

## ***Andrew "Andy" Jones Class of 1938 Ephrata Alumni Association Noted Alumni***



During the 1930s Ephrata High School graduated a total of 187 seniors. Andy Jones' class of 1938 numbered 19.

While in school Andy worked part-time as a projectionist for the Lee family at the Capitol Theater. He continued working at the new Marjo Theater when it opened in 1940. Andy's aptitude for mechanical ingenuity would later serve him well.

While Andy was in high school the United States passed neutrality Acts (1935-1939) intending to prevent Americans from becoming entangled in World War II. Andy, like other Americans, supported our allies, Great Britain and France.

After the surprise Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 Andy, like many of America's young men, went to war.

After graduating from Ephrata High School, Andy:

- Served with the 26<sup>th</sup> Calvary, United States Army during World War II as a radio operator. During combat was called upon to man a machine gun and mortar to break up a heavy artillery barrage coming from a German counterattack. Awarded the Silver Star citation for valor on December 19, 1944 at 23 years of age.
- Finished service with the army after the surrender of the Germans in May of 1945 and enrolled in the aeronautical engineering program at the University of Washington, receiving degree in 1948.
- Worked at Boeing beginning in 1950 delivering field services for Lufthansa in Germany, India, Singapore, and Egypt. After a stellar career of 35 years, retired in 1985.
- Became a pilot and enjoyed flying airplanes, as well as, spent time at hangar working on collection of airplanes including an antique Stinson Reliant from the 1930s, antique Aeronca Chief and modern Cardinal RG.
- Served as a 17-year volunteer at the Overlake Hospital, Issaquah, WA and spent Thanksgiving holidays baking and delivering turkeys to downtown shelters.
- Honored by fellow veterans at his memorial service, "Well done, Corporal Jones. We release you to proceed on duty assigned".

Andrew Paige Jones 1921 - 2004

### **Peter Jurgens Writes About Great-Uncle Andy**

I was happy to learn that the Ephrata Alumni Association is planning to recognize my great uncle Andrew Paige Jones, Ephrata High School graduate of 1938, as a noted alumnus for Ephrata High School. Uncle Andy was about 11 years older than my mother and as a child she absolutely idolized him. It was easy to see why. Andy was simply the most kindhearted person you could ever hope to know. Of course, the fact that he was the projectionist at the local theater and got her into more than one movie for free probably helped a bit. I wish my mother was still with us as she would have much to add.

I recall once when my family went to visit Andy. His exuberance for life was contagious and soon he had us all down in the basement dancing polkas! It was on that night that I first learned of his heroism during WWII. In a corner of the basement was a framed document - his Silver Star citation. It was rare for him to speak of the war. In fact, I never heard him discuss the war itself. He did tell us a story once that took place when he was still in Europe (probably Czechoslovakia or Austria) after the end of the war. The local people had little food and by law were not allowed to hunt or fish. I guess it was still a pretty feudal society. Andy and some of his buddies helped one group by doing some "fishing" for them. As I recall, since the peasants, by law, had no poles or tackle "fishing" involved the use of some hand grenades. It was through other relatives that I learned that the silver star was vaguely related to a machine gun and saving lives. No one seemed to have any details. Only recently was I able to obtain Andy's full military record. We are fortunate that the fire that destroyed some eighty percent of WWII personnel files somehow spared his. The citation, which is posted on Ancestry, is a very brief summary. A careful reading, however, starts to reveal the horrific nature of the events that unfolded. How did two



**(Andy on left)**

radio operators end up manning a machine gun and mortar to break up a German counterattack? Why was the machine gun unmanned? Why was the mortar missing its sight and where was the mortar squad? The citation states that "they were subjected to a heavy enemy counter attack." Such a counter attack would start with a heavy artillery barrage and indeed supporting documents from the proceedings of the Award and Decoration Board state that the mortar sight was damaged during just such an artillery barrage. It is likely that at the machine gun and mortar squads were also casualties of that same barrage. When the shelling stopped, Andy and his fellow radioman, ears ringing and eyes burning from smoke, would have found themselves surrounded by carnage and destruction. Their actions under these circumstances truly give meaning to the phrase gallantry in action. Following the battle, Andy was put in for a Bronze Star. However, following a review of the circumstances, the Awards and Decorations Board amended the citation from Bronze to Silver Star.

As a genealogy buff I would be remiss if I didn't point out that Uncle Andy is one of three Andrew Pages in my family tree that are named for our ancestor Andrew Page of Gilmanton New Hampshire. In 1776, he signed the Test Act which pledged "to the utmost of our power, at the risk of our lives and fortunes, with arms oppose the hostile proceedings of the British Fleets and Armies against the United Colonies". Signatories of the Test Act are recognized as patriots by both the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution.



Uncle Andy was very much into airplanes. I don't know if he went to work for Boeing because he loved airplanes or if his love for airplanes grew from his work at Boeing. About the time I was in high school he owned a Cessna Cardinal. Once he took my parents and me on an airplane ride down to Mount Rainier. It was a beautiful summer day with a mix of blue skies and high cirrus clouds. We stopped somewhere for fuel and lunch. That was my first

ride in a small plane and the whole experience was a bit surreal. I have attached a photo of Andy and his plane that my dad took that day. Around that same time, I was involved with a local Astronomy club and

had assembled large telescope. I told Andy all about my telescope and at some point, lamented that I had been unable to afford a better mount. Andy insisted that I bring my telescope mount to his house in Issaquah. Once there we disassembled it and Andy used a metal lathe to re-bore the mount and then added ball bearings to make the shaft rotate easier. On that Saturday he taught me a little bit about machine tools as a lot about generosity. I wish I had more to share with you and I look forward to reading your post on the Ephrata High School website.

Last Name — First Name — Middle Initial <b>JONES ANDREW P</b>		Serial Number <b>3112508</b>		Grade <b>Tec 5</b>	Organization <b>Cav</b>			
Headquarters Issuing Orders <b>26th Inf Div APO 26</b>		Order Number General <b>56</b>	Special	Date of Order <b>19 Dec 44</b>	Rescinded	Revoked	Amended	Corrected Copy
Type of Award <b>SILVER STAR</b>	Posthumous	Oak Leaf Clusters		O. L. C. Number				
Present Status if Living		Citation						
<p>For gallantry in action near ***, on 26 October 1944. <del>While</del> While the first platoon of the troop was outpostting a hill position west of *** they were subjected to a heavy enemy counterattack. On his own initiative and in the face of enemy fire Technician Fifth Grade Jones, a radio operator, manned a machine gun to cover the withdrawal of two comrades from a forward observation post, and then brought up a 60mm mortar which lacked a sight, and with the assistance of one of his comrades delivered accurate fire upon the enemy, breaking up the attack, <del>and</del> causing the enemy to scatter and take cover. This accomplished, the two men then acted as artillery observers and directed accurate artillery fire which routed the enemy. His heroic action was instrumental in averting a serious threat to our positions. Technician Fifth Grade Jones' courage, initiative and outstanding devotion to duty reflect the highest credit upon himself and the armed forces of the United States.</p>								
<p>THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE, DECORATIONS AND AWARDS BRANCH RECORD OF AWARD OF DECORATION</p> <p>WD AGO Form 0708</p>								



## The Silver Star

- On July 19, 1932, the Secretary of War approved the Silver Star medal to replace the Citation Star.
- The Silver Star is awarded to a person who, while serving in any capacity with the U.S. Military, is cited for gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States.

