

8th Air Force Association Historical Society Oregon Chapter

November 13, 2004

Meeting Opening

Eldon Bevens

Pledge of Allegiance

Eldon Bevens

Opening Prayer

Roland Stewart.

one other; Omar Kelsey 384th BG; David Perry; Bill Washburn (Oct 11,2004); Oscar Choen (wrote book, see Charlie Gallagher for e-mail).

Treasurer Report

Jerry Andrew

70% of members have paid.

\$3,032 as of may 1st. \$1,900 in savings; checking. \$1,100. . As always, books and records are at the meeting. Dues are due by January 1st..

Rebate from National when we send in our records of membership.

Guests

Bill Seitz 98th BG, 80 missions. Wayne Embry (x Air force); Chis Daily 9paratrooper and ranger); Tom Davis's sons John and Paul Davis; Don and Eireen Malarkey;Joanie Welch; Warren Jones 452nd BG 3rd Division; Ray Winters & wife Betty; Bill Geier 4th FG (medic);Joe Kopella Debbie and Paul Spear; Tom Richardson; Jerry Andrews' son; Scott Andrews; Roger Burwell's book going to secretary for history; Robin is the guest; Kathleen (from Burtonwood UK); Richard Kaufman (historian, aircraft electrician vietnam); Ramsey Pendle; Dan Osburn; Bill Shaw (Past president of Evergreen air museum)

Nominating Committee

Joe Conroy, Virginia Knight and Charles Gallagher

- President: Don Bougeouis
- VP: Roland Fisher

- Secretary: Tom Philo
- Treasurer: Jerry Andrews
- Board Members: Von Erickson; Eldon Bevens; Don Malar

Flight Line Editor

Jerry Ritter. Thanks to those that contributed articles. If anyone wants to contribute articles please send them to Jerry.

Bob Miller is still recovering from his illness.

Reports

Evergreen Aviation Museum - Eldon Bevens

Air Cadets very busy. Over 60 a/c at museum. B-17 being crowded into the corner due to number of new a/c. Putting together an I-MAX theatre at the museum.

390th BG 570 Sq out of Framlingham; new a/c has been recovered and restored from Greenland, a B-17, and will be flying in December. Touring the US like the Collings foundation. The group icon was the Square J.

Oregon Military Museum - Bill

Japanese MG is new; a paratroop version. Did the albany parade for veterans parade. new curator at museum was able to secure a grant for it.

DUWK; M37; M20; Willy Jeep; Harley Davidson; M3 Stuart were in the parade.

Hours 9-5 Fri and Sat, appointments other days.

Historians - Joe Conroy

Memories of the 8th Air Force project. Joe and Tom Philo.

Mildred, speaker from August, donated three books to the chapter. She was an engineer for boeing during the war.

National 8th AF HS - Virginia Knight

Kansas City reunion. 671 people attended. 4 new groups joined the reunion conference. Did several tours. Very well organized. It was Virginia's 12th reunion. Down to the minute planning. Next meeting is set to be at Washington DC Dec 27th Oct 2nd 2005.

Membership - Joe Conroy

Joe Conroy 181, 108 Veterans and 73 non-veterans.

Future Programs - Don Keller

May meeting person who wrote "Dust off"; Woman who wrote an article for Yank magazine article (later KIA) for Feb. Author will be speaker.

Board Meetings is now three weeks before meeting.

74 people called in before deadline for food call. 16 called in after deadline.

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) ; Aero Frame had shop display items (they are out of Oregon city)

Membership - Charlie Gallagher

Please contact to update any changes.

Pearson Air Museum

Dance seems to have gone well.

Other Items

Round of Applause for Eldon Bevens for being president for past two years.

Lt. Col. Bob Hagen to observe 2005 observance WWII Aug 25-28.

Don Keller - put stickers on cars about 8th AF and other unit stickers.

Door Prize and Raffle - Jerry Andrews

Cold Cash Raffle Prizes

\$25 Cindy

\$15 Lois & Don Taylor

\$10 Al Cambell's son got it

Door Prize

Lois & Don Taylor! \$8.00 from the signup sheet door prize. When you sign in there is a number next to where you print your name. A number is randomly drawn and that line number determines who wins the door prize money.

Speaker Introduction

Eldon introduced Don Bourgeois to in Don Malarkey.

At first introduction Don Malarkey stated that "malarkey" stands for BS and Don B stated that the same is true for Bourgeois. So, Bourgeois and Malarkey both stand in for "B.S." in some languages.

Don spoke about the greatest generation about the most adventurous life and after WWII did make the world safer. For all those who went through the depression, through the war, and then rebuilt their lives. The difference between some heroes and other sis how they served and how they did; the 8th is one of the great organizations that caught the attention of movies like the 306th that inspired "12 o'clock' " high the 5th Marine div formed just for Iwo Jima; Eagle Squadron. in the ETO the 101st caught attention in there.

The people in europe have not forgotten. they still thank americans in the smaller towns.

Easy Company of the 506th PIR of the 101st was picked by Stephen Ambrose as an example. Then Spielberg created the HBO series.

Don Malarkey, an oregon native, is focused on in the Band Of Brothers. Is a hero who changed history, normandy, market garden, battle of the bulge, berchesgarden "eagles nest" of hitler.

Don Malarkey

Honor for him to be invited in front of the 8th AF Came with the only broken bone in his life, broke his right arm last Saturday night. He never realized how how hard it is with just his left hand - no writing.

Invited down to Sheridan Federal prison area to give a speech. Promised to give signatures but could not even write a letter. So he promised that after the first of the year will come back and sign items for people.

Don originally tried to join the Marines but a tooth defect kept him out them and also the Navy. In April of 1942 the Army came though Oregon looking for fighter pilots. He had gone to Catholic school and had only basic math skills so he could not do the advanced math part of the test so he could not get into the pilot school program.

In the summer of 1942 he went to Monarch Steel in Portland to work in machine shop across from Schmidt steel works. He got notified that he would be drafted and Charlie, his boss, stated that he could get deferred since they were doing war related work but so he said no to being deferred because he wanted to go to war.

Joining The Experiment

Don Malarkey is an original member of E/506/101 - E Company 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division. This unit was part of "experimental" regiment stationed near NE Georgia. It became an experiment in training due to the large number of people who were refusing to become paratroopers after being sent to Ft Benning Georgia. E Company became famous for running Mt Currey - a 3 1/2 miles round trip up the mountain and back to camp in record time. It started off as a gentle slope up, then the last 1/2 mile to the top was very tough.

W company was where people were first assigned when sent there or when being reassigned. So to everyone W either meant "washout" or "welcome" depending if you were coming or going. The 5 people in his tent where he was billeted were being kicked out.

On his 2nd day in camp he was assigned to E Company. He was marched back to back of barracks, assigned a cot, and told to put up his shaving gear, and while doing so saw a picture of a pretty girl's picture on the wall which was taken in an Astoria picture studio named Wilson. Wilson studio took all graduation pictures from Astoria where he grew up but this woman was from Illwaco HS and was the sister of the man next to him. The other man next to him was from Centralia Washington.

Tom Burgess came from Illinois which was a good sporting town.

After hearing about the run up the hill he was worried that he could not make it. After his companions heard him worry out loud a few times he and the two of them ran up the hill but in only running trunks - the two of them after had already run it that day. After that first run they and he knew that he could he do the run with combat gear.

At the camp they had obstacle courses, and a jump training tower. Quite a few men would freeze at the top of the tower. Herbert Sobel was the CO - Commanding Officer - and he would not allow anyone to smoke, talk, eat, drink water (or anything else) during the forced march of 5 miles every Friday. That was the start, he kept increasing the miles they marched till the very last forced march one was 50 miles with same restrictions. They routinely did 50 pushups a day. They also did 25 pushups using only one arm. The Regiment took in 6,000 people but only 1800 passed the qualifications stay in the unit. The highest percentage by group to be kicked out were officers!

1st battalion that went to Ft Benning left before them.

The CO read in a newspaper about a Japanese unit that did a 120 miles march with pack. Wanting to beat that record and with having orders to go to Atlanta, instead of taking the train he decided to march them there. This is how they they started their re-deployment to Atlanta and Ft. Benning.. A lof of the through the Chatchooche National Forest. The first day they did 55 miles, then 50 next, then the final march to Oglethorpe University where they finally were allowed onto the train to take them the rest of the way.

After getting there his legs were all swollen up. Could not even get up. Dick Winters was his Platoon leader (later CO then battalion) refused to get into ambulance and walked in.

Bands were pastry street in five corners. Radio broadcast about the new records in mileage. Radio broadcast of this feat and fives bands.

1st Battalion had been there on flat land. They used to run backwards in front of the cadres since they were in better shape than the other people. So they skipped first two weeks and just did qualification jumps and packing chutes etc.

Finished Dec 24th 1942.

Transferred parts of the 82nd (502) to the 101st to form the cadre: long talking, non walking, non jumping sons of bitches.

Camp McCall was next in NC the into Tenn and kentucky on maneuvers. Blue and Red Army stuff. Then CO picture at Ft Bragg and furlough home (that meant going overseas next, everyone knew that). Did not tell but most guessed. Then to Camp Shanks to Blockly on ship Sumaria.

Got a book on customs about England. 1st Sept 1943 arrived in Liverpool. First US division to UK.

Auburn was the town in the Wilts area of UK. Newbury England was where other parts of div was at. Battalion HQ was at an estate.

D-Day and Normandy

Over Normandy the HQ plane was shot down and all killed so the 9th AF pilots dropped down lower and took evasive action against orders. So they dropped down to 275 feet and dropped from that alt.

Brecourt guns (11 people) against the battery and Infantry defending. Also Carentean.

There were 15 or 16 missions that were planned but never completed. once they in the planes and some were in the air when they were recalled. Flares were sent up and mission stopped since patton had overrun the drop zone. Twice that happened with General George Patton's division overrunning the drop zone before they could jump.

Their 2nd Jump

Then Monty got the idea to do "Market Garden." See the movie or read the book "A Bridge Too Far" to understand the idea behind it. The 101st jumped at Son then attacked South to Eindhoven where the British were to show up at the same time. The British 30 Corps were a day late in getting there.

The 82nd parachuted on the other side of the Waal river near Lent across Nijmegen so to capture the bridge from that direction. The operation plans stated that from start to finish the 101st part in the battle would last 5 days. The 101st was in Belgium in the front line for 78 days. They spent most of this time on the island in middle of the Rhine (Neder Rijn?).

While on the island Don saw massive raid going over to Berlin and was told that 2500 4 engines bombers were in the raid plus 1200 British. (Editor's note: The most bombers in a single formation sent by the US side on a raid was 1,500 plus a thousand fighters. The British never flew in an American style "formation" but in a bomber stream. Though late in the war they did perform some daylight missions but never in a American styled formation. They flew very loose formations since they were not trained to fly that way.)

In the movie the scene where the walk back past the Germans was not totally true. The incident was a combination of two that did occur and the one that happened at Carentan where it the execution of the prisoners happened. No one would verify when it happened. E Company had cleared that area and were wondering what the firing was about. The people in back yelled forward to know what them know what Spears had done. No one was willing to come forward to testify about that since they were afraid what would happen latter to them.

Why they would not could be explained by what had happened earlier. Captain Spears asked a Sgt. to take his squad across the open field 200 yds or so to a cluster of farm buildings. There were only a few farm buildings on the other side across the open field however German panzers were milling around the farm buildings who would have an open view of the attack.. The Sgt. objected and Spears killed him with his Thompson sub-machine gun.

An investigation ocured over this but the other ranks confirmed the Sgt. refused the direct order to attack across the open terrain so he was not court-marshalled.

Captain spears attitude was also exemplified when the night before the Rhine jump (they were the backup regiment) the officers got their liquor rations and went to the sargeant's tent and shared it with them. Later in the night Spears told them that "no prisoners" were to be taken if they jumped. Very brave but ruthless and should have been killed but he was not.

After they got out of Holland all of their equipment was taken away - guns, entrenching tools, everything. They had nothing was left but their clothes - this was done so they could be issued all new gear. The turn-in had been going on for two weeks but nothing had been issued in return.

On December 16, 1944, the "Battle of the Bulge" began. The German code name for it was "Watch on the Rhine." After initial confusion at Allied Headquarters as to if it was a local attack or a real offensive General Eisenhower ordered all reserve divisions to Belgium .Eisenhower had only two divisions in reserve: the 82nd and 101st. The 506th Parachute Infantry were sent to the front in cattle trucks.

After passing retreating units the divsion got out of their trucks and 1st Regiment left the main group to march East and the 506th went into the center of the local line and also north.

When Don's unit marched through Bastogne he had no ammo at all. He was given a clip by one of his mates. Passing back a Sherman tank he took a entrenching tool off of it so he went into battle with a carbine with one 20 round clip on one shoulder and entrenching tool on the other.

The 501st PIR met the German panzers as they were coming near Bastogne from the East and South.

The 506th PIR marched north and got to Foy and Noville that night (December 17th). That same night German tanks and infantry attacked and forced them out of first Noville then Foy so they retreated into the woods below Foy and dug in there. Noville is 2 KM north of Foy. Foy is 5 KM north of Bastogne.

By the evening of the 18th the two divisions and the remnants of others were surrounded in the Bastogne area. After repeated attacks (from only 1 direction at a time) the Germans sent a demand to surrender to the defenders. When General McAuliffe saw the note he stated "Nuts" then asked opinions of the others as what to do for a reply. Harry Canard stated that the first comment he heard sounded good. So that is went back to the Germans as to their demand. McAuliff was the Assistant Div commander - the commander was back in the US discussing the planned Rhine jump - so that is why he was in charge of the division.

The reason the Germans failed to take Bastogne was they they never attacked from two or more directions at the same time. By attacking only from a single point all the American divisional artillery could be used to thwart the attack. If they had launched from two or three directions at once that would not have been possible and the Germans would have taken the crossroads. The reason they did not was that they were worried that their own artillery and tanks would hit their own troops coming in the other directions.

On Nov 24 the air cleared and the C-47s "Dakotas" dropped supplies.

Their whole medial staff was captured on the first day and spent the war treating German prisoners.

Got down to 6 rounds per mortar. 1 bandolier per rifleman.

On the 24th they would kill cattle in Bastogne and bring the pot to the front line before daylight and deliver the food. Chopped up fine and put into the canteen hoping meat would be in there.

That evening they got a custom christmas card with greetings still has the card. Torn and taped up in a frame.