

Geronimo - Distinguished Signal Corps Pigeon

Pigeons were vital to communications during both war and peacetime. The Pigeon Program operated as a part of the Signal Corps from 1918, until its discontinuance in 1957. In 1919, the pigeon program was transferred from France where it was a part of the American Expeditionary Forces, to Fort Monmouth. The program was headquartered for most of its active life at Fort Monmouth.

This “series” of blogs is a presentation of biographical information for some of the more distinguished pigeons in this program. It is the 11th blog that presents biographical information since the inception of this blog site. This blog is about Geronimo, a veteran of World War II. Geronimo was recognized as a Hero by the Signal Corps and was one of fifteen World War II Hero Pigeons that were still living in 1957, when the program ended. He bore the number “10043 USA 43 SC.”

Geronimo, a blue check male, was hatched in San Prisco, Italy in 1943. . Geronimo was credited with completing thirty important combat missions in the European Theater of Operations. Without mishap, he delivered several of the 81 messages sent by American and British troops during the seven day battle, crossing the Volturno River north of Naples. His successful missions were accomplished despite the most hazardous war conditions.

After the War, Geronimo the other Pigeons declared to be World War II Hero Pigeons were housed at the “Churchill Loft”, the Army’s “Pigeon Hall of Fame” at Fort Monmouth.

When the Signal Corps discontinued the Pigeon Program, Geronimo along with another hero Pigeon, Eureka, were shipped via Air Express (18 April 1957) to the Woodland Park Zoological Gardens, in Seattle, Washington. Geronimo died 26 July 1964; at the time of his death he was the oldest living and last surviving WWII Hero Pigeon. After his death, Geronimo was returned to Fort Monmouth where he was stuffed and mounted for display in the museum at Fort Monmouth.