



# QuEd up for Education

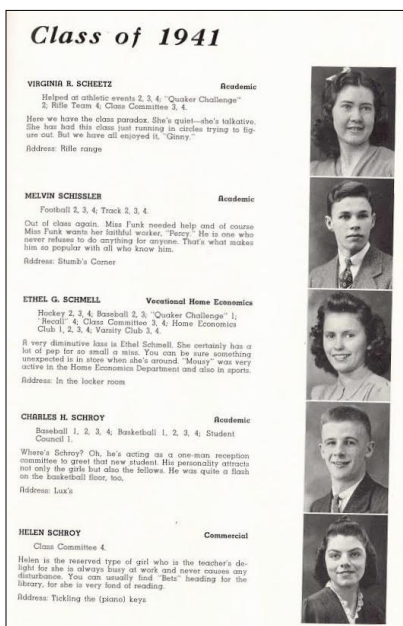
People and programs impacting our QCSD community

January 15, 2019

## 1941 QHS grad talks WWII with students



*Melvin Schissler, 95, flew 25 missions over Europe in a B-17 bomber.*



**Melvin Schissler's high school yearbook photo, second from top.**

**By Gary Weckselblatt**

**M**elvin Schissler graduated from Quakertown High School in 1941, when its students attended classes in the building that's now called Quakertown Elementary School.

On Tuesday, Mr. Schissler, 95, visited Quakertown Community High School, to speak with students about his years in the Air Force during World War II. He flew 25 missions over Europe as a ball turret gunner on a B-17 bomber, known as the "Flying Fortress" for its weaponry.

A ball turret was a Plexiglas sphere set in what is often described as the belly of the B-17. It included two 50-caliber machine guns. The man who inhabited the space would be shorter

than average to fit and revolve in the turret.

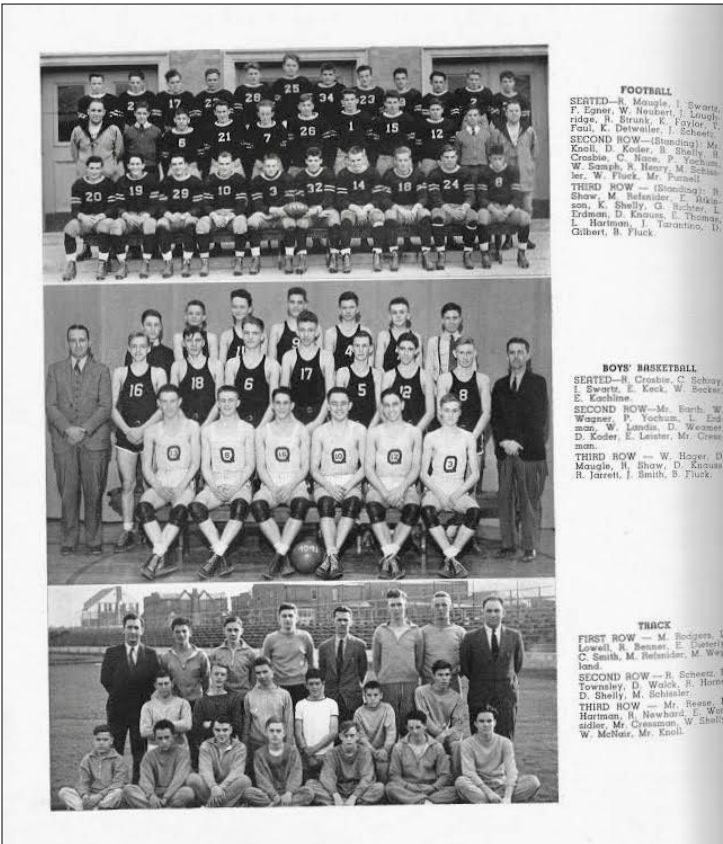
Students in U.S. History classes and AP U.S. History had several questions for the veteran, both during and after his 45-minute presentation in the Performing Arts Center.

"They have to know what we went through at their age," Mr. Schissler said, after several students interested in his story visited him onstage before heading back to class.

Otto Liepin, 92, handled a majority of the discussion for Mr. Schissler, who doesn't hear well. Mr. Liepin, a graduate of White Plains (NY) High School, served in the Navy during the Korean War. He described himself and his

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**Otto Liepin, 92, who served in the Navy during the Korean War, handled a majority of the discussion for Melvin Schissler on Tuesday at Quakertown Community HS.**

# SCHISSLER

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friend as “a couple of old relics.”

“It’s pretty miraculous that they didn’t even come out of the service with a scratch,” said Nicole Chambers, a QCHS student. “They gave us really important insight on how the war was. Their lives are so different from ours.”

A PowerPoint included photos of the high school yearbook, “The 1941 Recall.” It showed Mr. Schissler as a student. He was a reserve on the football team and also ran the mile for the track team. Outside of the library, there is an exhibit that includes those photos, in addition to WWII medals he was awarded. He said his father was a plumber and his mother worked in a cigar factory.

Mr. Schissler flew 25 missions and “never had a scratch and the crew never lost a member,” Mr. Liepin said. “You talk about miracles.”

*Gary Weckselblatt, QCSD Director of Communications, writes about the people and the programs that impact the Quakertown Community School District. He can be reached at 215-529-2028 or gweckselblatt@qcsd.org.*

