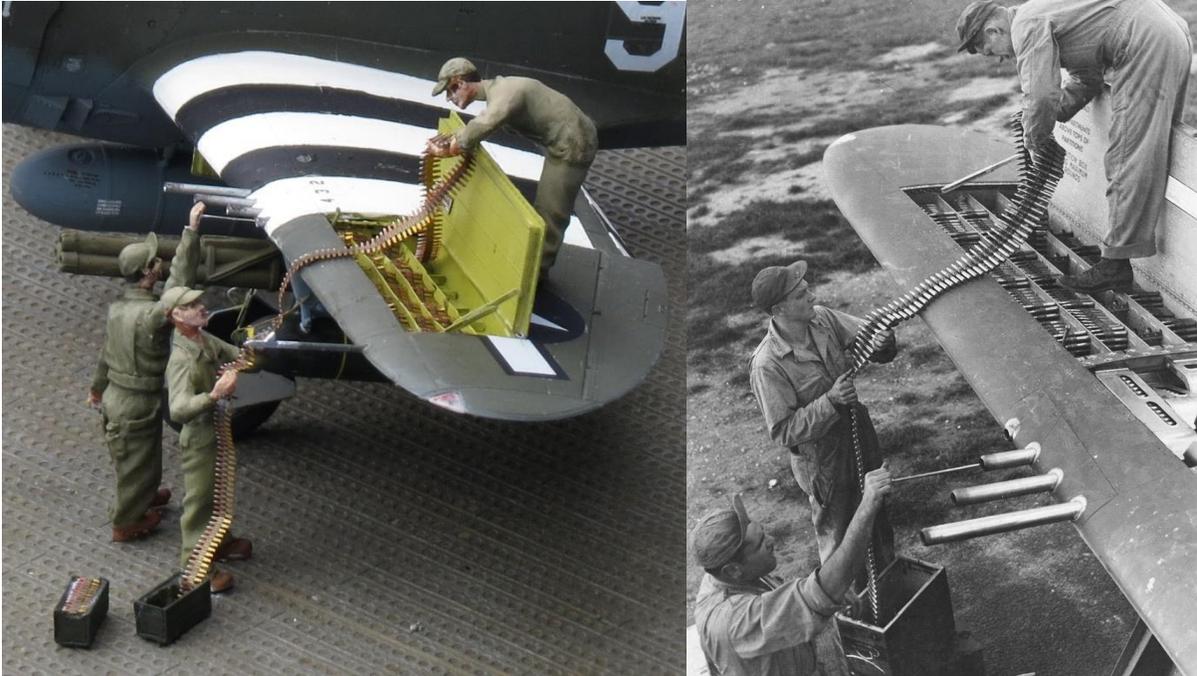


Model of 2nd Lt Harry Strahlendorf's P-47 'Razorback' Thunderbolt added to the Heritage Centre display

A new 1/48th scale model diorama has been added to the display cabinet describing an American pilot, 2nd Lt. Harry 'Pop' Strahlendorf, who was based at Bisterne Advanced Landing Ground with the 404th Fighter Squadron, during the D-Day period in 1944.



His P-47 Thunderbolt was named 'Eddie Nor II' after his wife, Edna Lenore. The model diorama depicts a daily scene at the time, with the ground crew loading the ammunition bays and cleaning the guns in the wings, prior to a mission, as seen in this 1944 photo.



The Squadron moved from Bisterne to La Londe (US Airfield A-6, 1 mile north of St Mere Eglise in Normandy) on 23rd June 1944. At 0820 hrs on the following day, Harry was on his 48th combat mission, in company with six other pilots from the Squadron, attacking an anti-aircraft gun post on the outskirts of Cherbourg, when his aircraft was hit by a shell burst, which blew off the aircraft's tail.



The story of how the French hid his body from the Germans, then subsequently buried him next to the wrecked aircraft, and how his family discovered the details of what had happened, many years afterwards, is told in the Heritage Centre display, together with an American flag, flown from the Capitol, in Washington DC, in his honour, many years later.



Fifty years after his death, the local people created a new park in his honour, in the city, and a memorial was unveiled marking the crash site; a sincere expression of the appreciation of the French people of Cherbourg, which is inscribed:

“TO THE MEMORY OF THE AMERICAN LIEUTENANT
HARRY W. STRAHLENDORF
PILOT OF THE 371st FIGHTER GROUP, 404th SQUADRON
9th U.S. AIR FORCE
KILLED IN ACTION DURING THE AERIAL ASSAULT
FOR THE LIBERATION OF CHERBOURG
JUNE 24, 1944”



He was known as 'Pop' in the Squadron, the 'Grandfather' among the pilots, as he was much older than most of the young pilots of the 404th, with whom he flew his 48 combat missions. **He was just 29 years old.**

If you wish to know more about his story, there is a link at:

<https://371stfightergroup.wordpress.com/2014/06/24/a-summer-of-sacrifice-begins-remembering-harry-w-pop-strahlendorf/>