

August 7th Meeting 8th AFHS

Bob Miller - Pledge of allegiance

Roland - Invokation

Visitors

Jim Hunt, Doctor Mosher (who was stationed at the field hospital at Braintree which served the 8th and 9th AF).

Predident - John Horne

Special meeting in Eugene (see directions in the newsletter) on August 23. 114 vets and 77 Associates in the group. Need head count on people going there. See Jerry Ritter if you are going.

Feathered Props

Al Campbell died last week and a service is being held for him at St. John's Fisher catholic church in SW.

300th Member

Jack Allen was the 300th person who has joined the chapter. As a reconition of this milestone he was awarded an 8th AF patch.

8th Air Force patches, and other patches, can be purchased locally at the Pearson Air Musuem in Vancouver, Washington.

Speakers

Those people who speak at the meeting do not have to pay for the meal. The society picks up the tab for them. If interested in speaking contact Don Keller, b17airdepot@worldnet.att.net.

Asides

Little Sauton was an aircraft graveyard. This is where people would go to scroung parts for aircraft. No keys in jeeps. To keep the jeep from being stolen they took the distributor cap from the jeep. Armament bud Embee would carry around a spare distibutor cap, and when he wanted a jeep he used it to use a jeep.

Reunion

303rd BG out of Molesworth is having a reunion here in Portland.

National Reunion

National Reunion in Colorado Springs in October. A few people are going to the meeting.

Charles Gallager

Newsletter resources. Charlie's original jacket is so fragile he did not want to handle it anymore. He therefore bought a "knock-off" A-2 jacket and then via newsletter announcements he found a painter to repaint his jacket.

Jerry Andrews - Treasurer Report

Records are always available.

\$2,044.64 on hand as of the end of July.

Remember: Any amount given to the chapter above the dues can be written off your Federal Income Taxes.

General news

2nd Air Division newsletter had a list of all bases and what a/c flew out of each one.

Eugene Newspaper article concerning the Collins foundation tour of the B-17 and B-24. Joking around stated that the B-24 started out as a submarine but they put wheels on it for a truck then ended up as an aircraft.

Presentation

Eldon Bevens - Ball turret gunner.

Today, August 7th, is "Purple Heart" day. Eldon was awarded a purple heart, 390th BG in B-17s out of Framington. He lives across the street from where he grew up in Dalles Oregon.

To become one you had to walk under a string -- if you did not touch it you were in. Was trained down in Las Vegas, Indian springs for air to ground firing.

Initial training was being put in a truck, a shotgun, and then driven around a track shooting at clay pigeons. 75 rounds that day.

Lincoln Nebraska was where they were assigned as a crew. Still remembers all Franklin K Dupentougher, 23 years old was the oldest and the pilot. Alexandria Louisiana was where they trained.

They would start off in shorts and shirtsleeves and as you gained altitude you would put on more clothes. Not put on too fast else you would sweat and freeze.

Daily they would see a jeep go out to a 17, load items into it before it went on a flight, then afterwards it would come back and unload stuff. Came to find out they were loading beer into the a/c to cool them down.

Goose Bay Labrador is a drop-off to the ocean at the end of the runway. Snow storm after they landed and 3 feet of snow on plane. It then froze after cleaning plane was frozen. Wheeled into a hanger to warm up and melt off the ice. Only time he was in a warm B-17. British had little boats along the whole flight path to rescue any a/c that had to ditch. Framingham was the closest airbase to the English channel.

They would take them up on training missions near the French coast. Just close enough to get the Germans to fire.

November 30, 1944 to Merseberg. Mission was off course and a bit and flew into a flak corridor and for 12 to 15 minutes through 1800 guns. Lost 7 planes out of the group in a few minutes. 7 make it back to base, rest landed elsewhere.

some from the 569th BS was transferred to 570th since they had lost even more. Smith, toggler; Shaw engineer, smith WG, robinkirk, TG.

Flew weather missions. Got up hour earlier to do this, fly till clouds cleared, the back. Not even given credit for combat mission.

Dec 25, 1944 hit a bridge to stop German troop movements. Clear sky and could see each bomb hit since a blob of mud would come up. 2 years, 2 months 2 days in Air Force.

January 1945 to Frankfurt Germany. Number 2 engine started throwing oil and it congealed up behind. Landed at Lyon but the navigator got out and stepped onto a land mine and the whole crew was wounded, but the radio operator who had stayed in the a/c.

Only supposed to be in a Field Hospital for three days. Either back to unit or to another hospital.

Stayed there for three weeks. Got 7 copies of orders to get back to unit. 1 copy to Paris, 1 Copy to London, 1 more to get back to base. John, the co-pilot and had similar wounds.

O2 checks every 10 minutes, 4 to 6 hours in the turret at a time.

Became a night Operations Sgt and retained his flying status. He would be the one to wake up people who were going on missions.

Flew two Holland food drop missions at the end of the war. He has been back to Holland a few time and the people still reconize the effort they did. Vorbocken and Hornhollen.

Had 1 ME-262 come thtough their formation.

Was a great view from there. On the first mission he could see a solid cloud of black ahead of them to Mersberg.

390th BG at Pima air musuem in Tuson and good web site. 9th has a Wing at the museum.

57 B-17s were lost on Merseberg. Lead nav missed the IP and they had to turn around and when doing so flew into a 120 headwind so the groundspeeds was down to around 35 mph which allowed the flak a long time to fire at them.

Eldon wore a chest parachute. He would unhook it and left it hang on the side.

Door Raffle Prizes - \$10.00, \$15.00, \$25.00. Eldon Bevens got the grand prize.

Dick Presse won the door prize.