



P-38 Lightning



P-61 Black Widow



P-49 Airacobra



C-46 Commando



P-51 Mustang



C-47 Skytrain

John Zaimis
Specialist 3rd Class U.S. Army
16 September 1940 – 17 September 1941
Staff Sergeant U.S. Army Air Forces
18 August 1942 – 5 November 1945

John was born on 11 November 1918 in Camden, New Jersey. His parents were **Socrates Zaimis** (1 March 1885 – 31 January 1939) and **Eugenia Markos** (25 August 1893 – 14 January 1986), both of whom were born in and emigrated from Greece in 1915. John attended Maxon Grade School in Plainfield, New Jersey, from 1929 to 1932, and graduated from high school in Plainfield in 1936. After high school, John worked in, and in 1939 took over the family diner in Hillside, New Jersey, which his parents had opened and operated. John owned the diner until he entered the Army. He enlisted in the Army in Elizabeth, New Jersey, as a Private on 16 September 1940 for a year, and was assigned to the 114th Infantry Regiment, 44th Infantry Division, at Fort Dix, New Jersey, where he underwent training in the Infantry. He left the Army at Fort Dix on 17 September 1941 as a Specialist 3rd Class. He then returned home to work as an Assembler for Western Electric Company in Kearney, New Jersey, for a year. On 18 August 1942, he enlisted in the Army Air Forces, and underwent training in Wetherford, Oklahoma, to become an Airframe & Powerplant Mechanic/Inspector on Army aircraft. As such he was qualified to perform and inspect maintenance work on every part of Army aircraft except for the airplane instruments. After training at Wetherford, he was transferred to San Bernardino Army Air Field, California (which was renamed Norton Air Force Base in 1948), where he was assigned to the 309th Depot Repair Squadron, 47th Air Depot Group, which was formed there. The Squadron briefly moved to March Field, California, from which it deployed to North Africa for the remainder of World War II. John left for North Africa in August 1943 for Tunis, went on to Algeria in November 1943, and later to Casablanca, Morocco. While in North Africa, the Squadron processed aircraft that arrived by ship from the States to ready them for service by removing cosmaline, installing propellers, and inspecting and checking out all systems. The aircraft they processed included P-38s, P-39s, P-51s, P-61s, C-46s, C-47s. After 27 months overseas, John returned to the States for discharge as a Staff Sergeant at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, on 5 November 1945. John married **Maria Ann Ventre** (born 9 January 1922) on 20 January 1946 in St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church in Cranford, New Jersey. They lived in Hillside for two years, and John worked briefly as a Cable Former for Western Electric Company in Kearney, New Jersey. In 1947, they moved to Hometown, Pennsylvania, where John worked as Night Manager in the Beacon Diner that was owned by his uncle. They moved to Kenilworth, New Jersey, in 1950. John then joined the Flying Tiger Airlines as an Aircraft Mechanic, later becoming a Manager. He worked there until 1981, when he retired. In 1988, John and Marie moved to and settled in Lower Macungie Township, Pennsylvania. From 1967 to present, John has been a member of Azure/Masada Masonic Lodge 22 in Cranford, New Jersey. He has been a member of Macungie VFW Post 9264 since 2005. John and Maria had three children: **Christopher, John,** and **Victoria**. Christopher served in the Army in Vietnam during 1968. John's brothers, **Nicholas** and **George**, also served in the Army during World War II.