



**Myron L. Guisewite, C-47 Pilot, 32nd TCS
19 Oct 1921 - 3 Aug 2021**

By Colonel Mark C. Vlahos, USAF Retired

Myron L. Guisewite was born in on October 19, 1921 in Avis, Pennsylvania, one of the five children of a New York Central Railroad worker. After finishing high school in 1940, he left home for the first time to follow in his father's footsteps with the railroad. On December 7, 1941, he was working out of Buffalo, New York and was shocked when he heard of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. He knew something was going to happen, because the war in Europe was too big a deal. All the kids wanted to go into the armed forces. Guisewite quit his job and enlisted. Too young to get into the aviation cadet program, his mother had to accompany him to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania to release him. He took the entrance exam and was put on inactive reserve for six months. He was called up on January 17, 1943. After classification, he was sent to Santa Ana, California for pre-flight training. He always wanted to

fly. There was no flying in pre-flight. There were only academics, marching, discipline, and Army stuff. In ground school he was taught math, physics, meteorology, navigation and code. After about six weeks, he went on to primary training school at Tucson, Arizona, where he got to fly the Ryan PT-22. He was pretty confident when he first flew solo and found it exciting. He continued to California for basic training, where he flew Vultee BT-13 trainer aircraft; also known as the Vultee "Vibrator." The recruits worked up to bigger engines, higher speed planes, then went on to advance training at Luke Field, Arizona. There, Myron trained in the North American AT-6 advanced trainer aircraft and began gunnery practice out at Gila Bend. On November 3, 1943 Myron was awarded his USAAF silver pilot wings.

Just over a month later, by Christmas 1943, Myron was in Casablanca, Morocco; that's how quickly new pilots were shipped overseas. When he got to Casablanca, the new pilots reassembled and took basic combat instruction in the C-47 from pilots returning from the front. He then went by train to Tunisia, where he settled in a tent encampment. Next, Myron was flown to Castelvetrano, Sicily where he was assigned to 32nd Troop Carrier Squadron (TCS), 314th Troop Carrier Group (TCG). In Sicily, Myron gained valuable flying experience on freight, resupply and aeromedical evacuation missions in the C-47 as a co-pilot. On March 5, 1944, 2nd Lt. Myron L. Guisewite boarded the British troopship *Monarch of Bermuda* at Palermo, Italy bound for England. Arriving in Gourock, Scotland, he was then put on a train and arrived at RAF Saltby, Station 538 north of London. Now assigned to a crew, Myron flew many night training missions in preparation for D-Day.

The 314th Troop Carrier Group was tasked to provide 60 aircraft for Operation NEPTUNE, the code name given for the airborne invasion of Europe or D-Day. The 32nd TCS only provided 6 aircraft for this mission; Myron's crew did not fly this mission. However, Myron the following night he flew his combat mission as part of Operation FREEDOM, a resupply mission for the 508th PIR. Myron was the co-pilot on 32nd TCS C-47 #42-23641 piloted by 1st Lt. Plez T. Nall which was Chalk #9, Serial #40. For this, he earned his first Air Medal. Three months later, on September 17, 1944, he flew his second combat mission; the first day of Operation MARKET dropping British paratroops just west of Arnhem, Holland. On this mission he flew as co-pilot on 32nd TCS aircraft #42-93070, piloted by 1st Lt. Sidney Weitzman, Chalk #43, Serial #A-24. Four days later, on September 21, 1944 Guisewite flew his third combat mission of the war dropping men of the 1st Independent Polish Parachute Brigade south of Arnhem, Holland. On this mission, Myron was co-pilot on aircraft 32nd TCS #42-109982, Chalk #100, Serial A-87 piloted by Major George E. Faulkner, the 314th Troop Carrier Group S-3. On board was the commander of the Polish Brigade, Major General Stanislaw Sosabowski himself, who jumped from this aircraft. On September 26, Myron flew on the last MARKET combat mission, airlanding on the grass field at Keent, Holland. On this mission he was co-pilot on

Aircraft #42-100976 piloted by Capt. Shirley B. Thompson. Myron earned his third oak leaf cluster for his Air Medal on this mission.



32nd TCS Chalk 100, Aircraft # #42-109982 carrying Maj Gen Stanislaw Sosabowski to Arnhem, Holland; Note: Nose Code S2

(Photo courtesy of 314th Airlift Wing Archives)

In October 1944, 1st Lt. Myron L. Guisewite transferred to the Pathfinders and was assigned to the 4th Pathfinder Squadron, 1st Pathfinder Group (Provisional), 52nd Troop Carrier Wing, 9th Troop Carrier Command. On December 24, 1944, Myron was co-pilot on aircraft #42-93099, Bastogne resupply drop Mission 391-A and left England in heavy fog, carrying ammunition, food and basic supplies for the surrounded 101st Airborne division. There was a narrow path in and out, and when they reached their destination, the sun was shining, leaving their planes without cover. Myron remembers they lost a few aircraft and seeing the crew of a downed plane running for the woods. He was able to drop his load, the crew pushing the boxes that were attached to parachutes, out the back of the plane. Later, Guisewite said that he found it sad, because he could see the GIs in the snow, waving, grateful to see the supply planes. Suddenly, the plane was hit by anti-aircraft fire, the oil pressure went to zero on the left engine, and the C-47 started losing altitude. The crew turned around to retreat out of their little corridor, running on one engine. Unable to feather the prop, which was dependent on having oil pressure, the aircraft started vibrating. The pilot, 2nd Lt. Wallace O. Marley, kept the plane

up until gravity won and they were forced to belly land sixteen miles north of Reims. The stricken aircraft had to get past some woods to land and was able to reach a farming area near Reims, France. Luckily, it was a good landing, and Myron and the rest of the crew walked away from it. With the two pilots on this mission were 2nd Lt. Howard P. Wilson (NAV), Cpl. Benedict D. Caruso (RO), and Cpl. Morris B. Askew (CC). It wasn't Pathfinder work, but the squadron made the resupply drop and withstood the flak to get the plane safely down. When they glided into France, their first encounter was with the farmer whose field they plowed up. The crew couldn't communicate with him, and the man didn't understand that they had landed on purpose. Myron does not remember how they got to an airbase, but they were eventually flown back to England. It was the only mission he flew to Bastogne, and this was also the end of his Pathfinder experience. Myron then flew several "pipeline" missions transporting gasoline for Patton's 3rd U.S. Army sweeping across Europe towards Germany. He then transferred to European Air Transport Service flying out of Paris, France when the war ended. Myron passed away in August of this year, flying his final mission - yet another from the Greatest Generation who answered the bugle's call. To the best of my knowledge, he was the last man from the WWII 314th Troop Carrier Group to pass. *Authors note: much of this article was paraphrased from an oral interview posted from the digital collection of the National World War II Museum and my book "Men Will Come" A History of the 314th Troop Carrier Group 1942 - 1945.*



1st Lt. Myron L. Guisewite in 1945
(Photo Courtesy of Carnegie Mellon University)