

Enlisted Hero Walk Lackland AFB



Staff Sergeant Archibald Mathies



Congressional Medal of Honor

World War II

On his second combat mission, on February 20, 1944, Sergeant Mathies participated in an attack on Leipzig, Germany. During this raid, along with 2d Lt. Walter E. Truemper aboard B-17G 42-21763, nicknamed Ten Horsepower, the co-pilot was killed and the pilot severely injured. Mathies and the navigator flew the crippled plane back to England, where the rest of the crew jumped (parachuted) to safety. Mathies and the navigator were ordered to jump, but both refused to leave the pilot behind. After some indecision, they were permitted to attempt a landing. The plane crashed into an open field on the third attempt, killing all aboard.