

Finding 'Butch' Shepherd



Can you help us find 'Butch' Shepherd? – Since our Giles exhibition we've been trying to identify 'Butch'.

We know that his battalion was stationed at Debach Airfield from May 1943 to May 1944 before moving on to France and formed part of the 923rd Engineer Aviation Regiment, the largest African-American unit that served in Europe. Whilst in France the regiment build airfields near Nancy and Dijon.

8th in the East

Exploring the legacy of the USAAF



Butch (Shepherd)



Butch (L) and Ike (R)

It is their time based in Suffolk, however, that we have the most information about. Their friendship with Giles has been relatively well documented, not only through Giles's portraits and family photographs of 'Butch' and Ike but also their appearance in an article that featured in the August 1944 edition of *Vogue*.



Lee Miller's photo of Giles and African-American engineers in the Tuddenham Fountain, Butch is playing the drums

One interesting piece of information our research has brought up is that the men of the 923rd Engineer Aviation Regiment, alongside their work constructing and repairing airfields, formed a choir.

This 200 strong group, pictured practising below, toured bases around East Anglia and they even performed at the Royal Albert Hall in September 1943 with Roland Hayes, the famous African-American tenor.

If you can help us identify any of the men in these photographs or have any suggestions for further research, please don't hesitate to [contact us](#).