

Actor Jimmy Stewart Fought Bravely in WWII

Earlier this month marked the 75th anniversary of beloved actor Jimmy Stewart being [drafted](#) into military service for WWII.

Jimmy Stewart is best known for his roles in films like *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* and *It's A Wonderful Life*, but he's also notable for his brave military service during World War II.

Here are 4 things you might not know about Stewart's heroic military career from the [Jimmy Stewart Museum](#):

1. When Jimmy Stewart was drafted in 1941 he was rejected because he weighed too little. While Stewart could have simply returned to his already successful acting career, "he went home ate everything he could that was fattening and went back and enlisted in the Army Air Corps [and] he passed the physical with an ounce to spare."

2. Already a licensed pilot, and eager to fly to serve his country, Stewart paid out of his own pocket for 100 hours of extra flying time in order to comply with the Air Corps proficiency board.

3. Stewart campaigned for two years to be sent to fight overseas before his commanding officers relented and sent him to England. He would go on to fly 20 combat missions.

4. By the end of the war, Stewart had risen to the rank of colonel and was awarded "the Distinguished Flying Cross with

two Oak Leaf Clusters, The Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, and the French Croix de Guerre with Palm."

Though Jimmy Stewart could have easily walked away from military service and gone back to a lucrative life of fame, he actively strove to be able to fight for his country. He remained in the U.S. Air Force Reserve until 1968, rising to Brigadier General. His courage and relentless patriotism, as well as his undeniable acting talent, certainly make him worth remembering.