



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE
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PRESS RELEASE


**Voices of Veterans: Private First Class Buster Lee
Bailey Shares His Story of Service in the U.S. Army Air
Force**

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AUSTIN — Today, Texas Land Commissioner and Veterans Land Board (VLB) Chairwoman Dawn Buckingham, M.D., is proud to introduce the next installment of the series highlighting the VLB's Voices of Veterans oral history program. In this episode, we hear the story of Private First Class (PFC) Buster Lee Bailey.


Bailey was born and raised in Dallas, Texas. He enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Forces in 1946 and attended boot camp at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas. After training to become a radio operator, he was shipped out to Hawaii.



VOICES OF VETERANS

<small>name</small> Bailey, Buster Lee		
<small>military branch</small> Air Force	<small>rank</small> Pfc	<small>conflict</small> WWII
<small>date interviewed</small> 04/20/2017		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <small>interview available on voicesofveterans.org</small>

Buster Lee Bailey a native of Dallas, Texas enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Forces in 1946, and served as a Radio Operator. He survived a crash in a C-46 cargo plane on Palmyra Island, about 100 miles south of Hawaii on July 8, 1947.



He would track the flight of distressed planes to ensure they arrived at their intended bays safely. On July 8, 1947, he was in a C-46 transport plane when an accident occurred during take-off on Palmyra Island, about 100 miles south of Hawaii.

"The engine threw the propellers, and they came through the plane, and one of them, if it had been six inches to one side, it'd have missed me; six inches to the other side, it'd have killed me."



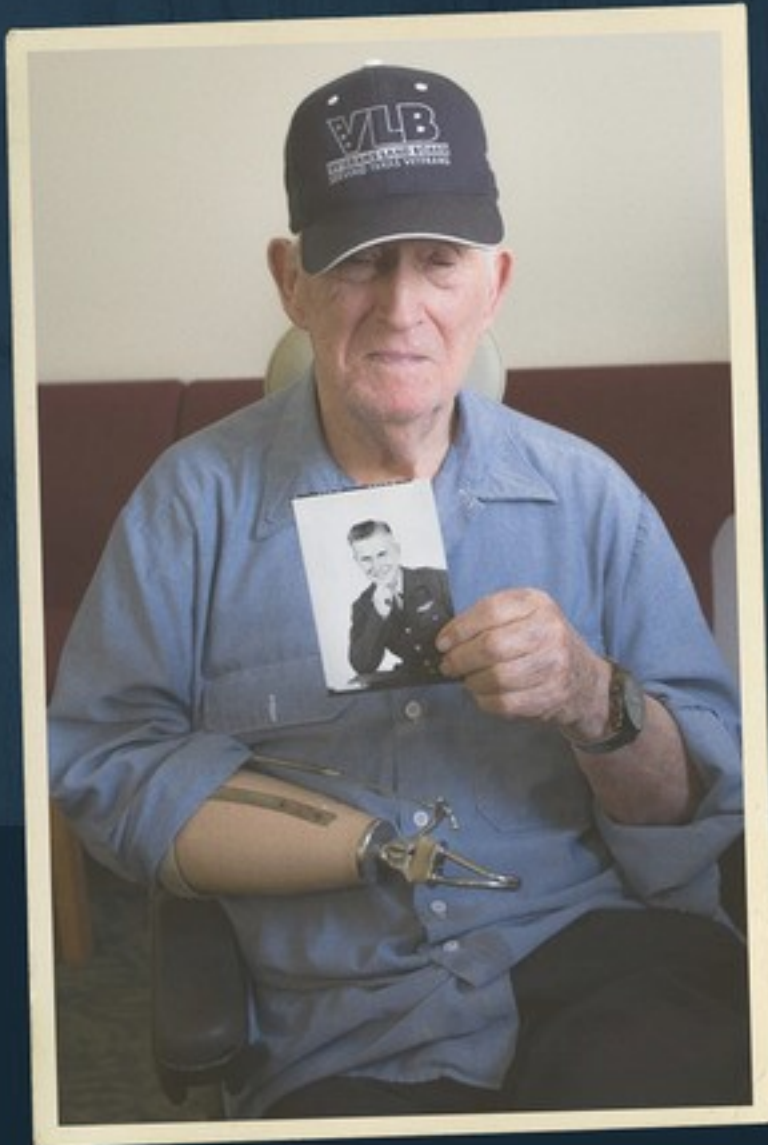
COURAGEOUS RADIOMAN RECOVERING—Pfc. Buster L. Bailey, who lost his right hand and right leg when a C-46 transport plane crashed on takeoff at Palmyra two weeks ago, smiles as a nurse at Tripler General hospital arranges his flowers. He will leave soon for the Mainland. Doctors say his mental attitude has been superb, and on Air Force Day he demonstrates it with a big smile. (Photo by J. E. Kirkpatrick.)

VOICES OF VETERANS

VLB CHAIRWOMAN, DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

Bailey lost his right hand and right leg in the crash. He only became emotional when discussing his mother finding out about the accident.

When asked what message he would like to leave for future generations, he said, "Watch out," and began to laugh, showing a bit of the attitude that helped him through a terrible ordeal. Afterward, he said earnestly, "Keep America free, strong, and free."



VOICES OF VETERANS

VLB CHAIRWOMAN, DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

To listen to PFC Buster Lee Bailey tell his story, click the button below:

[PFC Buster Lee Bailey's Story](#)

Veterans can email VoicesofVeterans@glo.texas.gov to tell their stories. Please note that the Veteran must be a resident of Texas at the time of their interview.

Voices of Veterans is a state agency's first Veteran oral history program. It records the stories of Texas Veterans through their time in service and after returning home from combat.

The VLB records interviews with veterans over the phone or in person. Their interviews are then permanently archived in the Office of Veterans Records at the GLO, where they join the historical documents of other Texas heroes such as Sam Houston, Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, and William Barret Travis.

Veterans' interviews are also available to researchers, historians, genealogists, and the public. These precious records inspire future generations and remind us of our Veterans' sacrifices.

To listen to the over 500 archived stories of Veterans documented through the GLO's Voices of Veterans oral history program, click the button below:

[Voices of Veterans](#)