

Tom Molbeck, Director
City of Racine Parks and Recreation and Cultural Services
800 Center Street, Room 127
Racine, WI 53403

01 October 2018

Mr. Molbeck,

Please consider this request to have a commemorative plaque and boulder installed in Park Place near the corner of 6th St and Lake Ave in downtown Racine.

The plaque would commemorate a touring exhibit of a German warplane behind the old Hotel Racine in June 1942, and the accomplishments of my father during WWII.

Although the exact wording of the plaque has not yet been determined, these are the details:

A Messerschmitt Bf-109 which had at one time been flown by a German Ace, was brought down by RAF Spitfires during the Battle of Britain. The warplane was sent on tour of the United States to raise funds for the British and American war effort, and in June 1942 the exhibit appeared in downtown Racine.

My father, Robert J Goebel, was nineteen years old at the time and a recent graduate of St. Catherine's High School in Racine. He walked from the family residence on Yout Street to view the warplane exhibit. While the RAF Sergeant guarding the plane was otherwise occupied, my father climbed into the cockpit and imagined himself defending the skies of Europe. The incident was to have a lasting impression on him, and he remarked later that from that point on he knew that he wanted to be a fighter pilot.

After joining the Army Air Corps, he was sent to Italy in the spring of 1944 to join the 31st Fighter Group, which had just transitioned from the British Spitfire to the new P-51 Mustang. After 61 combat missions he was credited with 11 victories, making him a double ace. When he returned home in September 1944 he was

twenty-one years old. He was awarded the Silver Star and a Distinguished Flying Cross.

Robert J Goebel (1923-2011) published his book **Mustang Ace: Memoirs of a P-51 Fighter Pilot** in 1991.

In October 2003 he was inducted into the Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame.

After the war the Bf-109 described above, which I refer to as "White 4" languished for a time as scrap metal. Eventually, however, the airframe was discovered and restored, and is once again part of an exhibit. Now it appears as a display at the Imperial War Museum in Duxford, England.

I plan to seek private funding for the project Robert Goebel/"White 4" if the requested authorization is granted. I live in Texas, but am able to travel to Racine to answer any questions and appear before any boards or committees as may be necessary.

Thank you kindly for your consideration in this regard.

Sincerely,

Robert J Goebel Jr.
McKinney, Texas
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(916)899-8568

see "attachments"



PRESS-GAZETTE

Tuesday Evening, September 29, 1941



This is one time a woman smiles at bullet holes. Mrs. Wales Latham, New York, president of Bundles for America, is shown looking at the holes through the unarmored cockpit of the German Messerschmitt plane that will be exhibited here Thursday and Friday on the Courthouse lawn. Mrs. Latham incidentally coined the phrase "Bundles for Britain" but changed her organization into Bundles for America after Pearl Harbor.

and British colonies.

Nazi Messerschmidt, War Prize, Arrives For Racine Display

A Messerschmidt 109 warplane, former crack fighter of Germany's luftwaffe, arrived in Racine today for a 3 day exhibition as part of a nation-wide charity tour to raise funds for the benefit of men in the nation's armed forces. The captive nazi war prize was placed on exhibition in a tent in Memorial park, Sixth street and Lake avenue.

Bullet-riddled and bearing the scars of its various aerial battles, the 32 foot fighter, looking more like a private pleasure plane than a bristling combat ship, arrived from Madison in a special 10-ton trailer.

Racine Journal Times
01 June 1942

Subsequent appearance in Green Bay

Current exhibit at Imperial War Museum at Duxford.

