

8th Air Force Association Historical Society Oregon Chapter

May 6, 2004

Meeting Opening

Eldon Bevens

Tannoy system announcement! May 8th, 1945 Germany Quits! Stars and Stripes said so.

Pledge of Allegiance

Eldon Bevens

Opening Prayer

Roland Stewart.

Today was National Prayer Day. Non-Denominational. Starting in 1775 of the Continental Congress, again by Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War, 1st Thursday in May by Ronald Reagan. Affirmed by the US Supreme court in 1983. Helped a lot of crew through tough times, it helped Roland during some of his rough missions over Germany. The Oregon legislature requires that it is submitted first for review before being given.

Roland then read a poem written by an anonymous Confederate soldier during the Civil war.

Treasurer Report

Jerry Andrew

Sports News - Roger Bannister ran the first sub 4 minute mile. Willie Mays was born. 1915 Babe Ruth got three hits including first home run.

\$2,610 as of May 1st. \$1,900 in savings rest in checking. \$777 expenses \$475 in income. As always, books and records are at the meeting. Most of the income occurs in the last quarter of the year (normal).

Jerry has been sending out reminder letters last 4 months. There are 10 people who have not replied. He read off the names for all so if they know them they could ask them if they wanted to renew.

Flight Line Editor

Membership

Joe Conroy 181, 111 Veterans and 70 non-veterans.

Displays

Member pictures, group pictures, books for display and for sale (10% of proceeds go back to the club), new WWII Unit air base map (From Duxford, UK); military figures (RAF, Luftwaffe, P-51 pilots, B-17 Gunner)

FAA Rules

Jerry Ritter on proposed FAA aircraft rules which would have grounded all aircraft since they would have not allowed passengers on planes.

Over 2000 people wrote objecting to them. FAA said it would re-consider it.

B17 and B24 Aircraft News

Carl Gufasten

909 Has been re-skinned on the top due to the hail damage.

Aluminum Overcast had its gear collapse down in Van Nuys airport this is EAA's aircraft. Collings foundation has offered replacement parts. It is now painted differently than being all aluminum.

B-24 and B-17 in Medford on Wednesday June 9th, 10, leaving to Corvallis on the 11th (Friday) at 3 PM. That weekend over the weekend. Monday the 14th they go to Redmond (Bend) Roberts Field. 14-16th there then leave at 2 PM to go to Aurora. Wednesday the 16th till 2PM on 18th to Olympia. Gathering of warbirds in Olympia 18-20th then they go onto Port Angeles.

Put out flyers when they are down in Aurora.

Terry Scott on the Bomber in Milwaukie. Need \$70,000 before they can start to restore the cockpit. The restoration on the nose is moving right along. They rotate exhibits.

Program Director

Don Keller

A new magazine, Bomber Legends, is out.

Pearson Air Museum

Every Wednesday is Drive / Fly in at Pearson Airfield.

Uniform display

Exhibit in the Gallery in Salem in the capital through June 3.

Evergreen

Adding 34 acres into the museum area of the growth boundary. Getting Mig-15, F6F, FJ3 Fury. C-130 is being prepared for a buyer. 13 people going on the Evergreen Gulfstream jet to DC for the national dedication of the WWII memorial. (Eldon and his wife are two of the 13.)

8th AF HS National Convention

October 5-10th in Kansas City, Missouri

Caterpillar Club

Bail-outs in combat conditions. Red Jewel, US bailout and Green jewel colors -, Canadian bail-out ; Two clubs "Switchlick" and "Pioneer" are two known organizations that work with people who have bailed out.. Hal has the pins.

Guests

Ray Winters worked on Okinawa. Engine mechanic on 51s and 47s. Bill Tucker flew gunships, 300 missions on 52s. SAC 17 years, Major. Gayle Gusdaz(?) flew tankers with Gorrest service. 22,000 hours.

William Olsen Vietnam. Jane Weiss owns an aviation shop out of Oregon City shopping center. Aeroframe is the name of the store.

Jack Allen, Vietnam. Don Brandt was on PT boats in the South Pacific. The PT boat may have it in the water by end of May 2004. Swift boats are smaller and were used to hunt for and find downed pilots. PTs were for patrol and fighting.

Newsletter

Jerry Ritter. Bob Miller not doing as well in recovery as he thought so newsletter was not put out. Will come out latter if possible.

Historial Records

Ed Perry did the photographs that were on display. Tom Philo will be taking them and cataloging them.

Saturday Meetings

We have had lot of dicussions on Saturday meetings. Elks lodge receptive to it. Befit to the non-retired members. A show of hands showed around 85% of the people would be receptive to having meetings on Saturday.

WWII Dedication in DC on May 29th

Two other people going to DC from club.

Over 800,000 people will be there for the dedication (16.1 million servered in the war.) 400,000+ died as a result of the war.

Darrel Wigmyer got the first door prize. \$8. End of meeting for the rest.

Speaker Introduction

Don Keller introduced Ed Flabetich of the 10th Mountain Infantry Division. "Ski Troops" Only light division still extensice in the US.

Don Keller is his godson.

Retired PFC out of A Co. Average age was 18-19 when first organized out of people who were skiers, bums, whatnots. Germany, Austria, Italy all had mountain troops.

Formed at Mount Ranier Wash (Dick Pressy was an old 10th mountain man as was Bill Washburn was also in the unit! Both left and went to the air unit.) Formed in late 42 and at 9,300 camp Hill along the Canadian border. Winter mountain training, rock climbing, and lots of cross-country skiing. No commander wanted them since since most were above the Mason-Dixon line and though they were all bunch of hot dog college kids.

Easter Sunday March of 44 at 47 below they were sent to Texas in June of 44 where it was 104.

Deployed to the Gothic line in Italy. Originally they were going to be assigned go up Point du Hoc but Eisenhower nixed it.

Belevedere was to be attacked. Attacked 2,500 up a ridge, Feb 18th at the top was a layer of fog so caught the Germans off guard. Ended up at Lake Garden. ? 996 KIA in four months in combat.

Tennessee Pass on continental divide is a monument.

Most of the ski areas were started by men of the 10th.

22 chapters. This year in June in Texas.

Radio operator heard a plane calling gliding gliding 10,000 and the radio operator called out "Walking walking 13,000".

Bill Bobbington was a company commander.

A lot of the original people came from very wealthy families (reason why they thought all of them were spoiled college kids). Foundation was set up and now they give out 45 scholarships a year.

Documentary on the 10th on the History Channel on it. "Fire on the Mountain" is another one on the 10th. Johnny Lithfield.

Snow in February but snow makes a lot of noise in night when if on skies.

15,000. Triangle division, three regiments. Original unit had lots of mule. Hard time getting units off of the ridge. They erected a tram to get wounded off the ridge and got supplies up the ridge. Hampton Lumber and Jack Mitchell built the tram to do it. Was considered a military accomplishment since no one had done it before.

Assault at night, 6 hour climb, most had 60 lb packs. Took their ammo away to avoid setting off any rounds. Ed had a BAR which weighted 21 lbs. Howard Cook, John Emery, and others re-climbed the ridge on the 50th anniversary.

85, 86th 87th Infantry regiments were the core plus other units.

87th were pulled out and made the assault on Kiska in late 44. The Japanese strung cables across the valleys. So miserable they lost 18 guys due to friendly fire due to not being able to see.

After 6 months goes home on furlough. What is the first thing you are going to do. Make love to my wife. What's the second. Take off my skis.

Raffle was \$25, \$15, \$10 (\$5 ticket gets 6 tickets).