

WINGED COMMANDOS WWII LIVING HISTORY GROUP

Authenticity Guidelines and Uniform Requirements for Members

Glider Pilots

"Winged Commandos" was the name adopted for themselves by the glider pilots in training at Lubbock's South Plains Army Air Field during World War II. The Winged Commandos Living History Group (hereafter the Group) is open to many types of impressions by members, but has established these guidelines as a starting place for members portraying US Army Air Forces glider pilots. Future guidelines will be written for other military & civilian roles.

Most of the uniforms, footwear, headgear and weapons are available by Internet sale through vendors specializing in accurate reproductions of these items. With the exception of rank and other specialized insignia for the Troop Carrier Commands, there is nothing unique worn by glider pilots. For the most part they dressed like other USAAF pilots wearing training or dress uniforms and like glider infantry or paratroopers in field uniforms.

The Group recognizes any uniform issued and worn by USAAF glider pilots (GP's), aviation students, or aviation cadets during the war. Depending on the job being done, the time of the year or geographic location the uniform would be different.

For participation in events, a specific uniform will be designated by the officers of the Group. Members are encouraged to purchase their own uniforms and equipment as soon as they are able to. Borrowing uniforms is acceptable, but members should not participate with partial uniforms or mixed uniforms that would have been unacceptable during wartime. Please do not buy something that is not an authentic reproduction.

The khaki summer uniform is the only uniform required at this time. It is appropriate for wear at all official meetings, for travel, for conducting tours at Silent Wings Museum, or for participation in parades and living history demonstrations where discussions about glider pilots are taking place. It is not appropriate for wearing at combat-focused events however.

Haircuts should be short and neat. Facial hair is allowed for officer impressions, but must conform to wartime regulations. Modern eyewear or jewelry does not fit in either. Contacts or period frames with your own prescription lenses are good. Personal items as a part of the impression are encouraged as long as they can be documented as being correct. Especially with field gear, having original or reproduction items can give one a lot to talk about with the public. Accurate dog tags are encouraged, but not required.

Members are encouraged to research the impression they are undertaking and not seek out anomalous, rare portrayals. The Winged Commandos, for purposes of historical accuracy requires men and women to adopt gender-appropriate roles in the 1940s. Cross-dressing is permitted only for comedic purposes at social events.

GP Summer Uniform, Khaki (required)

The khaki cotton uniform was worn the most by glider pilots and students while stateside and in climates such as North Africa or CBI

- cotton khaki garrison cap with black and silver braid for officers, blue and orange for enlisted USAAF
- russet low quarter dress shoes or high quarter service shoes
- tan socks with low quarter shoes
- khaki uniform slacks
- white t-shirt
- khaki uniform shirt
- khaki tie
- regulation khaki belt with officers plain brass buckle

GP Field Uniform (optional)

Early war (up to June 6, 1944)

- rough-out high quarter service shoes
- marled brown/grey socks
- regulation wool shirt and trousers
- white t-shirt
- canvas leggings
- open buckle trouser belt
- M1941 jacket
- authentic helmet
- gas mask
- M3 fighting knife and holster
- flying goggles
- pistol web belt with first aid kit, canteen cover, and holster (opt.)
- mussette bag worn slung on one shoulder or with suspenders on back
- reproduction Mae West life preserver (optional)
- map case (optional)
- weapon options: M1 Garand, M1 carbine, Thompson submachine gun

Late war (after June 6, 1944) may substitute the following

- cotton trousers (paratrooper style pockets acceptable)
- double buckle boots with no canvas leggings
- M1943 jacket
- Weapons: grease gun

GP Flight Training Uniform (optional)

- A-4 worsted wool flight suit or ANS-31 cotton flight suit
- white t-shirt
- high quarter russet service shoes
- garrison cap, regulation billed cap, cloth or leather flying helmet
- period sunglasses
-

Herringbone Twill Work Uniform (optional)

- rough-out high quarter service shoes

- HBT billed cap or wool jeep cap in cold weather
- White t-shirt
- HBT overalls or HBT trousers and jacket
- Issue belt

Aviation Student Enlisted Dress Uniform (optional)

- low quarter russet service shoes
- enlisted men's wool uniform
- enlisted collar insignia with USAAF branch of service (wing & propeller)
- wool service cap or wool garrison cap with orange and blue piping
- staff sergeant rank insignia (how most glider pilots entered training)

Suggested vendors for uniforms and equipment:

AEF Supply: uniform clothing <http://www.aefsupply.com/ww2.htm>

At the Front: uniform clothing <http://www.atthefront.com/>

Bayonet: uniform clothing <http://www.bayonetinc.com/store/>

Garcia Aviation: rank & aviation student insignia
<http://www.bayonetinc.com/store/>

Hogan Quartermaster Depot: Reproduction K-rations
<http://www.angelfire.com/nc/stug/>

International Military Antiques: Weapons and accessories
<http://www.ima-usa.com/>

Lost Battalions: footwear and uniform clothing <http://www.lostbattalions.com/>

Service of Supply: Field gear accessories <http://www.serviceofsupply.com/>

Stamped Out: engraved dog tags and chains/cords
http://stampedout.net/catalog/index.php?cPath=31_39

Top Pots: Restored WWII helmets
<http://www.toppots.net/main.php?do=home&action=home>

What Price Glory: footwear and uniform clothing
<http://onlinemilitaria.net/shopcontent.asp?type=home>

World War II Impressions: field equipment, uniform clothing
<http://www.wwiiimpressions.com/>

World War II Supply Room: repro paperwork and packaging
<http://www.wwiisupply.com/>
August 2009 draft (3)