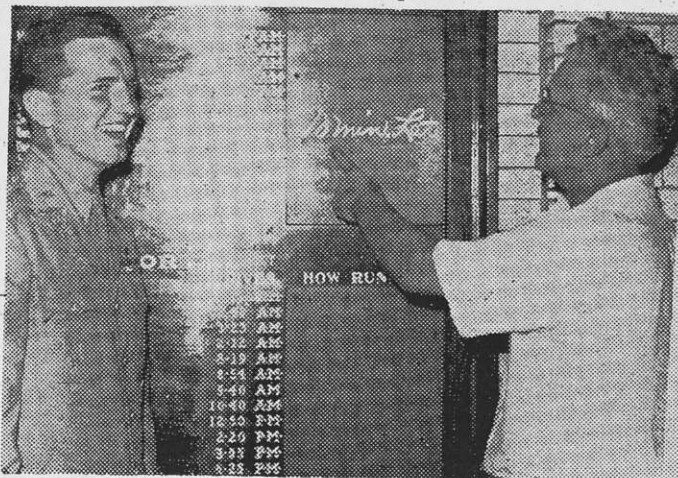


"Mission Home" Delayed Ten Minutes

Hochella,
Michael F.



Captain Michael F. Hochella, U. S. Army Air Corps, was late in carrying out a mission last evening. He was due to arrive in Bethlehem, after 18 months of active service in the Pacific theater of war, at 6:09 last night. Wartime traffic slowed up his train and the depot call board shows him tardy for the first time since he got into service. But what's ten minutes—he's home and here is being greeted by his father on his arrival.

Hochella With 45 Missions To His Credit, Home On Leave After 14 Months In Pacific

25 1944

"It's great to be home," was about the only thing Captain Michael F. Hochella, United States Army Air Forces, said following his arrival home last evening after spending 14 months in the Southwest Pacific, with General E. C. Whitehead's 5th AAF, in New Guinea.

Captain Hochella was a pilot of a B-25 medium bomber, and participated in over 45 missions. He is the holder of the Distinguished Flying Cross, with a bronze oak leaf cluster; the Air Medal, and the Purple Heart and cluster, for wounds received in action.

In March of this year, Captain Hochella's plane was shot down in the Pacific area, and after spending two days in enemy territory with four other Air Corps men, they were rescued by a naval PT boat. The five flyers were then taken to a hospital for treatment of the wounds they received in their forced landing.

On June 21 of this year, a dispatch from the Associated Press told of Lieutenant General George C. Kenney, commander of the Southwest Pacific Air Forces, awarding the bronze oak leaf cluster to the DFC Captain Hochella, for leading a formation of B-25's in an attack

over Rabaul, New Britain. Captain Hochella's formation was credited with destroying seven enemy aircraft on the ground and three in the air.

WITH LOCAL MAN

While blasting the Japs in the Pacific area, Captain Hochella teamed up with a former Bethlehemite, First Lieutenant Frank G. R. Lataweic, now of Philadelphia.

Lataweic graduated from Bethlehem High School and was a native of this town. Together in the Southwest Pacific, the two flyers made Bethlehem a triple threat town to the Japs. The boys carried Bethlehem made products in the bomb-bays of their planes in the form of parafrag bombs, made with Bethlehem Steel casings, and wadded down on the Japs by use of Bethlehem parachutes made by the Laros Textile Mills.

Some time ago, Lieutenant Lataweic was home on leave, and at that time spent some time with Captain Hochella's father, Michael A. Hochella, of 410 Grandview Boulevard, relating some of the experiences the boys had together.

Lataweic then went to Atlantic City Rehabilitation Center and was re-assigned.

23 YEARS OLD

Captain Hochella, who will observe his 23rd birthday anniversary on August 8, is a graduate of Liberty High School, and was well on his way to a B. S. degree at Moravian College, when the war disrupted his plans.

He enlisted in the Army Air Forces and won his wings at Moody, Ga. He has a brother also serving in the AAF, Second Lieutenant Elwood M. Hochella, now a pilot on a B-26 Marauder Bomber, stationed at Shreveport, La., waiting assignment overseas.

Captain "Mickey," as he is known, was well known in local sports circles during his high school and college days, and made a great sports name for himself.

He expects to leave about August 14 for Miami, Fla., where he will go to the Air Forces Rehabilitation Center for re-assignment.

July 25, 1944