

8th Air Force Historical Society, Oregon Chapter

13 August 2022



Lt. Col. Frank Heyl with his Quilt of Valor and Tom Davis

[Photos taken by Joan E. Hamilton]

Interview of Lt. Col. Frank Heyl by Tom Davis

Based on the 8th AFHS Presentation by Lt. Col. Heyl

Edited by Joan E. Hamilton

[*Modifications made and approved by Lt. Col. Heyl]

Our August 2022 presentation was an interview of Lt. Col. Frank Heyl by Tom Davis.

Tom Davis: Frank, why don't you start off by telling us where you grew up? Where were you born?

Lt. Col. Heyl: White Salmon, Washington. [Start of camera video part 1] I grew up and then went in the military after graduating from high school.

Tom Davis: When was that?

Lt. Col. Heyl: 1942 or '43. I think it was 1943.

Tom Davis: Why don't you tell them about the experience of trying to join the Navy? [Start of cell phone video part 1]

Lt. Col. Heyl: My father served in WWI and [WW]II in the Navy. Of course, I would wear his old uniform around when I was growing up and I knew I was going to be Navy, a Navy carrier pilot. So, my father went off to WWII and my dad said, "Take care of your mother while I'm gone."

And I left about six months later. And I went to the Navy recruiting office here in Portland. I went in and took my physical and flunked it. I passed the written, but I flunked the physical. I said to the corpsman, "I'm Navy. What'll I do? What'll I do?"

He said, "No, just go across the street there at George Wright Reception Center, Army."

He said, "They'll take anything."

He was right. So, high school seniors, you know, they talk too much, but I'm telling the medic, I said, "You know, the Navy rejected me because of a physical."

He says, "You don't know how lucky you are."

I went, "Well, I wanted to be Navy."

He says, "Well, how many girls are there in the ocean?"

I agreed with him. So, off I went into the Army Air *Force and got into the Aviation Cadet Program. *We flew the PT-17, a T-6, and the AT-10. *Then, I [was] sent to OTU, Overseas Training Unit, in B-25s because that was the aircraft that I assigned to fly. I'd asked for fighters. Everybody wanted to fly a fighter. At that time there was the P-40s, but the P-51s were just coming out and so my instructor says, "No, no."

He had been an airline pilot in twin-engine, flying DC-3s. So, he said, "In commercial aircraft, boy," he said, "When you get out, you'll fly twin-engine."

He also said, "*With twin-engine, you've got two engines."

He says, "If you lose one engine, the other engine will get you to the scene of the crash."

He was right. Anyway, I went into twin-engine at OTU in gunnery in the B-25. My instructor was talking to another instructor and I was standing there and he said to the other instructor—his name was Captain Blackshear—He said, "You know, I proved that an idiot could fly the B-25."

He pointed to me and I thought about that. But I did go off to B-25s and I wanted to be in the 8th Air Force because everybody's going to the 8th Air Force because they were the big bomber command in Europe. So, all of a sudden, they said, "Well, you're going to the 5th Air Force in the South Pacific."

I thought, "Disappointment, again. I got bumped out of fighters and I got bumped out of B-17s. I got the B-25. And now I don't get the 8th Air Force."

But, after the war, I got to talking to people—and I don't know whether this is true or not—but I found out that one-half [or] 50% of the 8th Air Force air crews didn't come home. So, I got bumped out of the Navy. I got bumped out of B-17s. I got bumped out of the 8th Air Force. So, how lucky can you get?

Oh, I got to meet Jimmy Doolittle after his raid *of 16 B-25s on Tokyo. I shook his hand along with about 300 other *retirees.

But off to the South Pacific, *as an assigned co-pilot. All *multi-engine aircraft aircrewmembers start off flying as co-pilots so they would get squared away.

So, we're getting ready to go overseas in the South Pacific and I was very lucky. My instructor that I had was going back for the second tour. [Inaudible] go back.

I thought, "How lucky can you get? I'm going to have a man that got shot down, was rescued, had many hours—had 150 hours in a B-25—what a lucky day."

I was a shining second lieutenant then. My uniform *even smelled like moth balls. *Filling out the clearance, one of my classmates walked up and said to me, "Frank," he says, "I'm your co-pilot."

I says, "Oh, no you ain't. *I'm Captain Sandstrum's co-pilot."

He said, "*Sandstrum went to the hospital with a ruptured appendix this morning.'

Disappointment. I thought, "How unlucky can you really get?!"

But we got to Okinawa finally in the last three months of the war. Got to fly *several missions at low level.

In my first mission in a B-25 as first pilot, I had a navigator from Portland. *He'd sit up in the nose. We never flew over 300 feet because we had eight .50 caliber machine guns and some of the aircraft had .75 mm guns in the front of them. We were sub hunters, submarine hunters, looking for submarines. And so my first mission as a first pilot, you'd take off and climb to 1000 feet and make a turn to the left and turn to the right out of traffic and then drop down to about 300 feet above the water and go looking for submarines. All submarines at that time had to surface at night and run diesel engines to charge *batteries for their electric motors. How many Navy people do we have? [One?] That's not a very good showing.

Bert Campbell?: That may be due to the same reason you didn't join the Navy.

Lt. Col. Heyl: Anyway, the navigator, he sat up in the front in the greenhouse they called it on the B-25. And he would spot with the field glasses for you. We'd take off and fly due East and looking for subs and the minute the sun starts to *come up, we'd turn around and head to fly west. Is that right? West, yeah.

Anyway, and he'd spot a submarine. So, I made about two or three missions, as I said, as a co-pilot. All of a sudden, I'm sitting there dreaming about maybe seeing something and the navigator says, "Sub!"

And I looked and there was one. I could see it on the horizon. I was just breaking daylight. They were getting ready to submerge and so we opened up on the sub, naturally. Now, you're not suppose to go around and look at the target after you shoot at it because they've got guns, too. You fly out, as I remember, for a minute or two minutes and make a turn to the left and then another turn to the left and then forty-five minutes to take a quick look and don't get too close.

So, the navigator, he finally said, "I see the target" after we made a run. Flew over. I could not see it. It was on the other side of the aircraft when we went by. So, there was a silence.

I said, "Did you see anything?"

You usually see oil *or the water. Is that right, Navy? You'd see oil on the—and you'd see other debris if you got 'em.

But the navigator says, "You know, there ain't many subs made out of lumber."

"Lumber, no."

But I swore I saw a submarine, but we got a banana crate.

Got back to the base there. I've forgotten the name of it. *N-A-H-A? No. In Okinawa. I can't remember the name of it. Anyway, landed. Our aircraft went into the shop and about two days later we were going to fly another mission. *On a good mission, you *got a bomb painted *on your plane. I had a banana crate painted on the side of mine. Promotions became very slow for me.

The only thing now that was bombing Japanese islands with was the *2 other Air Force B-29s. I knew that I'd never get on the bombing because we could either carry a bomb load or a fuel load. We couldn't carry a bomb load and a full fuel load and get to Japan and get back *to Okinawa. So, I knew I was going to be a sub buster. But I think we did three weeks [or] four weeks. *Dropped the A-bomb and that was that. So, the war was over.

We came home and I thought, "You know, I've really been lucky and I like the military."

I'd have to go back to a stockboy job in a grocery store at twenty-five cents an hour *and 10% grocery discounts. I was making \$255 a month [in the military]. I'm going to stay in and fly airplanes. So, the day came when we were all getting discharged in 1946. It came my turn.

The personnel officer said to me, he said, "What do you want to go home on? A bus or a train? Here's your discharge."

I said, "Well, really, I'd like to stay in. What's the first thing I do?"

[He said,] "See a psychiatrist."

I didn't know what a psychiatrist was. I'd never heard of one and I told him that because I wanted to be honest with him for a change.

I said, "What should I do?"

He says, "See the chaplain."

So, boy, I took off for the chaplain. I and talked to the chaplain and told him what I wanted to do. He said, "Well, I'll tell you what," he says, "Pilots are a dime a dozen."

I said, "Well, my instructor told me I could fly for the airlines."

The chaplain said, "He's probably looking for a job too."

He said, "Just being a pilot, over 80,000 were trained."

Look that up on one of your computers. But, 80,000.

He said, "You've got to have a ground job."

I said, "What could I do?"

He said, "Well, how about food service officer?"

I said, "Well, I know how to eat. That's about the extent of it."

He said, "How about, you know, a maintenance officer?"

I said, "I don't even know how to change a spark plug *on an airplane."

He said, "What else did you do?"

I said, "I worked on the rifle range and I picked up grass and I pasted targets."

[He said,] "Good, you're an instructor."

But he says, "You've got to have a *college degree. Stay in the reserve. Get your degree. Then, go back on active duty. Now, you've got a college degree and you know how to fly and the military will be glad to have you because the military only does two things. They either train for war or fight war."

He said, "You're trained to fight."

And I thought, "Oh, yeah."

But the next thing he says, "You're an instructor."

I said, "I've got a degree that says so, a piece of paper."

He said, "All right, apply to go back in."

Well, I applied but it didn't work out like I wanted. They didn't accept it. So, I went to—I graduated from Lewis & Clark here in Portland. So, I applied for a job with the Portland Public Schools and they said, "Yes, you can start to work in September."

[I said] "Great."

In the meantime, I got married. Now, I had a job and I got a letter from the President, "Greetings. You've been recalled to go to Korea."

So, I said to my wife to be, "You'd better think about this. You just might end up with a monthly check from the government *and a free funeral."

She said, "I'll take a chance."

So, we got married, *graduated from college and shipped off to Korea all within six months and flew in Korea. I flew C-46s there.

Tom Davis: Man, you're perfect right down the line. I don't even have to interrupt. You're doing great.

Lt. Col. Heyl: Am I?

Tom Davis: I can't believe how you're following exactly. There is hope for my memory. There is hope.

Lt. Col. Heyl: Where was I? Oh, C-46s.

Bert Campbell: Tom, he's doing this all by memory.

Tom Davis: I know it. It's amazing.

Lt. Col. Heyl: Thank you. [Laughter] I've got to tell my family about this. Where was I? Oh, Korea. After you fly 50 missions in Korea, you get an air medal. I got 49. Didn't quite make the air medal.

My second or third flight into Korea with the paratroopers at night we were landing at K-46. How many went to Korea? Somebody went to Korea to confirm my story. Yes, good. I flew paratroopers into K-46. We could not pronounce Korean names, pilots couldn't. So, it was K-10, K-12, K-46, Kimpo. I couldn't remember that's K-[14].

Anyway, I landed a C-46 and they debriefed the crew after every mission and I saw all this lightning storm up there. So, I got on the ground and they're debriefing me and I said, "You've got a big lightning storm up there."

He said, "Yeah, it's known as the *38th Parallel. That's Chinese and North Korean fire."

I thought, "God, what am I doing here with an unarmed aircraft?!"

I flew 49 missions that way in Korea and finally finished off my missions there and came home and joined the--.

Tom Davis: Not yet. Tell them, you've got to tell them about you signed up for another year in Japan. That's classic.

Lt. Col. Heyl: Oh, but I'm still wanting to stay in. Yeah, okay. They said, in Korea they said—I'd finished my mission and I applied to go home—and they said, "If you go to Korea and take a ground job as well as a flying job, you can request your wife to come over, bring your car over at government expense."

I thought, "Hey, this is ideal."

So, I called my wife on a Mars radio and I said, "Hello, dear."

On a Mars radio—if anybody's familiar with it—you'd say, "Hello, dear, over. I love you, dear, over."

And she says the same thing. A lot of "overs" in here. So, I called my wife. She'd never been out of Multnomah County in her whole life, So, I said, "Dear"—I'd written to her and told her that I was on my way home. I'd finished my combat missions and tour in Korea.

I called her and I said, "Dear, how would you like to come to Japan?"

Big silence. She says, "Can I leave tonight?"

I said, "No, you've got to wait six weeks."

So, she came over and joined me there and they made me the—I was late for coming back off the leave with my wife. We went to a Japanese mountain retreat and came back and they said, "Congratulations."

I said, "Another promotion."

They said, "No, you're a flying safety officer now as well as a ground transportation officer."

So, I'm now the air-ground safety officer.

My wife and I are about six months into there and they congratulated me again. Now, I'm the air-ground flying safety and accident investigating officer. With a title like that, I'm still a captain. I thought, "With a title like that, a promotion."

But I found out that [inaudible] organization they're frozen there as a captain. So, we spent the year and a half in Japan and came back to the States.

Tom Davis: You've got to tell them about your experience with Shinto, your red kimono. You've got to tell that.

Lt. Col. Heyl: There might be a Shinto priest in the audience.

Tom Davis: No.

Lt. Col. Heyl: I moved to the Japanese village *Kogamachi. I had to rent a Japanese house. My wife and I lived there. I found out we were the only Caucasians living in this Japanese village and so I found it best when I came home from work to put on a kimono. So, I went to a tailor and I had him make me—it was just like a bathrobe with a *sari. I had my Japanese kimono. People of certain ages wear certain colors. I could wear blue. Old men wore black. So, I took a look at the colors of the fabric in the tailor's shop and I said, "Red. I've got to have red. I like red."

So, I get a red kimono. Of course, I had the appropriate haircut, crewcut. But I'm walking down the street and all the Japanese would get off the sidewalk and bow and say, "Ah, *konnichiwa, konnichiwa.*"

And I [said] back, "*Konnichiwa.*"

I got home and we had a houseboy. You had to have a houseboy interpreter. I walked in the door and the houseboy, "Ah."

I said, "What's wrong?"

"Red kimono."

He says, "Only *religious priests wear red."

I'd walked about two city blocks with all of these Japanese bowing. So, I had to retire my red kimono.

At the end of *two years, we came home. I signed up with the *Air Force Reserve. Colonel Bob Sheets *was our commander. The thrill of my life for the day was with *meeting Sally Sheets.

[To Sally in the audience], Your dad was my boss for *several years. Great officer, great commander. So, then I had the opportunity like we've got too many majors in this unit and so [they said,] "You're the last one in and so you're out and you'll go into the Search and Rescue Squadron. Anybody Search and Rescue here? Flown the A?? Out at the base here, yes.

Bert Campbell: *304th?

Lt. Col. Heyl: *304th, thank you. I was assigned there.

Bert Campbell: They started with Hueys and then they went to Blackhawks.

Lt. Col. Heyl: So, I was there and the commander there I knew him, but I can't remember his name now. There were two of us, now, lieutenant colonels and they called us in and said, "Both of you lieutenant colonels are over age in grade."

"What's that got to do with it?"

They said, "If you're over age in grade and you've been in seven years, *the Air Force retires you."

I said, "Well, gee whiz. How come we've been in?"

They said, "Well, we're short of pilots, so we'll take anything again, even lieutenant colonels."

He said, "Your job since you've been in is a captain's job."

He says, "I'm a lieutenant colonel. I'm the boss. You two are lieutenant colonels."

I was one of the two and he says, "We've got a promotion for one. I'm going to be the colonel. You're going to be retired in about thirty days."

So, now, I had on special dates once a year I would go over with the Army National Guard. Bill Gottlieb was the man I talked to there. I would do a cold weather combat aviation survival training program for them. Every time I'd leave, they'd say, "Why don't you come over to a good unit?"

I'd laugh. No, I was wearing a nice, blue uniform. I didn't want to go back to khakis again. They did this twice. The minute my Air Force commander said I was through, I ran across the street to the Army and said, "Here I am. Were you kidding me or did you really mean it?"

They said, "We meant it."

I said, "What'll I do? What'll I do?"

They said, "Go home and stay for thirty days and you'll be in the National Guard. Do you have a flying suit? Steal it because we don't have any flying suits your age or size. You're too small. Bring your flying suit and you're in the Army National Guard."

So, by golly, I went over there in the Army National Guard. They did take me on and the next thing that happened was they got rid of the *fixed wing aircraft and *went to

helicopters. I'd been told [to] stay away from any aircraft that has to screw itself into the air because it ain't long for this world.

But they said, "You're going to helicopter school."

I said, "I've got the flu."

So, I missed the first shipment to helicopter school. I missed the second one, *too, but they said, "Either helicopters or out."

My helicopter instructor was a twenty-one-year-old Vietnam pilot. He called me "grandpa" because I was in my fifties. I did *finally learn to fly helicopters in about three weeks.

The instructor kept saying, "Tomorrow, we're going to solo you."

I'd say, "Give me one more day. One more day."

On *Saturday, he asked me to come out to the base on Saturday, *my day off.

He says, "Taxi down *to the fence [at] the field."

So, I taxied down there. He said, "I've got to relieve myself."

I said, "Okay."

Now, he got out of it and the engine's running and he buckled *his seatbelt together and I knew exactly what was going to happen. He's going to leave me. He took off. He says, "You either fly or cry."

So, I flew. I flew the helicopter back up and parked it. Now, I'm the first pilot in the helicopter. He walked back. He wouldn't fly with me.

Audience question: What kind of helicopter?

Lt. Col. Heyl: Well, the Bell with the big bubble. Is that a Bell?

Audience member response: Yes, *OH-58 Kiowa Warrior.

Lt. Col. Heyl: Then, I flew the Hueys and I got checked out as an instructor in the Hueys. And so, now, we were assigned search-and-rescue jobs, jobs off of Mt. Adams and Mt. Hood.

I kept meeting a fellow, *Dick Woodfin, who was a US Forest Service *research analyst. *Dick had been active over 35 years in search & rescue. I kept meeting Dick Woodfin and we'd go to after-action *meetings and discuss the incident.

So, someone said, "You ought to write a book."

I said, "Gee whiz, you know, write a book? I can't even keep my bank book straight. Write a book?"

They keep ranging at us. So, Dick said, "You know, your wife can type about ninety words a minute."

I go, "That's nothing to do with me."

He says, "My wife was a high school English teacher. She can be an editor. *I'm a photographer and keep track of these incidents. We're going to write a book."

So, I started out to write a book and that's where this book came from. [*Why Some Survive: Common Threads of Survival From Accounts of Survival and Tragedy in the Outdoors* by Frank G. Heyl and Richard O. Woodfin, Jr.] *There's 117 incidents in the book of why some survive. There's 117 *accounts about people who got lost either in vehicles, airplane crashes.

We had an interesting one in Idaho. Maybe, some of you remember it. A young lady who was taking flying lessons from her uncle *and her boyfriend—the uncle had bought an aircraft in Wichita, so he said to his niece and her boyfriend, "Would you like to go to Wichita and fly home with me?" [End of camera video part 1]

She said, "Well, yes. That'd be nice."

*Since she was taking flying lessons, it would help her too. They crashed in Idaho. *They looked for the crash for about ten or fifteen days. [Start of camera video part 2] After fifteen days, *they give up official searches. They *are quite sure that the victims are dead. At any rate, they did finally find the aircraft and they found the boy and the girl alive. The uncle was dead. He was sitting in the front. The couple was sitting in the backseat of the aircraft. It was interesting, in fact, because we often hear discussions about cannibalism. That was the saddest story, I think, we ever had to write about. In recovering the uncle's body, they found knife cuts on the bones. Anyway, they found out about that later and they did admit it and they both had to see a psychiatrist after that.

But the most, the greatest story we wrote about in the book was a four-and-a-half-month-old baby girl. She was found alive in a snow cave after five days. Her mother was with her and, of course, her father was with her. How many of you have heard of Bagby Hot Springs? Several of you. That's where this occurred. They had gone in to

take a hot bath in the hot springs and snow had started to fall and most of the people were there on a Saturday afternoon [and] had taken off, but they stayed there. There was only one other vehicle in the parking lot. So then, they started to drive out and the ground was now covered with snow and he took a wrong turn and went into a logging clear cut and got stuck. Now, it's Saturday about 4:30 and the wife kept saying, "We've got to get home. Mother expects us for dinner tonight."

He said, "I'll walk out to the highway."

He got lost. He finally found the car again. The tracks came back to it. So, then he dug a little bit of a snow cave underneath a tree. All this is in the book. There they were for five days. This Bill Gottlieb that I mentioned earlier hired me in the National Guard, he was the first aircraft in there and we were the first aircraft over it, but we did not find the car.

He was the second aircraft over it and we were running low on fuel, so we had to get out of there. He was able to go in with a helicopter and get them out about 10 o'clock in the morning of the fifth [day] of five and a half days. So, the picture of the little girl's in here and a picture of the crew chief on the Huey helicopter taking the mother out and the father out. The father lost most of his toes. There's pictures of his toes in here. I took pictures and he's a commercial artist and he painted pictures of his own toes. It's perfect. Sally looked at it. They look like real toes. They were. Anyway, I took pictures of the toes, several of them. The third and fourth day, I couldn't handle this. How many of you've smelled the smell of gangrene? None, I hope. Okay, thank you. [Response from audience member.] You don't like it do you or did you? I set my camera up on a tripod and the father would lay in bed with a plunger and a cable to take his own picture of his feet. The father lost toes. The mother lost her life. What happened to the baby girl? Diaper rash. That was all that was wrong with her. The mother breastfed the baby. The father melted snow in his mouth and let it drool into the baby's mouth, so the baby did fairly well. The baby was dressed for the environment, dressed for the situation. How many mothers know what a trundle bundle is. [Inaudible] A trundle bundle is just a bag

with a hood, arms, no legs, zipper. Okay, thank you. At any rate, they ran out of diapers, of course, but she had the trundle bundle, a wool sweater, wool underwear. The mother had Levi's on, canvas. No hats, no caps. They both had what did they call them in those days? Waffle stompers. Not for the outdoor environment.

Now, it gives you in the book here in the back the procedure for cold weather dress. [Getting book] This one is for sale to you. It's a \$20 book, but it's for sale to you for \$10. The money goes to the Tunnels for [inaudible], isn't it? [End of cell phone video 1]

Tom Davis: Towers

Lt. Col. Heyl: Towers, thank you. This one's a freebee. Yep, \$10 for that. Now, that has the five requirements for survival in it. I had them on my office door [as] the combat aviation, cold weather, all environment survival officer that has the requirements for cold weather dress and the procedures to live any place in the world.

Five things you've got to do are in that book in the appendix. It's also in this book. We did this book [when] the military loaned me to the Alyeska Pipeline to write the book along with twelve other people, all MDs and cold-weather specialists. You can change the Arctic to cold. This is a freebee to every one of you, back here on the table. Pick one up on the way out. [*Staying Alive in the Arctic: A Cold Weather Survival Manual*, American Petroleum Institute.]

The first year on the pipeline they had working there, they had 142 cold-weather injuries. So, then they hired Dr. Cameron Bangs, a doctor from Oregon City. Anyone know Dr. Bangs? 81, yeah, great doctor.

Audience member: He lives down the hill from me.

Lt. Col. Heyl: He flew with us all the time. He was a civilian doctor and Bill Gottlieb's wife, a Colonel in the Army Guard, she was a nurse from Willamette Falls Hospital where Dr. Bangs taught. Yeah, he did, taught. They got to fly with us on certain rescue missions. You've heard of doctors who make house calls, well, Dr. Bangs made mountain calls. He'd go up and pick up people off of Mt. Hood and the various places. Dr. Bangs wrote the cold-weather manual. The cold-weather order of dress is in the book and in the Arctic manual. So, you'd know how to dress and take care of yourself.

Tom Davis: One other thing. I know that I've heard this already, but did you ever get exposed to fly in a jet fighter? Tell them about that.

Lt. Col. Heyl: After I finished my combat tours in Korea, I got to know the *commander of an F-86 *Sabre squadron.

He says, "You've flown *single engine."

I said, "Sure, yeah, I grew up in single-engine aircraft."

*He was short of pilots. He was trying to get me to transfer over.

I said, "Well, okay."

I didn't have any great desire. I didn't like the smell of them, really. The sergeant checked me out on all of the instruments, the controls, and the temperatures and airspeed limitations and that. They took me up and gave me a ride in *a Sabre trainer.

*The Colonel said, "How would you like to have a job with me?"

I said, "No, *I've got a problem with that aircraft. That's over a 500-mph airplane. I've got about a 200-mph *mind and body. I'm *about 200 miles *per hour behind it. And so, we'd get there before I'm ready to land. *No thanks. I like to hear that roar of reciprocating engines and I like to see those propellers out in front of the aircraft."

Little did I know I was going to helicopters a year or two later.

Tom Davis: I understand you never pranged an aircraft, right?

Lt. Col. Heyl: No, as flight safety officer and *assistant accident investigating officer, I did not dare have an accident or a scratch on an aircraft. I had to teach and preach flying safety and survival.

Tom Davis: You have to tell me what happened when you did a night landing in Redmond when only half the runway lights were on.

Lt. Col. Heyl: Flying in the Reserve in a *C-119. We would have people from all over the state. We'd *pick them up on Friday afternoon and take them home on Sunday night. My first trip into Redmond, Oregon, they had small aircraft landing and they're only *using half of the runway. *Small aircraft need very little runway compared to twin-engine *aircraft. About twenty miles out, I told the co-pilot, "You've got the landing lights of the field in sight. Give *the tower a call and tell them we're *visual flight and ask for *a straight in for landing."

*There were *several small aircraft in the traffic pattern that they would hold out for us to land. For the multi engine, they'd light the runway *full length. *For light aircraft, the runway lights were on only on halfway. It looked a little short. I was anxious to get on the ground. We touched down at *landing speed and all of a sudden, no *runway lights.

I thought, "Oh my god, *we've run out of runway."

I called for the co-pilot and I *yelled brakes, "Air! Air! Now!"

You've got hydraulic with your feet and the co-pilot has an air brake. You reach down here and yank up. But, once you turn the air brake on, it locks the wheels and you can't take it off. That's an accident is eminent.

So, I'm screaming. Got a hold of the wheel pulling back just trying to stop and I'm yelling, "Air! Air!"

So, he yanks *brakes on and we blew *all the main tires.

So, the tower says, "You're cleared to taxi to the parking area."

We couldn't taxi anywhere. Now, the *light aircraft had to go to--.

Sophia Kennedy's daughter: Madras?

Lt. Col. Heyl: Madras. But, now, that's not an aircraft accident. That's tires blew out, *an incident. So, I've never put a scratch on an airplane *knowingly.

Tom Davis: You bet. Most of the folks know Stan Richardson. You can't get away without telling how you meet Stan and the experiences. There're some good ones.

Lt. Col. Heyl: Stan and I, of course, he flew fighters and I flew multi engine, but he was one of the first pilots that I met here in Portland after WWII or after Korea I guess it was. We flew quite often together and we both became instructor pilots. He was my instructor, checked me out as an instructor pilot.

One day he says, "I've got a trip going to Sarasota, Florida. We'll be gone for about four or five days."

He says, "Can't get anyone else to go. How about you going to Florida? My folks are down there."

I said, "Sure, I'll go to Florida with you."

So, we got a crew chief, Leonard *Vail, was the crew chief's name. And so, we took off and flew to Florida and we landed at Sarasota.

Audience member: What kind of aircraft were you flying?

Lt. Col. Heyl: C-46. And [we] got to Sarasota and he called the tower. Stan was a daring pilot. He called the tower and requested the tower in Sarasota to call his dad at a private residence and tell him he was going to land and to pick us up. The next day, we went to a football game and after the football game Stan met his old coach and Stan invited the coach and the team to come out to the field to see the C-46.

So, they got in the cars and we all got in the C-46. I'm up in the cockpit explaining that there's the propeller and there's the wing and there's the seat and all the technical things, you know?

So, the next thing Stan says, "Were going to load the aircraft with the football team. *We're going to take *them for just a ride around the field."

Civilians in a military aircraft? Uh-uh, you don't do that.

I said, "You've got to go through procedures. We've only got three parachutes."

He said, "No, we've got four."

I said, "The rest of them, they don't have parachutes."

He said, "We're just going to go around the traffic pattern. *We will leave our chutes."

I said, "Okay, if anything happens, we all better be killed. We're going to Leavenworth if we have trouble."

But we took off with the football team. We flew to, I think, we went to Miami. An hour and a half we flew and I prayed all the way.

I thought, "Stan's a great guy and I loved him, but I can't handle much more of this."

He was daring. That's why he was a combat pilot. I was *a troop carrier pilot.

Today, if you fly from here to Florida, what is it about four or five hours? Coming home, it's about ten or fifteen hours. We were up all the night Saturday and coming home on Sunday.

*We're out at the airport in the morning at daylight because we were flying home and there's a place called—

Tom Davis: Hanford?

Lt. Col. Heyl: Hanford. You don't ever fly over Hanford, *a restricted area, ever. So, we were flying at night. *All of you who have even flown commercially can look out

the side windows at night and see a light out there somewhere. So, I'm getting sleepy after all this. I've got the collar up on my sheepskin jacket because we didn't have heaters. *Stan sees me doing this.

He says, "Frank, go ahead. *Grab a few winks. I'll fly."

We let auto pilot fly it anyway, but you've got to keep your eyes open even with auto pilot, evasive action [inaudible]. Anyway, I did go to sleep. I don't know how long I slept, but I woke up and I looked over and here's old Stan [asleep].

I said, "Stan, Stan, look at that light."

I didn't want to admit that I knew he was asleep. So, he looked and he said, "What light?"

Well, there wasn't a light. *About then, there was a *voice on the radio and it says, "Aircraft in the vicinity of *Hanford Bombing Range."

*About then, I see it looked like a blow torch out here at night--got even with it--two F-86s, one on each wing. They'd intercepted us and guided us south out of the bombing range.

I said, "Stan, what kind of jobs can we get as civilians after we get out of jail?"

He says, "Don't worry about it."

I says, "Well, you don't worry about it."

*Stan had to write *several letters of explanation. *We got a verbal and written reprimand.

I said, "Well, you probably destroyed my career, at least slowed down my promotions."

Tom Davis: Who said this? "In 1983 after forty years in the military, *Dr. Cameron Bangs said my eyes were bad and I couldn't fly any more *After serving in the Army Air Force, the Air Force, and National Guard, I retired [1943-1983]?"

Lt. Col. Heyl: *Now, I can tell you the secret of longevity. Eat your veggies, exercise, and lie about your age.