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# Alvin Sherman: An American Pilot in WWII Military Service and Career

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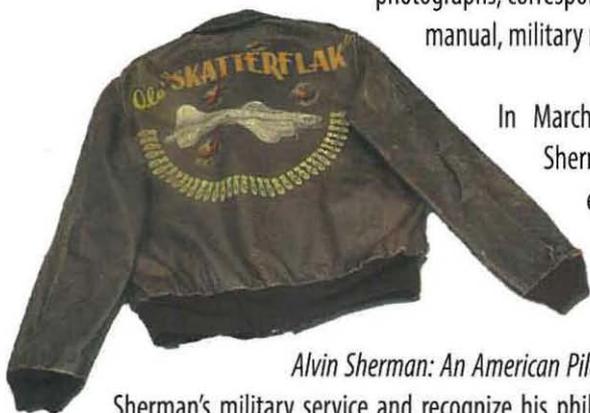
**ALVIN SHERMAN:  
An American Pilot in WWII  
Military Service and Career**



  
NOVA SOUTHEASTERN  
UNIVERSITY

## Alvin Sherman Exhibit

On December 20, 2011, Alvin Sherman donated his World War II memorabilia to the NSU Archives. This collection consists of the following items: military dress uniform, bomber jacket (Ole' "SKATTERFLAK"), medals received for meritorious service (distinguished Flying Cross, Commemorative Medal, air medals and oak leaf clusters), a log book of combat flying hours, photographs, correspondence, newspaper articles, flight training manual, military records, certificates and discharge papers.



In March 2014 a permanent exhibit of Alvin Sherman's World War II memorabilia was established on the second floor of the Alvin Sherman Library using select items from his collection of war memorabilia donated to the library. This exhibit titled

*Alvin Sherman: An American Pilot in World War II*, will serve to honor Mr. Sherman's military service and recognize his philanthropic efforts in support of the Alvin Sherman Library and NSU.



*Inspecting the damage after their last mission*

## Last Flight December 31, 1944

First Lieutenant Alvin Sherman along with more than 900 Flying Fortresses, launched raids against targets across Germany. About a third of the B-17's including Ole "Skatterflak" hit targets in and around Hamburg, Germany. His plane was severely damaged on this mission. The aircraft lost half the tail section, sustained a fire in the nose of the plane, lost both oxygen and hydraulic systems and much of the navigation system. In addition, four crew members were wounded. Sherman successfully landed his B-17 back in England. All crew members survived.



### Awards Received:

#### The Distinguished Flying Cross

The Distinguished Flying Cross was established in the Air Corps Act of 1926. It was awarded to First Lieutenant Alvin Sherman for his bravery in saving the lives of all nine crew members while piloting a B-17 Flying Fortress in a bombing mission over Hamburg, Germany on December 31, 1944



#### Commemorative Medal (Russia)

The Commemorative Medal, created to celebrate "The 50th Anniversary of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War (World War II)" was awarded to Alvin Sherman on April 24, 1995 on behalf of Russian President Boris Yeltsin, the Russian Government and the Russian people in recognition of his "courage and personal contribution to the allied support of Russia during her fight for freedom against Nazi Germany". First Lieutenant Alvin Sherman stayed in Russia for a short time after bombing nearby targets.



#### Air Medals and Oak Leaf Clusters

The air medals and 5 oak leaf clusters were awarded to First Lieutenant Alvin Sherman for his "courage, coolness, skill and meritorious achievement while participating in heavy bombardment missions in the air offensive against the enemy over Continental Europe".



- Born: New York City, 1922
- Attended New York University (2 years)
- Cadet training at Maxwell Field Alabama  
*Maxwell Field Alabama is headquarters for the Southeast Army Air Forces (S.E.A.A.F) Training Center. It is a preflight school where cadets are first inducted into the Air Forces*
- Primary training at Jackson, Mississippi
- Basic training at Greenville, Mississippi
- Advanced flight training at George Field, Illinois
- Member Eighth Air Force, 337th Bombardment Squadron, 96 Bomb Group (H) based in Snetterton Heath, England
- First Lieutenant Alvin Sherman's aircraft was nicknamed the Ole' "SKATTERFLAK" a B-17 G Flying Fortress (Model 2298)

#### Dimensions, Specs of the B-17 G Ole' "SKATTERFLAK"

Wingspan: 103 feet, 9 inches

Length: 74 feet, 4 inches

Gross Weight: 65,000 Lbs

Top Speed: 287 MPH

Cruising Speed: 150 MPH

Range: 3,750 miles

Ceiling: 35,600 Ft.

Power plan: Four 1,200 Wright

R182097 Cyclones



Standard crew of 10 (Ole' "SKATTERFLAK" had a crew of 9); pilot, co-pilot, bombardiers, navigator, flight engineer, radio operator, ball turret gunner, two waste gunners and a tail gunner.

The B-17 G Flying Fortress carried thirteen .50 caliber machine guns

Missions Flown: First Lieutenant Alvin Sherman flew 295 combat flying hours (equal to 35 missions)



*First Lieutenant Alvin Sherman (top row, second from the left)*



*First Lieutenant Alvin Sherman salutes  
as he is being discharged on July 2, 1945*

LEGEND

- IN OPERATION
- ABANDONED
- NOT INVOLVED
- I.E. TROOPS

F R A N C

## Professional Life and Philanthropic Efforts

In 1955, Alvin Sherman founded Palm Lane Homes which later became the Development Corporation of America (DCA), a real estate development company with operations in Florida, Texas, New Jersey, California and Puerto Rico. While serving as DCA's President he earned the singular acclaim of being one of the early pioneers of the affordable home movement, building simple, one-story concrete block conventional homes mostly for first time home buyers. DCA was listed on the American Stock Exchange for 15 years and was one of the top 25 builders in the U. S.

A strong advocate of the view that making higher education available to all those who desired it is fundamental to building a great community, Mr. Sherman established the Alvin Sherman Family Assistance Scholarship program at Nova Southeastern University (NSU). Mr. Sherman also supports the United Way of Broward and other non-profits that do not receive governmental funding.

Alvin Sherman made a generous monetary donation to NSU and in recognition of his gift, NSU named its new library, research and information technology center in his honor in 2003. Mr. Sherman humbly accepted this honor realizing that his name on the library (Alvin Sherman Library, Research, and Information Technology Center) would be a source of encouragement for students, alumni, and Broward County residents. For him the naming of the building felt like the right fit: "If you give, it has to be a belief."



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