

“MILK RUN”

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



August meeting is on **August 8**. 10 AM till 2 PM.

History News

Readers, where's your story?

Wooden Bombs and Wooden Airfields History Told At Last

There have been stories around for decades about US and British Military dropping wooden bombs on decoy airfields over the years (I have a section in my history section of www.taphilo.com on just this topic) and now there is a book – published on 6 June 2009 – just on this topic.

Pierre-Antoine Courouble's latest book, available in bookshops on 6 June 2009.



I have great pleasure informing you that Presses du Midi has brought out my latest book, “The Riddle of the Wooden Bombs” on this very day. I have just undertaken 22 months investigating an astonishing historical subject, that of the dropping by the Allies of wooden bombs on decoys that the Germans had installed on a number of airfields in Brittany, Normandy and Nord-Pas-de-Calais.

The story of this investigation is told on 264 pages containing 161 testimonies of ex-servicemen and elderly people from France, Belgium, Holland, Britain, Germany, America and Canada, of which 73 are interviews I personally conducted with them. “The Riddle of the Wooden Bombs” is in bookshops as from today, 6 June*. It has been prefaced by David Whiting, former RAF pilot and engineer, and stepson of Lord Dowding who was RAF Air Chief Marshal during the Battle of Britain.

My investigation entailed questioning a number of witnesses and above all it opened up a path starting in Normandy (the US Air Borne Museum in Sainte-Mère l’Eglise (Editor’s note: which I have been to and it is very good, Tom) and leading to conclusive proof in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais.

www.courouble.info (the site is under construction, please be patient, and in French).

WASP Playing Cards

The International Women's Air & Space Museum in Cleveland, Ohio is making its third deck of historical playing cards. This newest deck is devoted exclusively to the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) of World War II. Each card face in the deck can be sponsored by a business, family, organization, or any individual who would like to honor a WASP. For more information and to download an order form, please visit the museum's website at www.iwasm.org or call Heather Alexander at (216) 623-1111 or e-mail her at halexander@iwasm.org

I spoke with Heather this morning at IWASM and she told me that they need to get all sponsorships in by the **END OF JUNE** in order to have the playing cards ready in time for the holidays. They only have about two dozen sponsorships purchased so far and there are 55 cards in the deck. If you know of *anyone* who would like to sponsor a WASP please pass on this information! This is a wonderful and unique opportunity to honor your favorite WASP! And just so you know too, no one as of yet has purchased a card in honor of Jacqueline Cochran or Nancy Harkness Love – both of whom I think would make great "Wild Cards." :-)

B-24 Gunner Returned from the Pacific



LeLand Price was shot down in his B-24 by Japanese flak on September 1, 1944 off the island of Babeldaob, the largest island in Palau island group. On January 26, 2004 divers from the "Bent Prop Project" discovered the bomber in 70 feet of water and notified the US that remains were still in the aircraft. DNA confirmed his identify along with those of Earl Yoh, another gunner on the aircraft.

He will be buried back in Crescent City Ohio.

<http://www.crescent-news.com/news/article/4576079>

John C. Byczkowski, 87, receives Legion of Honor from France

On D-Day Sgt. Byczkowski, who was assigned to the 93 BG(H) 409 BS, was in the bomb bay with a pair of pilers at 20,000 feet trying to cut loose 4 armed 500 lb bombs hung up in the racks. Seeing that he was passing over a town he delayed cutting the bombs loose till his B-24 was over the channel – but then passed out due to lack of oxygen.

Army Lt. Col. Timothy E. Zack did the research which discovered his actions and got him the belated award.

He also was awarded a DFC for his actions that day.

<http://www.buffalonews.com/cityregion/story/655214.html>

Fighter Pilot Richard Suehr, dead at 91

Starting out the war in a P-40 in Australia he ditched his aircraft in a swamp and spent 10 days trying to get back to civilization in February 1942.

Then in 1945 over the Philippines the plane was seen to crash into the water during a dogfight with Japanese fighters and he was reported KIA to his parents. He actually swam for 12 hours to a small island and was discovered three days later and rescued – after his family had already held a funeral mass for him.

He co-wrote a book about his exploits called "[The Fighter Pilot Who Refused to Die](#)".

He died in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

<http://www.fayobserver.com/article?id=324584>

Salvaging History from Lake Michigan

<http://archives.chicagotribune.com/2009/apr/25/local/chi-lake-planeapr25>



On April 25, 2009 an SBD-5 Dauntless identified by Navy Bureau No. 36291 touched down on a blue tarpaulin alongside Waukegan Harbor after being raised from 351 of water.

During the war two converted passenger ships were converted to moored aircraft carriers and Navy pilots used them to practice landing. Around 100 a/c were lost overboard and so far around 40 have been recovered. A James Janega photo and story.

Soviet Bomb Found on Museum Island in Berlin

<http://www.thelocal.de/national/20090425-18871.html>

AS WW II aerial bomb was found during construction at the New Museum in the center of Berlin on April 25, 2009. It was stated to be a 100 kilogram (around 250 lb).

One of the first casualties in Berlin during WW II were in the ZOO from a 1940 RAF night raid that hit the Tiergarten and museum complexes.

Fokker Triplanes Take to the Air

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/marlborough-express/features/classic-fighters/2323264/Barons-plane>

If you are in New Zealand this year you can see three of them in the air.

During WW II an original Fokker was destroyed in a German Museum, along with a lot of other aircraft and material, by an RAF bomber raid. (Likely this was during the RAF's "Battle of Berlin" in the winter of 1943/1944).

9th Air Troop Transport Command Pilots

<http://www.lakecityreporter.com/articles/2009/05/03/community/life/doc49fbd1c86ca4f627128773.txt>

On D-Day there were lots of planes seen over the beaches, but there were as many planes flying at night before the troops went ashore. Men of the Ferry command, almost all of them never ever flown in combat, made their first combat mission at night all the same time dropping members of the 82nd and 101st Airborne divisions into Normandy.

If you live in Florida near Lake City, there is a monthly meeting of the D-Day club. Notes in the article.

Staff Sgt. Charles Owen

<http://post-journal.com/page/content.detail/id/529603.html?nav=5018>

369th Bomb Squadron, 306th Bomber Group became a POW on 29 July 1943 on the Kiel Mission when he bailed out of B17-F, number 42-5826. He gave a presentation about his POW experiences in May.

On the Kiel mission to bomb shipyards 168 B-17s were dispatched, 91 bombed at 9:01 AM, 48 hit other targets 6 planes were lost, 62 damaged, 2 men were KIA, 8 WIA, and the 8th AF claimed claiming 48 enemy planes shot down, 6 likely destroyed, and 33 damaged.

Flying for General Montgomery

Frank Evans became the staff pilot for Field Marshall Montgomery as a result of a US General losing a bet – he and the airplane came as a matched set.

<http://www.bonnercountydailybee.com/articles/2009/05/03/columns/doc49fcc155289d126814483.txt>

“On April 16, our whole crew was given orders to report to British General Montgomery, somewhere in Tunisia. This assignment was the result of a wager between General Walter Bedell Smith, Chief of Staff for General Dwight Eisenhower, and General Montgomery. Montgomery had stated that he would drive the German General Rommel's forces beyond a certain point on the map within so many weeks. General Smith did not think it could be done. General Montgomery had no personal air transportation available from the over-burdened British Air Force. The wager was that if he could reach that goal, the U.S. Army Air Force would provide air transportation for him. He won the wager.”

Salvaging Aircraft and MIA Efforts often Conflict

http://www.boston.com/news/world/australia/articles/2009/05/25/remains_are_lost_in_race_for_relics/

Collectors looking for historical aircraft, and the aircraft having been ignored for decades by the US Government not willing to search for MIA remains, has meant that aircraft are salvaged and rebuilt long before the US Government gets around to do a forensics inspection to see if the crew was in the aircraft when it went down.

POW/MIA family update event Saturday at the Clarion Hotel

At the Clarion Hotel in Richland, Washington, a large group of people met to have DNA swabs collected in hopes that if remains are found they can be identified. 78,000+ are still MIA from World War II.

<http://www.thenewstribune.com/news/northwest/story/762042.html>

Walter Knoll – B-24 Tailgunner

He and 4 other crewmates from his B-24 that he flew in over the Alps many times in are still alive. Pilot Vahl Vladyha, engineer Ernie Rota, top gunner Ralph "Moose" Benso and radio operator Don "Annie" Oakley.

<http://www.wausaudailyherald.com/article/20090531/WDH0101/905310500/1981/WDHopinion>

In The Third Wave on D-Day at Omaha Beach

<http://www.freep.com/article/20090531/COL32/905310437/1007>

At 20 years old and already a veteran, Richard Crum, waded ashore in neck deep water with a condom over his carbine's barrel to keep it dry.

The Gathering Foundation

Last year there was a gathering of aircraft and pilots from WW II – now it is a foundation with a web site and much more.

<http://www.gatheringfoundation.org/>

Local Chapter News and Groups

The Military Vehicle Collectors Club July 24 thru 26

[23rd Annual All Military Show & Sale](#). Sponsored by [The Military Vehicle Collectors Club of Oregon](#) - <http://www.mvcco.net/> takes place during the Gun & Knife show at the Oregon Convention center and is included at no additional charge with your gun show admission. Vintage military vehicles on display: all sorts of GI clothing, military
Page 5 of 7 Oregon Chapter 8th Air Force Historical Society, 'Milk Run' April 2009

vehicles & parts, field gear, radio gear, web gear, manuals, medals, insignia and other related items will be on display and for sale or trade. The MVCCO is a non-profit organization. This is not only a fundraiser for the club but also benefits the Oregon Military Museum at Camp Withycombe in Clackamas, Or.

July 24-25-26 PORTLAND, OR at the Expo Center – I-5 Exit #306B
Fri 12-7, Sat 9-6, Sun 9-4 Admission: \$9, 2 day \$14, 3 day pass \$21.

Wheels & Wings August 1

Wings & Wheels will once again be held at Troutdale Airport (TTD) on August 1, 2009. The event will start at 9:00am and end at 3:00pm. Rotary International will be hosting a Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser to help eradicate Polio.

Brad Fudge 503-807-5226 (cell phone)

Website: www.gorgewheelsandwings.com

Western Antique Aircraft & Car Museum

If you are at Hood River you can check out this museum. It is styled like the Shuttleworth Museum in England where antique aircraft and vehicles co-exist.

Open 7 days a week. Museum is located on Ken Jernstedt Airfield. 541-308-1600.

<http://www.waaamuseum.org/>

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 and they meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 12:00 noon. The July / August dinner meeting is on the fourth Tuesday of those months at the American Legion Hall 406 SE Oak Street. 6:30 pm Elmer L Giles, Sec.. 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
EMAIL: Gary Mortensen grmortensen@militarylibrary.net

“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.

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