

WWII U.S. GLIDER PILOT'S BRIEFING

NATIONAL WWII GLIDER PILOTS ASSOCIATION
OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE

Legacy of the World War II Glider Pilots Association



FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES



This extraordinary high resolution photo has proven invaluable in our quest to depict the face behind each record and enhance their historical narrative. Given to us from glider pilot Austin Perkins' family this is just one example of how our families help other families by partnering with the research team.

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GLIDER OPERATIONS
FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES

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HONORING OUR VETERANS - OPERATIONS -
MISSIONS - TROOP CARRIER MOVEMENT -
REUNION PLANS - EDITOR'S MESSAGE

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You have received this quarterly briefing because you are a paid member of the National World War II Glider Pilot Committee which is a component of the Silent Wings Museum Foundation. The Foundation is an independent 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization incorporated to support the Silent Wings Museum, and is not otherwise connected with the City of Lubbock, TX. The briefing content is created by our members who are not compensated for their research and writing. This content provides you with glider and other troop carrier stories, information, images, and history usually obtained directly from U.S. Military archives and other sources not in common circulation.

Editor's Note

Thank you again to our fantastic contributors, and may I extend another congratulations to Abigail for her selection as our first scholarship recipient!

Thanks also to our readers for their patience as we worked to get this edition out through a very busy winter season, we are hoping to be back on track for our Spring edition.

As I continue to edit this publication I am continually struck by the emotive and harrowing events that tie our glider pilots together. The fantastic work put into every aspect of our member's contributions truly makes the accomplishments of this historic military program resonate. If anybody has the ability to identify the Glider Pilot pictured on page 12, please write in to Patricia and I at the below email.

Please do contact us! We don't receive very many letters to the editor, and we'd love to share reader's thoughts with the rest of the community in following editions. If you have thoughts about a particular article or event that you've seen in our past issues, please send those thoughts to:

briefingeditor.nwwiigpc@gmail.com

Please keep the body of your responses to 150 words or less and please share your city/state so that members can see how wide-spread our publication is! If selected, your letter will appear in the next Quarter's *Letters* section as:

Letter,

About an article.

Signed Trevor S.

Lorton, VA

We look forward to hearing your thoughts!

Best,

Trevor Shimulunas

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CHAIR

Dear Member,

As predicted in January, the year 2023 turned out to be a GREAT year for the National WWII Glider Pilots Association.

- The Executive Council voted at the January 2023 Executive Council meeting to actively pursue reorganizing as a stand-alone 501c3 non-profit organization under the name National WWII Glider Pilots Association (NWWIIGPA). This was successfully accomplished in 2023 with the effort led by our previous Chair Bruce Overman.*
- Thanks to the leadership of our Reunion Chair Mary Roemer and associate Reunion Chair, Jeremy Lushnatt, the 51st Annual Reunion was very successfully held in Colorado Springs Oct 12 -14. Our day at the 94th Flying Training Squadron at the U.S. Air Force Academy was the major highlight. Ninety attendees enjoyed the 3-day event with attendees from across the U.S, Finland and France.*
- Our Quarterly Briefings are simply Best in Class thanks to our National Wing Commander, Patricia Overman and Member-at-Large, Captain Trevor Shimulunas (USMC). Four Quarterly Briefings and one Special Edition were published in 2023.*
- The Leon B Spencer Research Team responses totaled 120 new requests from glider pilot families this year. Over the past three years, 2021, 2022, and 2023 we have responded to more than 320 requests.*
- We actively attended and participated in the 94th Flying Training Squadron G-WINGS Ceremony in Colorado Springs*
- We awarded our first \$1,000 Student Scholarship in 2023. We will be publishing the application process again this year and who is eligible for the scholarships. This effort is led by Col Mark Vlahos (USAF-Ret) and Capt Trevor Shimulunas (USMC).*
- We became affiliated with the Air Force Historical Foundation.*

We look forward to a great year in 2024 and encourage all of you to join us at our 52nd Annual Reunion in Dayton, OH in October.

Gary

*Chair and Research Team Project Manger
National WWII Glider Pilots association*

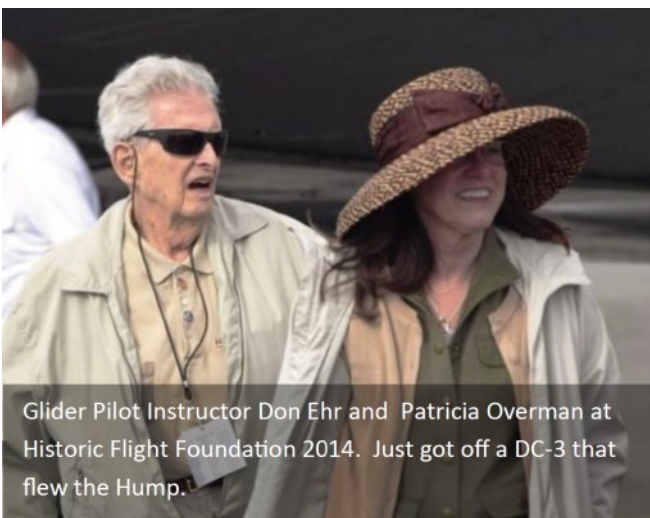
NATIONAL WING COMMANDER

We've had an outstanding year, marked by the publication of numerous books authored by our members. I am excited to announce the creation of a dedicated "[NWWIIGPA Member Authors](#)" page on our website. This page will serve as a quick reference to identify our member authors. In the future, I plan to expand this collection to include books by our glider pilots that are currently out of print.

If you are a member who has written a book not yet featured on our website, please reach out to me with the citation, a brief description, and your bio.

I am particularly thrilled to note that a significant number of our authors are also active members of our research team, aiding in uncovering the historical narratives of our families' WWII relatives. I've observed that families often find a deeper connection with a book when the author is first involved with the family's history. It not only enhances the reader's understanding but also serves as a compelling reason to invest in the book, as it becomes a personal journey intertwined with their family history.

We are ordering our new membership cards so when you [renew your membership](#) you will be sent a new card. It may take a few weeks to send them out.



Glider Pilot Instructor Don Ehr and Patricia Overman at Historic Flight Foundation 2014. Just got off a DC-3 that flew the Hump.

I deeply miss our glider pilots who have died and cherish every day the moments spent visiting with those who are still with us. I take great joy in the dedicated efforts we undertake to ensure their memory is preserved. While these remarkable individuals may not be widely known among the general public, it brings me comfort to know that they are not forgotten. Sending love to each and every one of them.

Patricia Overman, NWC

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REUNION CHAIR BRIEFING

The 52nd Reunion in Dayton, OH

is tentatively scheduled for the first weekend of October (Thursday, Oct. 3 through Saturday, Oct. 5) Mike Squillo and Rob Beahan have graciously offered to assist me in coordinating our tour events which include the [WACO Museum](#), [Wright Patterson AFB](#) and of course, the incredible [National Museum of the U.S. Air Force](#) (the world's largest and oldest military aviation museum). Due to the many options in Dayton, we are considering beginning the reunion earlier than in past years, with the first tour tentatively scheduled for early afternoon on Thursday. More details to follow, but make plans to arrive Wednesday or early Thursday morning. We are researching bus transportation, and of course meal options. Further, negotiations with our host hotel in Dayton are nearly complete.

Sun	Mon	Tue	October Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB

In the interim, sit tight and check our website or Facebook page for updated information.



Happy New Year!

Mary Roemer,
Reunion Chair.

National Museum of the U.S. Air Force

The World's Largest
Military Aviation Museum

MORE

LEON B. SPENCER RESEARCH TEAM BRIEFING

Dr. Don ABBE

Hans DEN BROK, Netherland

Richard CHANCELLOR, United Kingdom

Charles DAY Committee Historian

Chuck HOBBS

Fred LUNDE, Glider Pilot, Advisor

Tom MARTIN

Sharon MCCULLAR, Curator SWM

Jeff MCGOVERN

Patricia OVERMAN

Capt. Trevor SHIMULUNAS, USMC

Jean Michel SOLDI, France

Gary STRIPLING, Project Manager

Monique TAYLOR

Keith THOMS

Col. Mark VLAHOS, USAF Ret

**FAMILIES, IN THEIR COLLABORATIVE SPIRIT,
ARE HELPING ONE ANOTHER BY PARTNERING
WITH THE RESEARCH TEAM!**



Top row L – R: R Allen TODD, Edwin C MCQUARY, George Luther HAGNER, Arthur Louis HELLRICH, Austin Lee PERKINS, Henry Leonard PERSONIUS, Kenneth Wilson ROBERTS, Hilton Alex MCCABE, W Van ALEXANDER, Leoran Charles SPOONER, Gustav Adolph SCHMIDT.

Middle Row: L-R: George T WINTERS, John B LAMB, James H WHITCOMB, Dalton William TAYLOR, Robert Russell TELLER, Lawrence W. WILT

Front Row L-R: David GAMBERG, Gordon Edward MERWIN, Don J VACHON, Paul M PERRONE, William M MCINTYRE, Leland C GARDNER, Eugene William MATTE, Roe WILSON, Jr.

BACK Row: Left To Right: Todd, Meguary, Hagner,
Hellrick Perkins, Personious, Roberts, McCabe,
Alexander, Spooner, Schmidt
Middle Row: Winters, Lamb, Whitcomb, Taylor,
Teller, Wilt
Front Row. Gamberg, Merwin, Vachon, Perilome,
McIntyre, Gardner, Matte, Wilson —

*My Glider in The Background
with your name on it, you can't
quite make it out —*

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation for our families' ongoing support and collaboration in our efforts to document and preserve the rich history of the Glider Pilots program, including Troop Carrier. Your enduring support has been evident in your tolerance of our persistent requests for high-resolution photos, letters and documents. While these requests may occasionally seem overwhelming, it is with great enthusiasm that we pursue these items. Photos often reveal intricate details essential for accurately capturing the essence of historical moments. Without your help, we would not be able to fully uncover the complete history behind these remarkable men.

As an example, a recent project where 25 records were updated with photos was made possible by the generous contribution of member Vicky Jo Perkins Davis, daughter of the

esteemed Austin Lee Perkins—a distinguished member of the 302nd TC Squadron. Vicky shared a remarkable high-resolution photo, exceeding 350MB, featuring Glider Pilots gathered in front of Austin's glider just before embarking on the treacherous Holland mission. This extraordinary photo has proven invaluable in our quest to depict the face behind each record and enhance their historical narrative.

Thanks to Vicky's contribution, we were able to update almost the entire 302nd Troop Carrier Squadron's Glider Pilots with reasonably clear photos. Cropping down to the face is difficult but works beautifully if the photo is sharp and resolution high.

It's not just photos that are valuable for updating veterans' records. Textual files play a significant role in updating historical information and verifying existing records.



TODD



MCQUARY



ALEXANDER



HAGNER



PERKINS



ROBERTS



PERSONIUS



SCHMIDT



MCCABE



SPOONER



HELLRICH



TAYLOR



LAMB



WINTERS



WHITCOMB



WILT



TELLER



PERRONE



WILSON



GARDNER



VACHON



MATTE



GAMBERG



MCINTYRE



MERWIN

Lucky for us Austin had written the names of everyone on the back of the photo.

NAME	MEM				
1054	*	2D	LT	JACK D MORRIS	0784507
1054	*	009		CURTIS A RASMUSSEN	0784633
1054	009	2D	LT	ROY G POWELL	0784539
1054	055	2D	LT	ALVIN J VITEK	0784643
1054	078	2D	LT	DONALD R TASHROK	0784633
1054	058	2D	LT	HUBERT S WILLIAMS	0784644
1054	*	2D	LT	ZANE J WHITES	0784648
1054	068	2D	LT	HAROLD H WIST	0784646
1054	047	2D	LT	ALFRED J WOLFFAL	0784648
1054	047	2D	LT	DONALD E WOODMAN	0784649
1054	094	2D	LT	MERRIS A YEAGER	0762098
1054	009	2D	LT	KEITH S YOUNT	0784652
1054	048	FLT	O	JAMES H HARDY	T6439
1054	013	FLT	O	DELMAR L HEWICK	T6446
1054	009	FLT	O	JAMES W HOLLINGSWORTH	T6450
1054	*	FLT	O	JOE R LOPKINS	T6451
1054	009	FLT	O	ROBERT E MANN	T6472
1054	*	FLT	O	ROBERT L MAY	T6474
1054	009	FLT	O	DAVID BEUKEL JR	T6475
1054	009	FLT	O	ADOLPH W WETZGER JR	T6478
1054	*	FLT	O	CARLAND S MARGAN	T6481
1054	009	FLT	O	RICHARD R OFFICER	T6486
1054	094	FLT	O	ROY N PEAUCH	T7353
1054	047	FLT	O	ALLEN D PINNINGTON	T6493
1054	013	FLT	O	CHARLES J PETERSINGER	T6495
1054	017	FLT	O	DORSEY L STOVER	T6535
1054	*	FLT	O	GEORGE R VETTER	T6569
1054	013	FLT	O	WILLIAM A VINCENT	T6591
1054	*	FLT	O	DONALD J WALLACE	T7378
1054	009	FLT	O	JOHN G WHITEHEAD	T6557
1054	*	FLT	O	ELMER L WHITMIRE	T6558
1054	047	FLT	O	DONALD WHITMIRE	T6559
1054	*	FLT	O	DON R WHIDDOWSON	T6560

Note: All is made available to the SWM.



UNKNOWN GLIDER PILOT
302nd Troop Carrier Squadron
Vicky Jo Perkins Davis Collection



Does he look familiar to you? No he is not Tom Hanks. What we know about this glider pilot is that his photo was taken by Austin Perkins of the 302nd TC Squadron, 441st TC Group so we might assume he is a friend. He is standing on German soil so it would be the Rhine Crossing. He is wearing his first aid kit in the same manner as the 17th Airborne another clue this is Varsity.



This scarf is interesting. The Glider pilots were given scarves that were to be worn on their back or arm or neck during a combat mission [depending on where they wanted the enemy to shoot them]. They were a very bright incandescent yellow. The reasoning for wearing it was so the British knew they were American but then so did the enemy. Most put them in their pockets. However, this scarf is not a solid color. Sweetheart's scarf perhaps?

Send an email to Trevor or Patricia if you know who this is. Maybe we will get lucky. Feel free to utilize the Editor's email on page 3.

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From the Glider Pilots' Files

By Bill Horn Dec. 2021 Silent Wings Newsletter

GLIDER PILOT ASSOCIATION WEB PAGE ENJOYS SUCCESS

The glider pilot association's web page has received wide acclaim for its presentation of facts concerning the glider pilot program of WWII and detailed information about the organization. Compiled by George Theis the pages have enjoyed excellent success and acceptance. George has provided a wealth of information relative to our organization, the reunion sites and dates, a history of how we got started, the CG4A, the Silent Wings Museum, the Silent Wings publication and individual pages on each of the eight combat glider missions of World War II. There is also a page containing linkage to other web pages regarding gliders scattered all over the Internet system. George will modify the pages as options and circumstances change. When available, the latest information about the upcoming reunion will be added. There is also a link to send e-mail to George, to National Secretary Tip Randolph, and to National Reunion Secretary Ginny Randolph. You can use the following address to log on to the page:

www.ww2gp.org

This will take you to the home page and once there, you have many options to select for the various pages of information. Great job, George!

The National WWII Glider Pilot Association website has been in existence for twenty-three years. In 2001, George Theis spearheaded the development of the glider pilots' website, officially launching it in the fall of that year. In 2012,

Patricia Overman, a skilled developer and database administrator, joined the Association. While conducting research on her father, she established frequent contact with George, leading to the development of a strong friendship. In late 2012, George expressed his desire for a vertical scrolling script, and Patricia volunteered to code the solution. Thrilled with the results, George entrusted Patricia with the entire site's maintenance. George served as the content manager, while Charlie Day took on the role of technical advisor.

The glider pilots' records were initially stored in an aging MS Access program, which became increasingly unstable. In 2016, the legacy database underwent a successful transition to a secure online open-source database known today as the Digital Archives. This transition not only saved costs associated with MS Access but also empowered the research team to efficiently maintain the records. The website could now leverage database-driven functionality due to the inclusion of specific information.

With hundreds of thousands of users each year, the NWWIIGPA website continues to thrive and serve its community.

Glider Operations in the European Theater in World War II

By Abigail Kay Bradberry



The innovation of the glider, an engineless tubular steel and wooden flying frame, was heavily relied upon during World War

II. Over the course of the War, a total of 14,612 gliders were built to support the U.S. Army and U.S. Army Air Corps with a whopping 6,000+ pilots trained and needed to fly them. Becoming very popular very quickly, the glider was used in several famous campaigns throughout the European Theater, most notably: The Battle of the Bulge, the D-Day Invasion, and Operation Varsity to name a few.

Before diving into some of these famous campaigns and the impact gliders had on them, what were gliders used for in general during a war which was racing towards a more technological form of warfare?

World War II marked the beginning of “The Atomic Phase” of warfare, and with the new release of the cinematic film *Oppenheimer*, it is very common for one to relate the creation of a nuclear bomb to World War II. However, in addition to the atomic bomb, there were several other technological advancements made throughout the War including the first modern jet. Looking at this fact, one would

think a faster plane would be preferred over a plane without an engine at all. However, the planes of that era were extremely loud which made it very hard for the Allied and the Axis Powers to conduct a surprise attack or to get past enemy lines for any reason. Ergo, the innovation of the fighting glider. Combat gliders made their first debut as a German offensive tactic at 0425 on May 10th, 1940, at the “impenetrable” Belgium Fort Eben-Emael. Considered to be one of Europe’s strongest forts, Eben-Emael fell in just twenty short minutes to German glider paratroopers. The fort itself was an entire network of underground tunnels which connected a series of bunkers. The tunnel system made this fort ideal for long sieges and with the concrete bunkers on the surface built in tune with the surrounding landscape the fort was considered to be one of the strongest in all of Europe at the time. With only 71 men flying on nine gliders, the Germans were able to silently land atop the hill which housed the solid 185-acre fort. Since the glider gave the German forces the ability to land within feet of the fort there were few casualties suffered with only six Germans losing their lives. Meanwhile, the 780 Belgium soldiers that were stationed at the fort were taken as Prisoners of War under German supervision. This was the first time in the history of warfare that gliders had been used in an offensive

manner, and in doing so Adolf Hitler took a big gamble employing this method. His gamble did pay off however for the Germans because as soon as Fort Eben-Emael fell, the rest of Belgium was quick to follow. In addition to Hitler taking all of Belgium, his introduction of gliders to be used by the military is still used by several different countries as a training method for pilots.

Upon word of Belgium falling under such circumstances to the German forces the United States Army and United States Marine Corps began to research and build their own combat gliders. By the end of the War, the United States had developed 18 different types of gliders that were used both in the European Theater and the Pacific Theater. While both branches of the United States military began to research the use of gliders, only the Army stuck with them throughout the entirety of the War. The Marine Corps stopped their glider program in early 1943. One of the most heavily used gliders by the United States was the Waco CG-4A with an astounding 13,909 being built and used by the time the war was over. The Waco CG-4A was a very impressive flying machine, with the ability to fly with a maximum weight of 9,000 pounds. For reference, a Cessna 172 training aircraft has a maximum gross weight of 2,550 pounds. The glider was made to be used several times during its lifetime with the ability to land and be towed several times. However, many were crushed and broken beyond use due to the nature of the War and the manner in which they were being used.

The first large-scale use of gliders took place in 1941, when Germany invaded Crete, an island off the coast of Greece. This first glider use did not go quite as planned for the Axis, with thousands of men losing their lives when their towplane or glider were shot down. The glider paratroopers were not required to wear a parachute, so none were able to escape the doomed gliders before they hit the ground. At this particular campaign a total of 350 gliders and towplanes were shot down leading to the campaign's nickname of: "*Graveyard of the German Airborne.*"

Something that must be taken into account when flying gliders is the wind. Pilots today take careful consideration and make precise calculations when determining the wind for their flight. In the case that something goes wrong, they also have an engine to save themselves from crashing. Modern day gliders also have different safety features to ensure that the wind does not take them off guard. One of these includes a string that is attached to the glider's nose. This allows the pilot to see where the wind is coming from and make necessary corrections. In the 1940s this information was not as readily available and the safety features in aviation were not as advanced since aviation was still in its newer stages. Therefore, when the Allies used gliders for the first time on a very large scale during the Sicily Campaign it did not go as well as hoped because of the wind, amongst other factors.

Tow-planes began towing gliders out of Northern Africa to engage German and Italian forces in Sicily, Italy. Due to poor weather conditions, called Instrument Meteorological Conditions (IMC) today, and fierce winds, many tow-planes released their gliders too far from shore, causing some of the men aboard the gliders to drown. Over the next 38 days, the Allies would fight their way to reclaim Sicily, but at the cost of more than 20,000 men lost to the cause.

Fast forward to June 5th, 1944, the night before the D-Day Invasion. General Omar Bradley, a senior Army commander, orders gliders to be towed miles behind the German lines behind the beaches that were to be landed upon the following morning. Aboard these gliders were supplies and glider paratroopers. Their mission was to disrupt enemy communications and prevent German reinforcements from reaching the beach. That night C-47 transport aircraft towed the gliders behind the German lines, due to small landing zones lined by hedgerows and trees, many gliders cracked up on landing causing casualties. The next morning the Allies invaded Normandy and began the first big offensive at winning back Europe.

Moving forward to September 1944, when the Allies launched Operation Market Garden, an offensive operation aimed at creating an Allied-controlled route through the Netherlands into the north of Nazi Germany. Flying more than 300 miles from England, Allied gliders and paratroopers successfully landed in German controlled Netherlands to

begin the offense. The glider paratroopers just had to keep numerous river bridges under Allied control long enough for British ground troops to come to aid the push into Germany. Easier said than done, the operation as a whole was a huge failure due to poor intelligence on the strength of the German forces stationed in the Netherlands. Due to poor weather more gliders were unable to deliver relief supplies and the Allied forces that dropped in the initial round of gliders were quickly outnumbered, outgunned, and fell to the German forces. Had this Operation been a success, the Allies predicted a swift end to the War in the year 1944. However, while the operation as a whole was a failure, the use of gliders was very strategic and was considered a huge success by the Army Air Forces (formally becoming the Air Force in 1947).

A very famous campaign was the Battle of the Bulge. Otherwise known as the Ardennes Offensive, the Battle of the Bulge was the bloodiest battle that the U.S. Army fought over the course of the entire War. Lasting from December 16th and ending on January 28th, it was one of the last large-scale battles of the war. because the battle was Hitler's "Hail Mary" to turn the tide of the war back in his favor after D-Day, the Battle of the Bulge saw over 200,000 German soldiers and over 500,000 Allied soldiers engaged. The Germans hoped to split the Allied troops down the middle and then overtake them in smaller numbers. This is where the gliders played a vital role in the battle. By late

December the Allied troops were in desperate need of additional medical supplies, ammunition, and gasoline. On December 26, 1944, 11 CG-4A gliders were able to land inside Allied occupied territory near Bastogne in Belgium. These gliders were able to provide medical supplies and ammunition to the troops stationed there. The very next day, December 27, 1944, 50 more gliders were able to safely maneuver and land to deliver much-needed supplies. For five grueling weeks the Allies fought back Hitler's advance and with the help of all the glider pilots, the Battle of the Bulge is still considered to be one of America's greatest victories in war.

One of the last glider battles to be fought in the European Theater was Operation Varsity. Operation Varsity was the final push for the Allies to get into the heart of Nazi Germany. The only problem was that the heavily defended Rhine River needed to be crossed. Due to this, Operation Varsity required a huge amount of air support. So much so that Operation Varsity was the largest airborne operation to be completed in just one day. Over 600 tow-planes pulled an astounding 906 gliders over 200 miles to get troops safely across the river and into Nazi Germany. This operation was considered to be a success, however since it was conducted during the day the Allies saw heavy losses in terms of gliders. This is due to the gliders being caught in heavy anti-aircraft and ground fire from the Germans once spotted.

While there were numerous other occasions in which gliders aided the Allied forces during

the War, especially in the Pacific Theater as well as the European Theater. The campaigns in the European Theater are the more famous in which glider operations during the campaign helped lead the Allies to a victory over the Germans. After the war, gliders were and still are employed by the United States military. They are used in a different capacity today than they were then, but they still serve a very important purpose. Today gliders are used by the U.S. Air Force Academy to train the pilots of tomorrow.

Due to the valor and gallantry of the glider pilots of World War II, we now have a free world in which to call home. It is important to learn and know just how important the contributions of the gliders were in the War. Often overlooked, but a truly critical part that led to the Allies' eventual victory over the Nazi German forces, the gliders revolutionized how modern warfare was conducted. Gliders opened the doors to more vertical enhancing aircraft which would eventually lead to the reliance of helicopters in the military today, in addition, gliders gave way to the idea that aircraft can be specially designed to carry out and fulfill a certain task rather than just one basic aircraft design. A lightweight, quiet, revolutionary breakthrough in modern warfare, the glider forced a war that was racing towards a more technological future to slow down and truly appreciate the art that is flying.

In 2023 Abigail was awarded the Otto F. Lyons. Jr. Scholarship



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A Unique Glider Tow – Parachute Exercise in Sicily

By Colonel Mark C. “Plug” Vlahos, USAF-Ret
Leon B. Spencer Research Team

As the U.S. Army airborne and glider missions continued to evolve in 1943, several exercises took place at in the Pope, Camp MacKall, Laurinburg-Maxton (L-M), Lumberton area of North Carolina. On October 29th, 1943, the 436th Troop Carrier Group (TCG) would be tasked with a mission from the 82nd Airborne. A C-47 and two gliders would be loaded with a small number of 82nd Airborne Division troopers. The C-47 would tow the two CG-4A gliders (double tow) and after a short time in the air, the C-47 pilot and two glider pilots, simultaneously, would give a jump signal to the jumpmaster and the paratroopers would jump from all three planes at the same time in the vicinity of the air field. There is a great writeup and even film footage of this event on our organization’s website at: <https://ww2gp.org/training/gliderParatroopDrop.php>

While the C-47 proved it had enough power from its two Pratt & Whitney R-1830 Twin Wasp Engines to perform a double glider tow with paratroops and both gliders and the aircraft itself, the reality was the aircraft’s range would be greatly reduced, making it not practical to fly a combat mission in this configuration. Also, these exercises proved that jumping from a CG-4A was just not practical. [note: The R-1830 Twin Wasp was selected as the powerplant for both the four-engine B-24 liberator heavy bomber and the

twin-engine C-47 Skytrain. The production run of 173,618 R-1830 engines make it the most-produced engine in aviation history.^{1]}

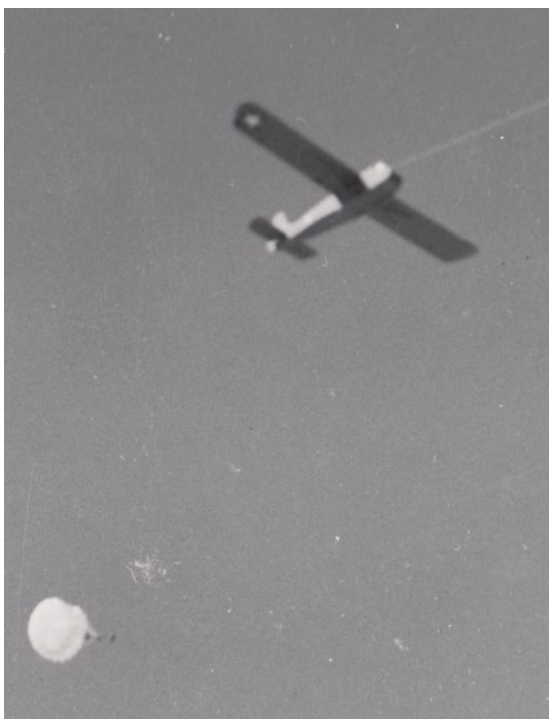
As I continue to focus my research efforts on Troop Carrier and Glider Operations in the Mediterranean and Balkan Theaters of Operation, I was surprised when I came across the events of October 25, 1943, (just a few days prior to the exercise at L-M) at Ponte Olivo Aerodrome in Sicily – a unique C-47 paratroop drop and glider tow exercise involving twenty-six C-47 aircraft, the same number of CG-4A gliders from units in the 52nd Troop Carrier Wing (TCW), and paratroops and glider troops from the 456 Field Artillery Battalion, 82nd Airborne Division. I found the description of this exercise in the History of the 51st Troop Carrier Wing. Even more amazing, I found a series of photographs (which Patricia shared with me awhile back) that perfectly match the dates and events of this exercise! The process of research, discovery and putting these materials together is what makes work as a historian interesting. This was just one day in the life of troop carrier and glider crews overseas in WWII.

While newer parachute infantry regiments (PIR) of the famed 82nd Airborne were being formed and exercising back home at L-M, the

509th PIR was the first unit of the 82nd Airborne to deploy to Europe for Operation Torch – the invasion of North Africa, followed by the 504th and 505th PIR, of the 82nd Airborne for Operation Husky – the invasion of Sicily. During operation Husky, the 52nd TCW dropped both the 504th and 505th PIR into Sicily on the nights of July 9th and 10th 1943. Up to this point, only the 51st TCW had glider tug practice and combat glider missions under their belt. The purpose of this mission was to initiate a 2-month long, extensive glider-tow training program for the groups of the newer 52nd TCW now based in Sicily. All troop carrier groups in both the 51st and 52nd had left North Africa and were based in Sicily the first week of September 1943. What makes this exercise even more amazing is that just one month prior, on the nights of September 13th and 14th, both of these combat - tested troop carrier wings very successfully

dropped thousands of paratroopers behind the beaches of Anzio as part of Operation Avalanche – the invasion of Italy. [note: these missions codenamed Giant I and Giant II also saw the first combat use of pathfinders – another major evolution in the continuing development of the Airborne Troop Carrier and Glider missions.]

On the morning of October 25th, the empty C-47s and gliders arrived at Comiso Aerodrome, where the 64th TCG was based. Here they were loaded and marshalled to begin the exercise. At 1:00 pm all units were ready. Immediately after take-off, 8 of the gliders dropped their tactical landing gears by parachute because of the special purposes of this demonstration ². The gears were dropped so the gliders could make a skid landing. Check out this amazing sequence of photographs from the exercise.

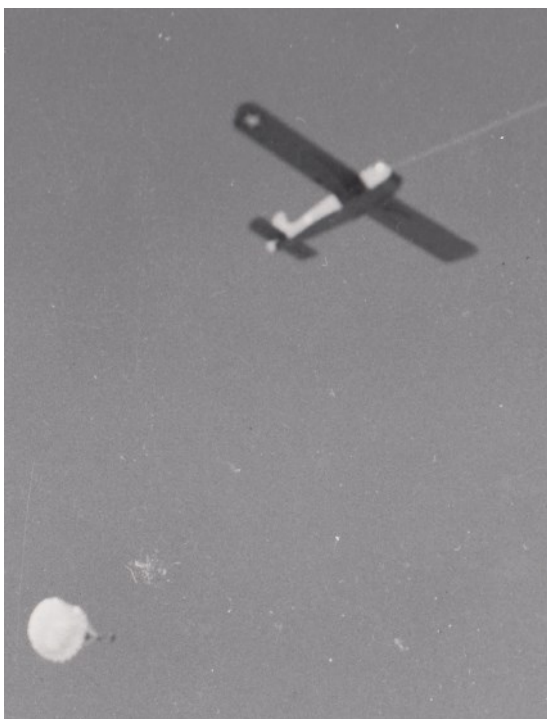


Caption: The landing gear, dropped by a glider participating in the 52nd troop Carrier Wing Maneuvers in 1943, [the gear] landed on Comiso Air Field Sicily. Both the gear and the parachute are in good condition. Photo Source: U.S. National Archives, courtesy of the NWWIIGPA research team.

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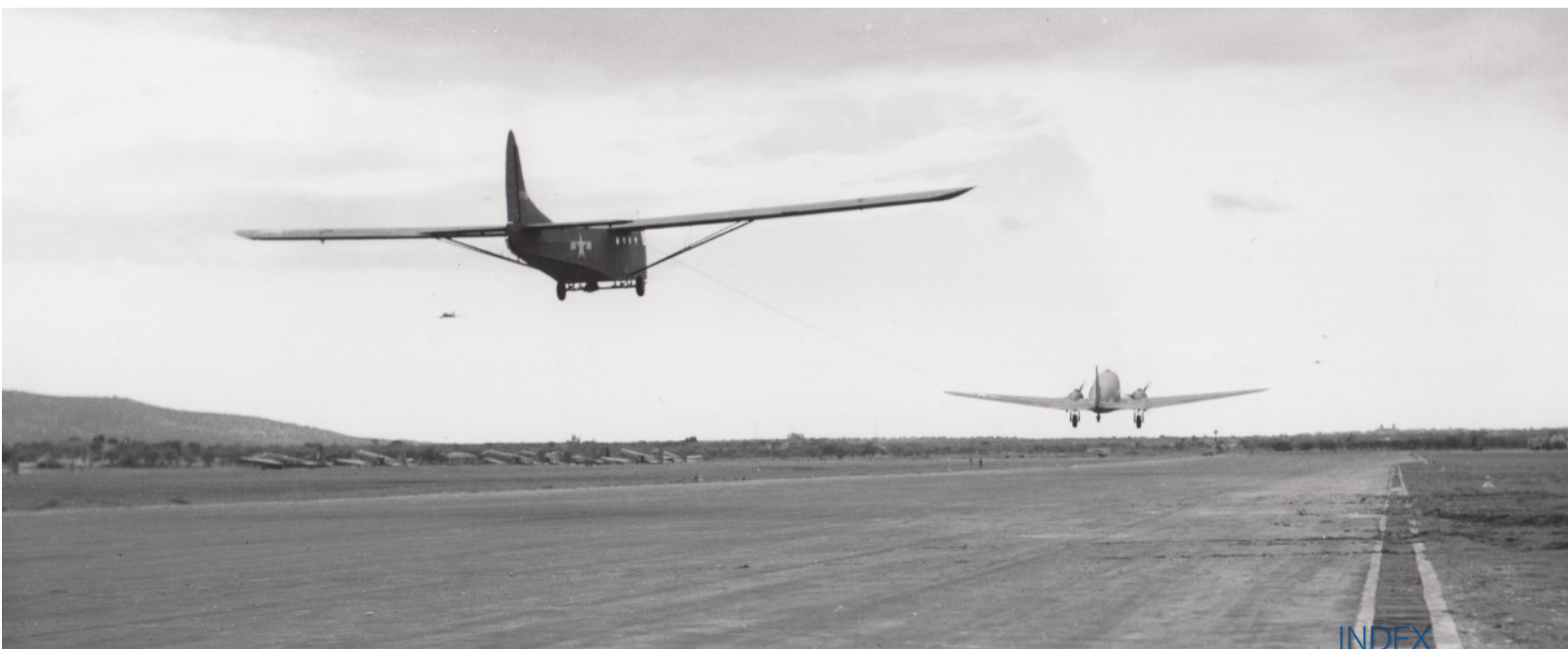
Caption: *Douglas C-47 tow planes with their WACO CG-4A gliders attached prepare to take off from an airfield at Comiso, Sicily, 125 October 1943. They participated in the 52nd Troop Carrier Wing maneuvers over Sicily.*
 Photo Source: U.S. National Archives,





Caption: A glider, towed by a Douglas C-47 is airborne over the runway at Comiso Airfield, Sicily, 1943. During the maneuvers of the 52nd Troop Carrier Wing the glider will be released of Ponte Olivo Airfield, and the paratroopers in the tow plane will jump. Oct 1943.

Photo Source: U.S. National Archives, courtesy of the NWWIIGPA research team.





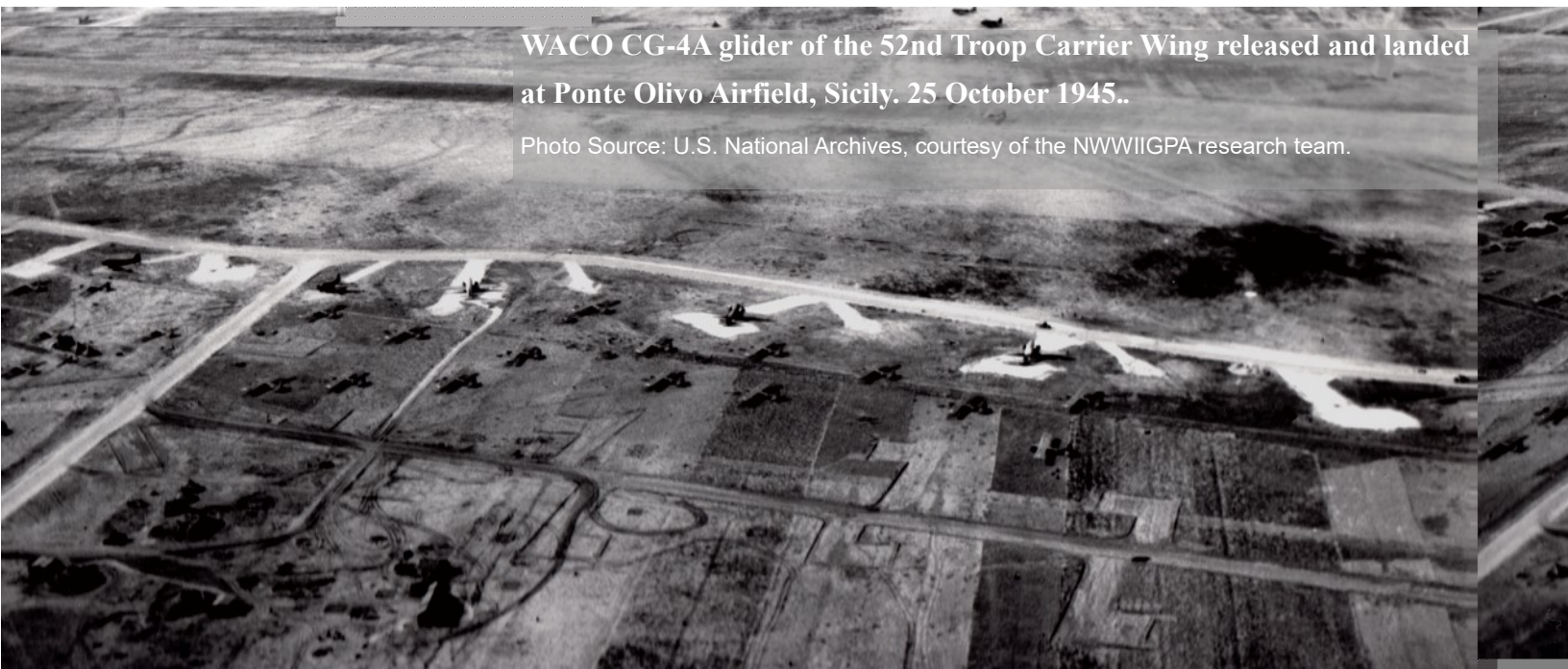
Over the engine of a C-47 in formation you can see another C-47 taking off with a glider in tow. This is Cosmiso Air Field.

Photo Source: U.S. National Archives, courtesy of the NWWIIGPA research team.



Caption: Waco CG-4A gliders towed by Douglas C-74's of the 52nd Troop Carrier Wing, in flight over Sicily after taking off from airfield at Comiso, Sicily, during their maneuvers. 25 Oct 1943.

Photo Source: U.S. National Archives, courtesy of the NWWIIGPA research team.



WACO CG-4A glider of the 52nd Troop Carrier Wing released and landed at Ponte Olivo Airfield, Sicily. 25 October 1945..

Photo Source: U.S. National Archives, courtesy of the NWWIIGPA research team.

The C-47s formed up in elements of 2, with approximately one-minute interval spacing between elements. The formation lead aircraft arrived at Ponte Olivo about 2:30 pm, making their approach from the south. The first 18 gliders were released about ½ mile to the east of the aerodrome and made landings on training landing gear at the south end of the aerodrome to the east side of the runway. After release of their gliders, the 18 tug aircraft continued their flight for approximately ½ mile, first dropping their tow ropes then dropping their loads of paratroopers a half mile to the north of the airdrome. The remaining 8 aircraft approached the release

zone over the same route releasing their wheelless gliders southeast of the aerodrome where they landed in a small, cultivated field adjacent to the aerodrome. These 8 gliders made use of parachute arresters in a proficient manner which enabled them to come to a complete stop within 100 to 200 feet after first contacting the ground. Then the 8 tug airplanes dropped their tow ropes and paratroopers at the same points where the first 9, 2-ship elements made their drops. All the gliders' landings were successful having been to designated areas without mishap to personnel or combat equipment.



One of the gliders landing in a field adjacent to the aerodrome had its skid damaged when it passed over a ditch some 5 feet in width. All equipment was unloaded rapidly and correctly.

This exercise demonstrated the feasibility of combined glider-paratroop operations using airplanes both as troop carriers and tow ships. It further demonstrated the possibility of initiating glider operations at a point away from the home base of airplanes and gliders since it showed that they can be moved to a strange field, loaded, marshalled, and taken

off to begin an operation in a period of hours. The exercise was very successful, exactly the kind of realistic training needed to build confidence among tug and glider crews. On hand to observe this key exercise testing glider airborne capability was Major General George S. Patton, Commanding General, 7th U.S. Army and Brigadier General Paul L. Williams Commander Northwest African Air Forces Troop Carrier Command (Provisional). After the exercise, General Patton drafted a Commendation Memorandum to General Williams, who in turn forwarded a copy to every glider pilot that flew the exercise.

*F/O R. Manner
good job!*

HEADQUARTERS SEVENTH ARMY
A. P. O. #758, U. S. ARMY

*Paul L. Williams
Brig Gen USA*

27 October 1943.

SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO : Brigadier General Paul L. Williams, Troop Carrier Command.

The demonstration at Ponte Olivio and Comiso Airfields, as executed by your command on 25 October 1943, of loading, dropping by parachute, and landing, was the best that it has been my privilege to witness. The towing and landing of the gliders, the dropping by parachute of the personnel of the 82d Airborne Division, the assembling and putting into action of heavy equipment, was executed with a dis-

A few of the glider pilots that flew this day were veterans of the British Ladbroke Mission as well. While a complete listing of the glider pilots who flew this exercise does not exist they were from multiple troop carrier squadrons. One glider pilot who was there and who is with us today was Fred H. LUNDE from the the 49th Troop Carrier Squadron, 313th Troop Carrier Group. Fred contacted me with the following information about the exercise:



Glider Pilot Research Team Adviser,
FRED H. LUNDE, 101
49th Troop Carrier Squadron

My recollection was that five groups of the 49th were given detached service with the 82nd Airborne under General James Gavin. We were told the 82nd wanted to know first hand what the gliders were capable of. How they operated in small

places etc.

While there I asked general Gavin if we could make a parachute jump with his unit. At that time he said yes but later said no. He couldn't take on that responsibility.

At the end of our detached service we were to fly at dusk. Pathfinders would be dropped setting up a landing area (LZ) for the gliders. We were told that we must see the lights red and green and release pronto or the C47 pilot would release the tow rope. Paratroopers were being dropped on the (DZ) a mile away. I was the lead glider pilot with Benbow copilot. I wasn't aware of the massiveness we were going to witness. To top it off I was slightly color blind red and green so tilting my left wing enough to allow Glider Pilot George M BENBOW to help see the lights. We both saw them in time to release, making my base leg long enough to get down into the wind parking where I was supposed to, getting out watching this massive landing of gliders. Our gliders were empty but the ones following had loads. Some flew onto the hillside beyond the landing area. Some crashed into one another. I never heard of injuries. As mentioned by Mark earlier General Patton was a witness and gave us a letter of commendation.

[Note: Both Lunde and Benbow received the Air Medal for the Holland Operation. They were the first glider pilots in the history of the war to hold a defensive position with the 82nd Airborne. Their fighting wasn't over when their evacuation convoy was attacked by the enemy. See: My 9 Days in Combat.

Finally, and importantly, the transfer of glider pilots and mechanics was accomplished in October 1943 to equalize the glider personnel between the 51st and 52nd TCWs. Veteran

glider pilots from North Africa officers. In and Sicily were distributed among troop carrier groups of both wings to serve as glider operation February of 1944, the entire 52nd TCW, with all its groups would transfer to England as part of the D-day buildup. The 51st TCW, with the 60th, 62nd, and 64th TCGs would remain in Italy for the rest of the war and support all combat operations in Italy and the secret war in the Balkans.



Generals George S. Patton and Paul L. Williams chat with C-47 crewmembers and glider pilots prior to takeoff at Comiso Aerodrome, Sicily
(Photo Courtesy of National Archives)

1. Manufacturer's product page, R-1830, November 11, 2013.
2. History of the 51st Troop Carrier Wing and Components 1 Jun 1943 to 28 Feb 1945, p. 144. U.S. National Archives.

1944 CHRISTMAS COMBAT MISSIONS—BASTOGNE

THE 434TH TCG COMES TO THE AID OF ALLIED FORCES TRAPPED BY GERMANS IN BASTOGNE BELGIUM DURING THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE



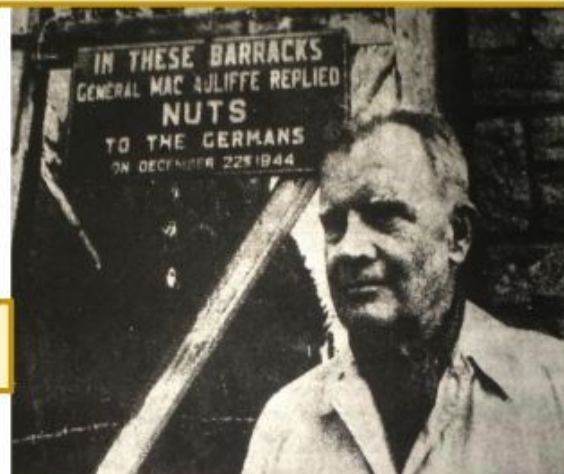
Photo taken by a U.S. Army Signal Corps photographer on 26 December 1944 in Bastogne, Belgium as troops of the 101st Airborne Division watch C-47s drop supplies to them.

During the now famous Battle of the Bulge was, American forces were briefly trapped during a siege that lasted 10 days by the Germans in the Belgium town of Bastogne. The Germans, looking to take the harbor in Antwerp, needed control of the major east Belgian roadways, 7 of which crossed in Bastogne. On December 16th, the Germans deployed their mechanized units and surrounded the American forces, led by General Anthony McAuliffe, who were outnumbered 5 to 1. Hindered by bad weather, resupply was impossible for almost a week.

General McAuliffe Says "NUTS!" to Germans

On December 22nd, the German Commander sent a correspondence to the trapped Americans, insisting there was no shame in

surrender. In a bold move, General McAuliffe simply responded with "NUTS!", and fighting resumed.



It was interpreted to the German truce party as "Go to Hell". The response lifted Allied spirits on the warfront.

Resupply Mission Is Go On 23 December

On December 22nd, General Patton requested the resupply of Bastogne be the number one resupply priority. Beginning on 23rd, Troop Carriers units began the task and by the sieges end 8608 sorties were flown dropping 1020 tons of equipment to aid the trapped units.

FROM THE 434TH TCG OFFICIAL HISTORY, DECEMBER 1944

The 18 December was another day of combat preparadness. 68 aircraft were alerted for a possible tactical mission. Once again the planes were unloaded and pararacks installed. This condition remained static until 23 December when 50 aircraft departed this station on a tactical mission to the trapped First Army units near Bastogne, Belgium. All planes returned safely to base with only minor flak damage to wings and tail surfaces. On 24 and 26 December combat missions were flown to the same area involving a total of 111 aircraft. No losses were incurred, but the ground fire was slightly more intense and accurate and as a result four planes received damage that required in excess of 48 hours for complete repair. There were no losses among crew members, but several received slight "Purple Heart" wounds.

434TH AIRCREW RECEIVED RECOGNITION IN HOMETOWNS

team for a year.

Henry C. Reavis, Jr.

Capt. Henry Clay Reavis, Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Reavis, 551 Sturtevant Drive, Sierra Madre,



H. C. Reavis, Jr.

flew one of the more than 800 C-47 troop carrier planes which were used to parachute medical supplies, K-rations, and heavy ammunition to trapped units of the First Army in the Bastogne, Belgium, area recently, according to announcement from headquarters of the 434th Troop Carrier Command. The operation is described as the greatest supply mission ever organized in the European Theater. Captain Reavis entered service early in 1942, won his wings in March, 1943, at Roswell, N. M., and went overseas more than a year ago. He wears the Air Medal with Oak Leaf Clusters for his part as squadron flight leader in the Airborne operations over the Cherbourg Peninsula and German-occupied Holland.

Holdenville Captain Flies Supplies To Trapped Doughboys



CAPT. KENNY WILLIS

434TH TROOP CARRIER GROUP HEADQUARTERS, European Theater of Operations—Captain Kent



1st Lt. George S. Thayer

1st Lieut. George S. Thayer of 13 Park street, son of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin R. Thayer, a C-47 combat pilot was one of the 434th Troop Carrier crew members selected to fly vital resupply items of food and ammunition to the American First Army units trapped in the Bastogne, Belgium,

Indianapolis Man Flew Supplies to Trapped Troops



Staff Sergeant Robert F. Resner, 514 North Jefferson avenue, was one of many troop carrier crew members selected to fly resupply items of food and ammunition to the American 1st army units trapped in the Bastogne, according to a dispatch from the 434th

Capt. Parker, Holder of Air Medal and Oak Leaf Cluster, Supplied Trapped Yanks at Bastogne

434TH TROOP CARRIER GROUP HEADQUARTERS, European Theater of Operations—Capt. Gordon L. Parker, 4214 Avenue D, Austin, Texas, a C-47 combat pilot and flight leader, was one of many troop carrier pilots selected to deliver re-supply items of food and ammunition to the American First army units trapped in the Bastogne area. Capt. Parker flew on four of the flights that delivered the much needed supplies to the ambushed American divisions.

The American doughboys were cut off and completely encircled by the German armored spearheads that von Rundstedt had sent crashing into the American lines shortly before Christmas. Their only means of defense was the ammunition, medical supplies and K-rations that the troop carrier C-47's delivered by parachute during the trying days before the American tanks broke through and gave relief to the entrapped Yanks.

The operation was described by air force experts as the greatest supply mission ever organized in the European theater of operations. More than 800 C-47's were



CAPT. G. L. PARKER

used in the five-day operation and the combat crews flew in some of the most adverse weather conditions of the winter season.

"This was probably the most important assignment I've ever undertaken in all my life," Parker said on his return from his last flight. "All of us realized that we had to get those supplies in and nothing was to stand in our way. I encountered some intense flak concentrations on all run-ins, but most of it was either too high or too low. The fighter support was excellent and this prevented any interference by enemy interceptors."

The Austin flier, who wears the Air Medal and Oak Leaf Cluster for his part in the airborne operations over Normandy and Holland, was promoted from first lieutenant only three days before participating in one of the most dramatic re-supply flights of this war.

Parker is a member of the 434th troop carrier group commanded by Lt. Col. Ben A. Garland of Waco, Texas. This unit is part of the vast US troop carrier forces under the leadership of Maj. Gen. Paul L. Williams, which is the air forces component of Lt. Gen. Lewis H. Brereton's first allied airborne army.

OPERATIONS

ABIGAIL KAY BRADBERRY Awarded scholarship



On November 21, 2023 a contingent of our Executive Council presented the 2023 Otto F. Lyon Scholarship award. The event occurred at the home Claudia Coggin, Secretary of the Association. Claudia made this a delightful event with fantastic food. It was an informal setting - a fireside chat where we told the history of our organization, stories from WWII glider operations and presented the Otto F. Lyons, Jr. Scholarship to Abigail Kay Bradberry, with a certificate, a challenge coin, \$1,000 check and a year-membership in our organization.



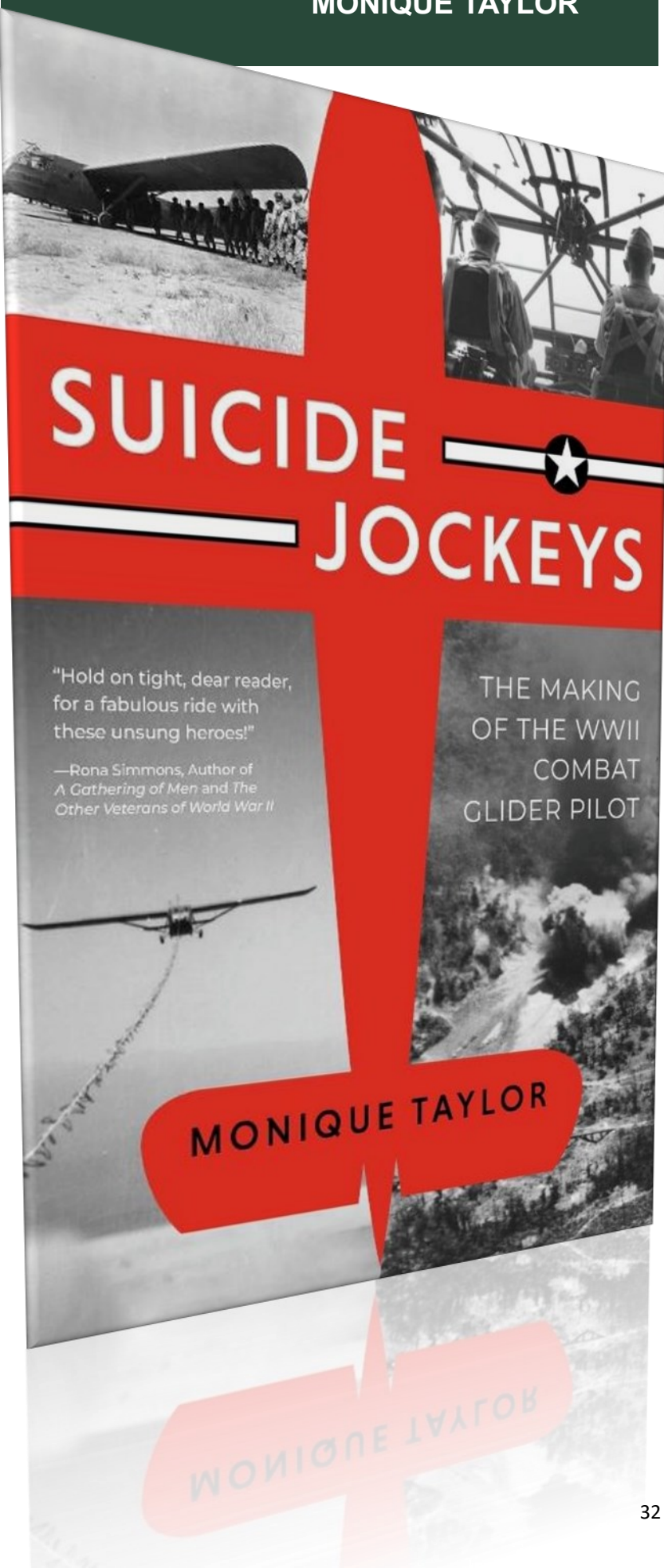
Abby was thrilled, she just turned 21 and is working on her instrument rating at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona; she also has an internship with United Airlines! CONGRATULATIONS!

Attending with Abby was her grandmother, Paula Snider; her mom, Lisa Bradberry; and her brother, James Bradberry.

MONIQUE TAYLOR

SUICIDE JOCKEYS: THE MAKING OF THE WWII COMBAT GLIDER PILOT

was released in November 2023



On May 10, 1940, the Germans neutralized one of the most heavily fortified fortresses in Europe with a new weapon: the combat glider—an aerial vehicle capable of carrying men and equipment in close proximity to each other and crash landing behind enemy lines. The Army Air Corps soon established its own glider pilot program, but the glider pilots were not considered power pilots nor infantry. The end result was a group of young men looking for adventure—belonging seemingly to no command other than on paper—that through the course of the war went into combat with varying amounts of equipment, training, survival gear, or none at all.

Suicide Jockeys: The Making of the WWII Combat Glider Pilot delves into the making of the glider pilot and the logistical, strategic, and tactical use of the plane they flew. In their "flying coffins," these glider pilots were the independent bastards of the Army Air Corp, demonstrating sheer guts, talent, skill, and luck in their missions, and ultimately helping to turn the tide of the war.

This is the French version and hopefully the English version will be out soon. To order go to <https://philippeesvelin.com/>





Loïse Renouf, conseillère municipale, Philippe Esvelin, écrivain, Nathalie Lamare, maire, et deux membres de l'association Patrimoine local Été 44. (©Michel BLOT)

“Cotentin, Second World War: Summer 44 will reveal forgotten “pieces of history”

The Summer 44 local heritage association, after two years of hard work, will unveil in the spring of 2024 unprecedented events that occurred in Sébeville (Manche) in June 1944.

“The executioner always kills twice; the second time, through forgetting,” said Élie Wiesel... It is precisely to not forget and pay homage to the heroes of freedom that the mayor and municipal councilors of Sébeville (Manche), in collaboration with the members of the local heritage association Summer 44, decided to launch research in the town two years ago.

These made it possible to discover forgotten events and to call into question certain certainties attached to the commune of Sébeville, epicenter of the LZW (in English “landing zones” W), the landing zone of gliders, during the Liberation, in June 1944.

Two years of work

“After two years of work, the local heritage association Été 44 will highlight pieces of history, completely ignored and unpublished, that occurred in Sébeville,” explains Nathalie Lamare.

Some of this research was selected, in agreement with the author, to be published in Philippe Esvelin's new book, entitled *Winged Commandos*, thus giving it credibility. This book, scheduled for release in spring 2024, is currently the subject of a subscription (www.philippeesvelin.com) You will also be able to meet the author, a specialist in the history of gliders, during his presence in the English Channel over the Easter weekend, a weekend where signing sessions will be organized around his new work.

We're gathered to finalize the work of memory on December 2, at the town hall of Sébeville: Loïse Renouf,

Philippe Esvelin, writer, Nathalie Lamare, mayor, and the two members of the local heritage association Été 44. A plaque and a stele

The Sébeville glider landing zone has revealed some of its secrets and this is how the National World War II Glider Pilot Association, the American association which honors the memory of American glider pilots, has decided to offer to the town a commemorative plaque to honor a crew of glider pilots. A plaque which will be unveiled during the June 2024 festivities.

Moreover, within the municipality, individuals connected to these tributes are actively involved in the creation of a monument designed to house the commemorative plaque. The foundation of this collective endeavor is rooted in participatory and collaborative initiatives, characterized by a spirit of good humor and solidarity.

From our correspondent Michel BLOT

Edited from French to English with some changes to portray the meaning of the article. The plaque and the monument will be revealed in June.

"A Jeep with Wings" Hap Arnold said. From this simple directive sprang the CG-4A glider. Meet the men and women who took on new roles and skills to build Cargo Gliders for the U. S. Army Air Forces. Discover how factories made to build refrigerators, pianos, and baby food transformed

for CG-4A production. From Promise to Production contains artifacts, images, and information drawn from the Silent Wings Museum collection to tell this amazing aspect of the WWII Military Glider Program. Even from afar, you can view

content from this exhibit.

Watch for posts on the Silent Wings Museum Facebook and Instagram about how a team of manufacturers, subcontractors, and individual workers accomplished the production of almost 14,000 CG-4A gliders despite materials shortages, the difficulties of utilizing re-furnished factories and newly trained workers to create a

From Promise to Production: Manufacturing the CG-4A Glider



A Jeep With Wings

I would like very much to have a small light jeep constructed... This jeep should be designed and constructed with a view of fitting wings to it so that we can take it off as a glider and drop it as a glider.
General Henry H. "Hap" Arnold, September 4, 1941.

From this idea came the directive for the CG-4A glider, capable of carrying a jeep and much more directly to the field of battle.

Early in 1941, General Henry H. "Hap" Arnold ordered a study on the potential uses of gliders in military operations. In April, Arnold's office received the report and in March issued two Classified Technical Instructions authorizing design studies. Eleven aircraft manufacturers received preliminary engineering requirements and invitations to submit designs for experimental testing at Wright Field.

Our companies provided potential designs: WACO Aircraft Company, Frankfort Sailplane Company, Bowler Sailplanes, and the St. Louis Aircraft Corporation.

The WACO Aircraft Company, already well-respected in aircraft design circles, submitted the winning design. As the Design Prime Contractor, WACO took the lead in the design process, prototype development, and production of cargo gliders for the USAF.



The Flea Patch Show sealed the deal on August 8, 1943. This carefully orchestrated day of maneuvers culminated in a surprise for General Arnold.

Standing in the dark at the edge of a training field, General Arnold's team and a large contingent of newspaper reporters waited for something to happen.



From above came a tune, the popular song "Coming in on a Wing and a Prayer".

Suddenly a searchlight found a line of CG-4A gliders mere feet away. From one marched a brass band playing "Hail, Hail the Gang's All Here."

General Arnold grinned widely - the USAF gliders were a go.

General Henry H. "Hap" Arnold frequently visited Wright Field as the Glider Program expanded. Here he views a training glider with Major Frederick R. Dent and student glider pilots at Wright Field.



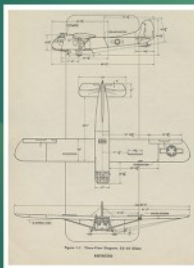
A. Francis Arcier – Father of the WACO CG-4A Glider

WACO's Vice President in Charge of Engineering, A. Francis Arcier, brought more than twenty years of experience designing both civilian and military aircraft to his role as lead designer on the Cargo Glider project.

Arcier's successful design featured simple lines and a modular configuration to aid in mass production as well as repair and replacement of damaged parts.

Arcier's team continued to work on the CG-4A design throughout its production run, adjusting elements for efficient assembly and use of materials. Feedback from manufacturers, especially Ford Motor Company, contributed to this ongoing process.

For his role in developing this and other crucial World War II aircraft and his post-WWII work with the U.S. Air Force, Arcier received the USAF Meritorious Civilian Service Award in 1953 and the USAF Exceptional Civilian Service Award in 1961.



Arcier's Vision for the CG-4A

Safe and Durable
The CG-4A was designed to protect pilots and passengers with a light but flexible airframe.

Simple Design
Arcier's simple design facilitated mass production by contractors with little or no experience building aircraft.

Efficient Use of Materials
The CG-4A's multi-panel design was ideal for production speed. A sleeker concept would have required metal needed for other types of aircraft, while the squared-off design could be accomplished with curved wood structure and plywood sheathing.

Versatile Cargo Capacity
WACO's lead designer emphasized the need for the CG-4A to carry a wide range of cargo with quick and efficient loading and unloading.



WACO Lead Designer A. Francis Arcier



reliable delivery aircraft crucial to the success of Airborne operations during World War II.

From Promise to Production will run through April 2024.

Sharon McCullar, Curator

Silent Wings Museum Hours:

10:00 AM to 5:00 PM Tuesday to Saturday

1:00 PM to 5:00 PM Sunday

Closed Monday



CATSKILL—On veterans Day 2023 Executive Council Vice President Joan Abrahamson gave WWII veteran, Sargent Enrico “Ed” Formica a letter of commendation and a challenge coin in appreciation for his service.

In mid December Joan also laid a wreath as a representative of the National WWII Glider Pilots Association at the Catskill Cemetery for Wreaths across America.



Next year all over America wreaths will be laid on December 14th, 2024. If you would like to get involved and represent the National WWII Glider Pilots Association at your local cemetery go to Wreaths Across America. <https://www.wreathsacrossamerica.org/>

Many WWII organizations organize to help lay wreaths on the graves of those who served their country.

COORDINATE A LOCATION

From sea to shining sea and every state in between, chances are there's a Wreaths Across America location near you that needs your support. Join us to lay wreaths on Wreaths Across America Day or volunteer to help coordinate marketing, logistics or fundraising throughout the year.

HONORING OUR TROOP CARRIER MEMBERS



FRANK T BRANDON*



BILLIE S CHEOLAS*



RAY CHAMBERS*



LARRY L HEYRMAN



JAMES O HAMMERSMITH*



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THANK YOU TO THOSE FAMILIES AND FRIENDS WHO HAVE CONTACTED THE LBS RESEARCH TEAM
TO PARTNER ON RESEARCHING WWII TROOP CARRIER HISTORY DURING THIS QUARTER.

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80th Anniversary of the invasion of Burma is nearing, March 6, 1944. The invasion was launched from Lalaghat, India. Caption: *Glider pilots of the 1st Air Commando Force pose in front of camouflaged gliders at Lalaghat, India. —Courtesy U.S. National Archives.*

COVER PHOTO: - Glider pilots of the 302nd Troop Carrier Squadron, 441st TC Group, just before take off to Holland for the Market mission. Austiin Lee Perkins collection