

“MILK RUN”

Oregon Chapter 8th Air Force Historical Society News Update
January, 2009



February 2009 Meeting is **February 7**. 10 AM till 2 PM.

History News

Readers, where's your story?

P-51 Mustang Recovery in China

Glen Beneda was a P-51 Mustang pilot in China on May 6, 1944 when he was shot down and spent two month evading the Japanese before returning to friendly forces. He landed in a rice paddy in Hubei province, his P-51 landed in a lake next to him.

The plane, even though it crashed, was still visible and the local Chinese farmers tied rocks to the floating pieces to ensure that it sank so that when the Japanese soldiers came the following day, nothing of the plane remained visible so the soldiers went elsewhere looking for Lt Beneda.

The State Administration of Cultural Heritage approved the excavation and the remnants of his P-51 will be put on display in a museum next year.

The original 100 “Flying Tigers”, and the subsequent fighter unit that inherited the AVG – American Volunteer Group - sobriquet on July 4, 1942, are well remembered – and are taught the unit history in school routinely – in China.

Full story at: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2008-12/15/content_7304193.htm

C-130 Going Strong 54 Years after Introduction

Since the first one rolled off the Production line in 1954, the Lockheed turboprop “Hercules” has traveled the world and has the same versatility as the famed C-47 “Gooney Bird” (which is still flying in some parts of the world in a commercial manner) which is essentially replaced in the US Armed forces.

This year it celebrated it's 50th year with the Royal Australian Air Force on December 13, 2008.

More than 2,400 C-130s have been built at the Marietta Georgia plant.

See:

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/raaf-workhorse-chalks-up-50-years-service/1386163.aspx>

Bulgaria Fighter Pilot Remembered

Full story at: http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=100007

On December 20, 1943 Bulgaria was part of the Axis Powers and a mission by 200+ B-24 Liberators of the 15th Air Force, escorted by P-38 Lightnings, went to bomb Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria. During the battle fighter pilot Dimitar Spisarevski deliberately rammed his fighter into a B-24 Liberator to bring it down – and was himself killed.

He was flying a Bf-109 G2 Messerschmitt along with 35 other pilots who broke through the P-38 escorts to attack the bomber formation.

As to if he deliberately rammed the B-24 or if it was accidental and the AXIS powers later portrayed it as deliberate act before the mission, the article does not mention that possibility. Most every fighter to bomber collision was an accident – there are not many accounts where pilots were told to ram when out of ammo, or stated over the radio to others that they are going to ram a bomber. The German ELBE fighter unit in 1945 flying modified FW-190s, and many Russian fighter pilots early in the war, are known to have deliberately rammed enemy aircraft.

In Central Sophia cemetery there is a "Walk of Pilots" where Bulgarian WW II pilots are buried.

The MACR listing for 20 December 1944 shows 11 B-24s lost that day (31 aircraft total), but only 1 ship from 15th AF bombers flying out of Italy, B-24 SN 42-83428 MACR 1592 from the 387 BG (H). The other B-24 aircraft lost that day were in the 8th and the 5th AF in the Pacific.

McConnell AFB in Kansas was Named after Brothers all flying B-24s

The three brothers Fred, Edwin, & Thomas signed up and all ended up being pilots / co-pilots in B-24s in the South Pacific -- in the same outfit.

Thomas was KIA on July 10, 1943 flying out of Guadalcanal in B-24 SN 42-40507, (MACR 4424) of the 380 BG(H). Brother Fred was killed in an accident when his plane hit power lines at Garden Plain on Oct 25, 1945.

Edwin finished 56 missions and got out of the US Army Air Corps in August 1945.

Full story: http://www.kansas.com/news/state/kansas_history/story/639685.html

Can One Man Fly a B-24 all by Himself?

Full story of "The Scratch Affair" at:

<http://www.ganderbeacon.ca/index.cfm?sid=196950&sc=308>

15 years of letter writing to correct B-17 Crew's Combat Record

Edward J. Giering (LTC, Ret.) spent that many years writing to various government departments trying to get his plane's combat record corrected by the US Air Force. Shot down on February 16, 1945, the official report did not mention that his plane was part of the bomb group that bombed the rail head at Munster. Once he found out, he started writing in the early 1990s till just last month working to get the official record adjusted.

Full story at: <http://www.theday.com/re.aspx?re=fdf612e4-7c18-461c-bfcd-f5d03af05f0e>

President Bush signs Proclamation for Nine WW II Sites

On December 19, 2008 President Bush designated 9 locations as National Historic Sites these include: Tule Lake Segregation Center, amp Tule Lake (California), Atka Island, Kiska Island, Attu Island (Alaska), USS Arizona Memorial (which is sinking by the way), and the USS Utah Memorial, plus six officer bungalows and mooring quays on Ford Island (Hawaii).

The sites in Alaska are virtually un-reachable. The 11th Air Force fought against the Japanese from Alaska from 1942 thru 1945. The amphibious invasions in Alaska had a higher causality count per numbers involved than D-Day in France – both due to the Japanese and the really bad weather and lack of proper gear for the soldiers fighting in such miserable conditions in the Aleutians.

A B-17 is still lying on Atka Island.

B-17s Over Israel

In 1948 three B-17s were the whole heavy bomber force in Israel – escorted by Bf-109s which came from Czechoslovakia. Two of the three B-17s arrived thought the effort of Charles Winters, and he was subsequently convicted of violating the 1939 "Neutrality Laws" which forbids private citizens from providing any type of military assistance anywhere to anyone (that right is now reserved to the US Federal Government).

He was pardoned by President Bush on December 23, 2008 for his 1947 -1948 efforts to help Israel during their initial war for independence. He died in 1984.

Full story at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/7799170.stm>

"Wings of the Bullet" novel published

Rudy DePaola, out of Woodstock Maryland, wrote this new book. He tells the story of A B-24 gunner in the South Pacific (5th or 13th Air Force, not sure.)

Not many stories have been written of the aerial combat in that theatre of war.

Rudolph "Rudy" DePaola joined the military in 1943 and was trained as a gunner in B-24s and was sent to New Guinea in November of 1944. He flew 25 combat missions out of Morotai airbase in the Halmaharas against Japanese targets in the Philippines, Borneo (oil fields) and other Jap held islands. The initial missions to Boreno oil fields were unescorted and were dropped after two missions due to heavy losses, until fighter escort was possible.

Wings of the Bullet * by Rudy DePaola; Story of Young Americans at War;
Publication Date: March 16, 2006; Trade Paperback; \$19.99; 231 pages; 978-1-4134-9816-5; Cloth Hardback; \$29.99; 231 pages; 978-1-4134-9817-2

To request a complimentary paperback review copy, contact the publisher at (888) 795-4274 x. 7479. Tear sheets may be sent by regular or electronic mail to Marketing Services. To purchase copies of the book for resale, please fax Xlibris at (610) 915-0294 or call (888) 795-4274 x 7876.

Xlibris books can be purchased at Xlibris bookstore. For more information, 888-795-4274 or on the web at www.Xlibris.com

“Elmer’s Tune” – Memoire of a Ball Turret Gunner

A chronicle of his time in the 615th Bomb Squadron of the 501st Bombardment Group (Heavy) flying in the Boeing B-17 Flying Fortresses of the 8th Air Force. This book was created based on the notes that he took during his 35 mission tour in the ETO – European Theatre of Operations.

[Elmer’s Tune](#) (links to Amazon)

Book was published by the Peppertree Press.

Local 8th AFHS Chapter Writers

Member Al Gould wrote a book Called "[Millions of GHOSTS Plead... Don't Forget](#)", Hartly Press, Gearhart, Oregon, ISBN 0-9659081-8-6; and Clayton Kelly Gross wrote "[Live Bait](#)", Inkwater Press, ISBN 978-1-59299-186-0. (Both web links are to Amazon)

And there are a few local chapter members who should write a book!!

Washingtonian Honored in Austrian Painting

Robert Otto, who lives in Everett Washington, was a B-24 tail gunner who was shot down during a strike against Vienna oil refineries, he is now a part of a painting honoring those who defeated the NAZI and thus liberated Austria.

His bomber crashed near Pollau with two dead, 1 missing and the other 5, plus Otto, captured. By this time of the war most bomber crews only had 9 men on them, they were losing too many gunners so each bomber lost a waist gunner.

Josef Schutzenhofer is the artist and it is now in a government building in Graz.

Live the Adventure of a B-17 Crewman

Dale Jarrett Racing Adventure, a firm that started out allowing people to live the life of a pro race car driver for a few days, now has an "adventure" for people to fly in a B-17 – the "Liberty Belle" and be a crewman on it – over a period of three days.

<http://www.wwiadventure.com/> is the web site with the final part of it where you go up in one of the 14 Boeing B-17s still flyable in the world for a ride – without the "to whom it may concern" return delivery options that the real flyers had to deal with.

This all happens in Savannah where the 8th AF Museum is at.

Takes place Feb 27 thru March 1 2009. Cost is around US \$2,000.

Don't forget – you volunteered!

Fly-bys

Lincoln F. "Babe" Broyhill, Tail Gunner Dead at 83



Photo from George Brice,
457 BG (H).

On March 20, 1945 over Berlin he did something quite remarkable – destroyed two ME-262 "Swallow" jets attacking his B-17 Bomber "Big Yank" in the low squadron, low group, as the 15th Air Force attacked the Daimler-Benz tank works within Berlin that day.

He died November 21, 2008 in Winston-Salem North Carolina.

He flew in the 840th Bomb Squadron, 483rd Bombardment Group (Heavy) out of Italy at Foggia as part of the 15th Air Force after flying missions out of England with the 8th Air Force.

One of the other gunners on his ship also got a ME-262 that day. Because of that exploit, and that the mission was the longest distance mission flown by the 15th during the entire war, the 483rd received a Distinguished Unit Citation.

Lowell Swenson

Lowell Swenson, 86, died in Bemidji, Minn., on October 16, 2008. Swenson founded U.S. regional carrier Mesaba Airlines in 1978. The airline was later sold to Northwest Airlines. He is a recipient of the U.S. Distinguished Flying Cross for his service during World War II, in which he flew 50 B-24 Liberator bomber missions in Europe.

"Milk Run" Definition

Milk Run: noun; uneventful, routine. Slang for an "easy mission". A combat mission where you attack the enemy and get credit for a mission toward your tour total but no enemy fighters, nor any effective anti-aircraft guns, are expected to be firing at you.

Word origin based upon the routine nature of delivering milk every morning to people in the US in the 1920s. First referenced in print 1925. See "cake walk". Antonym of Schweinfurt.

Local Chapter News and Groups

Archive Stories Update

My thanks goes to George Brice (357th BG) and to Larry Bellarts (490th BG) for sending in their stories for our chapter archives.

I'm still working on scanning selected images from the gun camera film of Wally Groce (56th FG).

Chapter Membership Annual Renewal

Reminder that the annual \$10 chapter dues should be sent to our new Treasurer Sharon Campbell, PO Box 275 Beavercreek, Oregon 97004-0276. Any amount above the \$10 is tax deductible.

We also have new officers for the coming year: President Bert Campbell; Vice President Charles Gallagher.

Pearson Air Museum

December 13 – Santa in a plane -- have your kid's photo taken in one of Pearson's aircraft between 10 AM to 2 PM.

Old Bold Pilots Club

Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 12 Noon till when people leave. Meetings are at The Village Inn Restaurant; 17070 SW 72nd Tigard right at Lower Boons Ferry Road and I-5 on the west side of I-5 at Exit 290.

ANA – Association of Naval Aviators

Meetings are the last Thursday of each month at the Elks Lodge next to Gateway Transit Center. 711 NE 100th Avenue, Portland, Oregon. Meeting is from 11:30 till around 2 PM.

Contact LtC George Bickford (Ret) at 503-789-8061. e-mail: bick @ teleport.com
Mailing address: Flying Beaver Squadron; PO Box 432; Clackamas, Oregon 97015-0432

Southern Oregon Warbirds Association

If you live in southern Oregon you can meet x-aviation personnel at the Southern Oregon Warbirds Association (SOWA) <http://www.southernoregonwarbirds.org>.
Meeting location: New Life Christian Center, 1723 NE Vine Street, Roseburg, Or 97470.
POC: Elmer L Giles, 102 Shadow Ranch lane, Roseburg OR 97470 Cell phone 541 430 4165. Dues \$10 a year.

Aviation Breakfast Club

This is the Walt Bohrer Chapter and they meet on the 2nd Sunday of each month (except Easter and Mother's Day) from 10 AM till 12 Noon at various places now that

their long time meeting place shut down. Call for details: 503-254-5555; e-mail: aviationclub @ aol.com

Need to do Photo or Video research?

You are free to go over to and talk, learn, and do photo, movie, and audio research at:

The National Combat History Archive

5801 NW Cornelius Pass Road

Hillsboro, OR. 97124

TEL: + (1) (503) 597-7030

FAX: + (1) (503) 597-7037

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