

ARTI
FACT

STREAMING TO VICTORY



LIKE MANY YOUNG PEOPLE WHOSE LIVES WERE SWEEPED UP BY WORLD WAR II, Lee Minker was catapulted into extreme circumstances in a short space of time. One moment he was a freshman at idyllic Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, the next he was piloting a B-17 like this in subzero temperatures over Nazi Germany, explosives bursting all around him. **THE UNSPOKEN—AND THE UNSPEAKABLE—HOVER OVER** Lee's judiciously worded letters home. In the heat of 1944's Battle of the Bulge, he writes, "Dear Dad, I have been working rather hard this month and as a result I have sadly neglected my correspondence." **THROUGHOUT LEE'S BOMB RUNS AND EARLIER FLIGHT TRAINING**, his family replied with the familiar and comforting details of life back in Wilmington, Delaware. "Dearest Lee," his mother writes, "Now dinner is over and the house is quiet . . . Shirley has run up to May's, Bernice and Walter are over at his house, daddy resting, grandmother looking at cards." **THE MINKERS POIGNANTLY DETAIL THE BOND DRIVES**, the rationing, the tension of impending tragedy. Between 1943 and 1945, when Lee arrived home, he and his family exchanged some 800 letters, now housed at the Historical Society of Delaware and collected in the award-winning *An American Family in World War II*, edited by Minker with Sandra O'Connell and National Park Service historian Harry Butowsky. **IT IS A TELLING STORY OF THE PRIVATIONS OF WAR**, on the home front and the battle front.