

WWII U.S. GLIDER PILOT'S BRIEFING

NATIONAL WWII GLIDER PILOTS COMMITTEE OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE
SILENT WINGS MUSEUM FOUNDATION

Legacy of the World War II Glider Pilots Association



"BROTHERS"

"Stand up and Cheer!" A story of two brothers on different paths and how they met in Germany under unique circumstances.

ALSO INSIDE:

- A look into the past 50 reunions.
- Brothers
- Surviving one of the worst POW camps in the Pacific.

COUNCIL REPORTS - MEMORIAL DONATIONS - ARTICLES - HONORING OUR VETERANS - OPERATIONS - MISSIONS - TROOP CARRIER MOVEMENT-

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INDEX

FALL 2021 General Order #4

FEATURED STORIES



10

[Memories of Reunions](#)

Fifty years of reunions that have shaped the National WWII Glider Pilots Association.

—by Cathy Welty

28

[Brothers](#)

Two brothers, separated by war, are reunited on the battlefields of Europe.

—by Hans den Brok



35

[Locating F/O Robert Hall](#)

Shot down in the jungles of Burma with the odds of survival very slim. With no information on what happened to Robert Hall it was a needle in a haystack to find what happened to this glider pilot.

—by Capt. Trevor Shimulunas, USMC



COUNCIL REPORTS:

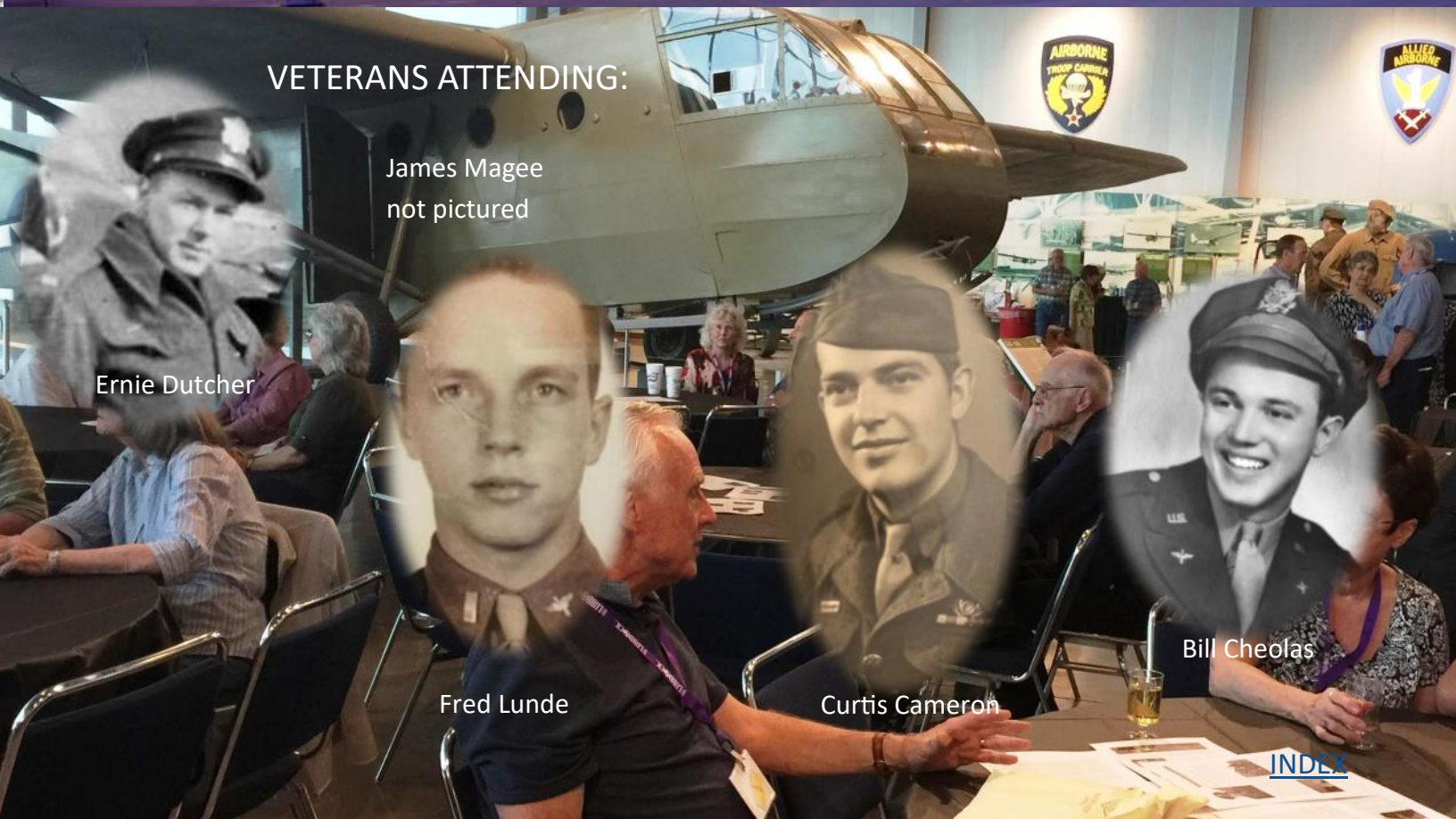
- 3 [Reunion Briefing](#)
- 4 [Chair's Briefing](#)
- 4 [NWC Briefing](#)
- 5 [LBSRT Briefing](#)
- 6 [94th FTS Briefing](#)
- 7 [Chaplain's Message](#)

- 8 [Final Flight](#)
- 9 [From the Vault](#)
- 43 [Honoring Our Veterans](#)
- 43 [Missions](#)
- 44 [Operations Briefing](#)
- 45 [From our Tow Crews Market](#)
- 47 [Donation Memorials](#)
- 47 [Back Cover Photo](#)

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 or 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. To stop receiving publications contact Claudia Coggin at claudia.coggin@gmail.com

NATIONAL WWII GLIDER PILOTS COMMITTEE
SILENT WINGS MUSEUM FOUNDATION
50TH REUNION

Reunion Postponed Due To COVID Prepping for Virtual Symposium



VETERANS ATTENDING:

James Magee
not pictured

Ernie Dutcher

Fred Lunde

Curtis Cameron

Bill Cheolas

[INDEX](#)

NATIONAL CHAIR

It is with great disappointment that I must announce the postponement of an in person annual reunion for one more year. This was a very difficult decision, and the Executive Council took it down to the wire, watching the COVID situation in Lubbock, and ultimately came to the inescapable conclusion that it was just not possible to continue with our plans. The good news is that we are in the process of exploring a virtual event, hopefully around the same time frame. More details will follow as we finalize the plan.

For those of you that have registered, you should have received an email or will soon receive a letter providing more details

We had scheduled two important items for the General Membership meeting. First, the Operating Procedures recently released by the Executive Council was to have been presented and discussed. If you haven't yet examined this document, you can open it by going to the NWWIIGPC website, use the Membership pull down and select Member Resources. Or just use this link,

<https://www.ww2gp.org/membership/signin.php>

You may still ask questions or provide comments by emailing Gary Stripling at

garystripling@gmail.com

The other item was to be the election of Executive Council Officers. This will now have to be handled by email. Before I get into the specifics, however, I should report on some realignment in those positions which has recently occurred. I have had some health issues and was unable to attend the July Council meeting. As a result, Charlie Day moved from the position of Vice Chair and was immediately appointed by the Council to the position of Committee Historian. Gary Stripling was appointed interim Vice Chair and has assumed my duties for the last several meetings.

A nomination form will soon be sent to you via email (for those of you who do not use email, a mailing will be sent) followed by an election email (or mail) as soon as the nomination deadline has passed.

We will continue to communicate through the Briefing as well as our FaceBook page and special emails for conducting our business.

Speaking of the Briefing, we have excellent articles from two of our regular contributors, Hans den Brok and Trevor Shimulunas. In addition, we have an article by longtime member Cathy Welty (daughter of Glider Pilot Ray Welty) that highlights the history of our reunions and reminds us of the importance of continuing that tradition.

I'll miss seeing all of you this October, but we have to play the hand we are dealt.

R Bruce Overman,
National Chair

NATIONAL WING COMMANDER



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

I am saddened that we have to cancel this year. We had five veterans who were going to attend! We were hoping more people would be vaccinated before the reunion but it just didn't go in our favor.

I added to the website new information. Under Bastogne and bundles from the ski I added the 78th Troop Carrier Squadron Ardennes Report. This report details the C-47 resupply drops. One on the 23rd Dec. at DZ Marcouray to Hogan's troops and the others on the 24th, 26th and 27th resupplies to the 101st Airborne by this squadron.

In helping research Cathy Welty's article I decided to replicate the [reunion information](#); the concise

[INDEX](#)

description of each reunion for the last 49 years. These reunion summaries used to be at the beginning of the printed roster (for those of you who remember the roster). I also added to the "[IN THE BEGINNING](#)" the information of persons holding the higher offices held throughout the last 50 years as well as the awards. This, too, used to be in the old rosters. The last roster was sent out in 2018 so the 2019-2021 information has been added to this online version.

As Bruce mentioned we have the members only page now that currently holds the year's Briefings, statistics, and the EC minutes and operating procedures. Any important information from the EC will be sent to you by mailChimp (**so check your spam email folder and make sure you have nwwiigpa@gmail.com in your contacts**) and depending on the information it may be housed on the members page.

Trevor Shimulunas is now our chief editor for the Briefing. It is a lot of work and he does a great job. We both work on finding content and I do the layout but he makes it read professionally. Thank you Trevor for this great gift. If you have a great story on WWII Troop Carriers, but you feel you cannot write, we are here to help. You might surprise yourself! Send us your story.

Since last December I have been trying to contact Raymond Hughes. He flew two missions in World War II. He was one of "those*" power glider pilots who flew co-pilot in a C-47 resupply mission during the Battle of the Bulge to the 101st. He was great to talk to and we talked pretty regularly until December. I had no family contact other than his wife but she had died in 2020 from Covid which was very devastating to Ray. He was very much looking forward to meeting Bill Cheolas at the next reunion. He had been wanting to meet him since he found out that Bill was by him in formation during the Varsity Operation. Bill was also one of "those*" pilots and they had a lot to talk about. However, after several months of getting his phone that said he was not available, I did an obituary search and found that he had passed away on January 21. I felt so bad. I am hoping a family member may read this and contact me.

One last but important note: To our members serving in the military and those retired from military service, know that you are in my heart and prayers. With a war that has lasted 20 years, I know you have been touched in some way by the deaths of your fallen brothers and sisters in-arms in Kabul. Our sympathies and prayers also go out to the families of the fallen. May God keep you all safe.

Patricia Overman, NWC

*I use the word "those" lovingly because Otto Lyons used to always laughingly tease the power glider pilots by calling them, "one of those pilots" His best friend was one of those pilots.

LEON B. SPENCER RESEARCH TEAM

The Leon B. Spencer Research Team continues to receive requests from families for research on many aspects of Troop Carrier, and even Airborne, units—averaging a request every 3 to 4 days. Since Jan 1 the team has received 65 requests. Our team tries to respond within the first days of receiving a request. We can usually provide the family with multiple WWII-era documents with their glider pilot relative's name once we know the Troop Carrier Group (TCG) and/ or Troop Carrier Squadron (TCS) he was assigned to.

Thanks to work done in the past by Patricia and Bruce Overman, Hans den Brok, and Tom Martin to obtain Archive Reels at their own time and expense, our team today has the resources we need to provide families some of the information they are looking for. In exchange, all we ask families to do is to share with us a good portrait photo and any WWII documents, photos, and letters so that we can continue our research into the WWII Glider Pilot Program.

It is an honor to serve these families and to help them understand the stories of their American Hero. Is your WWII relative's record up to date?

Gary Stripling,
Project Manager,
Leon B Spencer Research Team

OPERATIONS FOR THE
94TH FLYING TRAINING SQUADRON (94 FTS)

Hello from Colorado!



The recipient of the 2021 G-Wings “G is for Guts” was then Cadet First-Class and now 2nd Lt. Andrew Crites. We congratulate him for the tremendous work and goals he has accomplished. We are sure he will meet his goal to fly an aircraft in the fighter community.

“I’d like to fly something in the fighter community, but for now, I’m just focused on instructing well in the TG-16.”

Lt. Crites graduated in June 2021 and is on casual assignment training at the academy. Nothing has changed from the Army Air Force until now. It was common for pilots to be on casual status and train new pilots until being sent on assignment. Lt. Crites’ knowledge will greatly help incoming cadets.



Instructor Pilot , 2nd Lt. Andrew Crites, then C1C, training in the TG-16.



Instructor Pilot, 2nd Lt., then C1C, Andrew Crites with student in the TG-16.

Dear friends,

The images in the news last night were heart breaking and hard for me to watch; the pandemic, hurricane Ida and the withdrawal from Afghanistan.

As we move into the Autumn season it feels as though we have not made much progress against the Covid pandemic. The infection rates are rising at alarming rates especially among the unvaccinated. Young children who are still ineligible for vaccination are returning to school in person; some with masks, some without. I worry for the children, their parents and the teachers. I think everyone is exhausted by this pandemic, tired of worry, tired of masks, tired of controversy and ready for a return to some semblance of what we remember as “normal”. But please continue to be cautious and wear a mask to protect not only yourself but those around you.

Who could imagine a hurricane more powerful than Katrina would hit New Orleans on the anniversary of Katrina? I have family and friends who live in New Orleans and am glad that the repairs to the levees helped. The wide loss of power in southern Louisiana is making life very difficult.

Then the pictures of the withdrawal from Afghanistan with the loss of life of American service men and women was devastating. So much death, desperation and need in the faces of both the Afghan people and our service men and women trying to help them.

I offer a prayer for the bereaved, for those who have lost someone to Covid, for those suffering the after-effects of Hurricane Ida and for the families of all the service men and women who have died in the Afghan war.

May our God who with a mother’s love wipes away our tears and makes all manner of things well be with those who are suffering the pain of loss. May God heal their grief, strengthen their faith and grant that their loved ones rest in peace with God for all eternity.

“A Prayer for the Bereaved” Fr. Andrew

With humble blessings for peace and health,

Susan Pinter
Chaplain for the WWIIGPC

FINAL FLIGHT

In Memoriam



RAYMOND J HUGHES

16 May 1925—13 January 2021

TRAINING: Graduated from Advanced Flight School at Luke AFB as a 2nd Lieutenant on 4 August 1944 then sent to Advanced Glider Flight School at SPAAF, and graduated Power Glider Pilot Class: 20 October 1944 before being sent to the European Theater. Ray was assigned to the 74th Troop Carrier Squadron, 434th Troop Carrier Group located at Aldermaston Air Field, England, at the beginning of December '44. Ray was a co-pilot on one of the resupply missions to the 101st Airborne during the Battle of the Bulge. Ray's Group moved to France in February '45 and on the 20th of March 1945 Ray was transferred on detached service to the 86th Troop Carrier squadron, 437th TC Group at Coulommiers/Voisins Courcy where on 24 March 1945 he flew in serial A-9, CG-4A glider chalk number 144. This serial was a double tow combat flight in the invasion of Germany, codenamed: VARSITY. Their landing zone was not secure and they

landed surrounded by the enemy. After VARSITY, Ray returned to his parent Squadron in the middle of April '45. He went back to flying in a C-47 and flew missions into Germany to resupply the Armies with gasoline, ammunition and medical supplies and returned with POWs and forced laborers in what the 9th Troop Carrier Command named the Flying Pipeline. Ray returned with his Group to the United States to begin training in the P-51 fighter planes when the A-bomb was dropped ending the war at which time he went out on an honorable discharge from military life.



RICHARD B NEFF

15 FEBRUARY 1923—22 MAY 2021

TRAINING: Graduated from SPAAF, Lubbock, TX., Class No. 44-02 on 15 February 1944 and was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant. He was transferred to the European Theater and assigned to the 314th Troop Carrier Group. On October 12th he was reassigned to the 310th Troop Carrier Squadron, 315th Troop Carrier Group stationed at Spanhoe. The 315th never towed gliders in combat during the war. They dropped only paratrooper and C-47 resupply missions. During the Varsity Operation 24 March 1945 the 315th TC Group flew the invasion of Germany from an empty air field at Boreham, England. Richard's 310th TC Squadron was tasked with the housekeeping and security of this air field to prepare it for the mission. The glider pilots along with other officers and enlisted men accomplished this task allowing the 315th to drop British Paratroopers. As the Armies were racing across Germany, Richard participated in the Flying Pipeline in April and May flying C-47s into Germany to resupply the Armies with gasoline, ammunition and medical supplies and returned with POW and forced labors. During his 31 months in the military Richard had flown 350 hours in various types of military aircrafts.



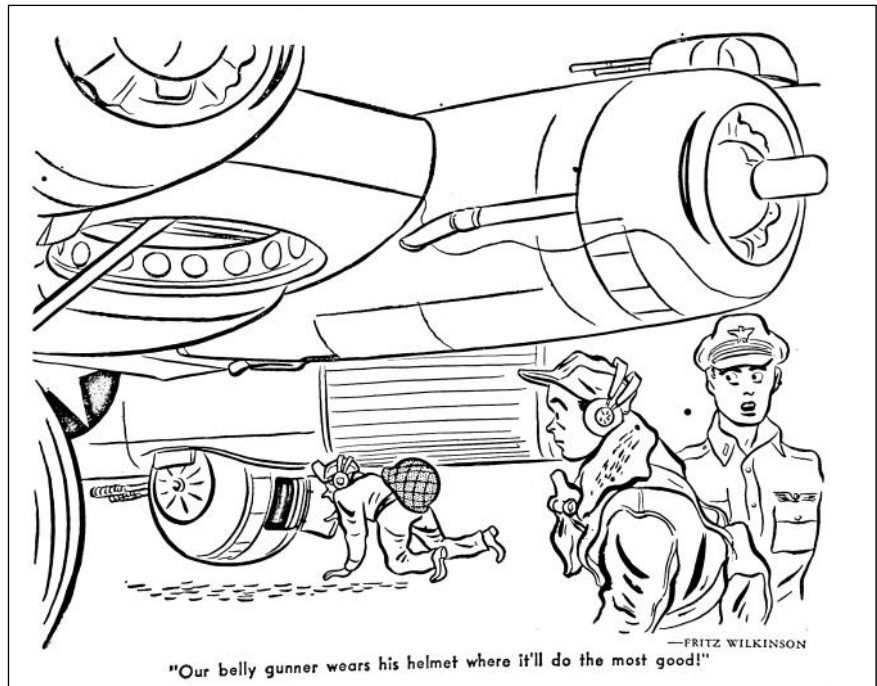
FROM THE VAULT

CLASSIC COMICS FROM THE WWII TIME PERIOD

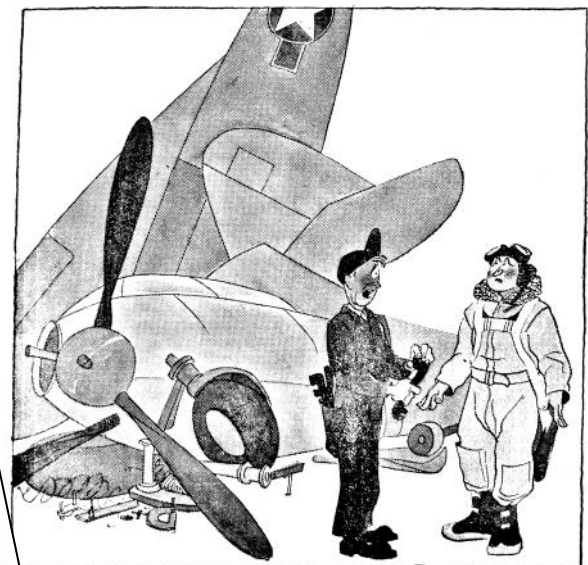
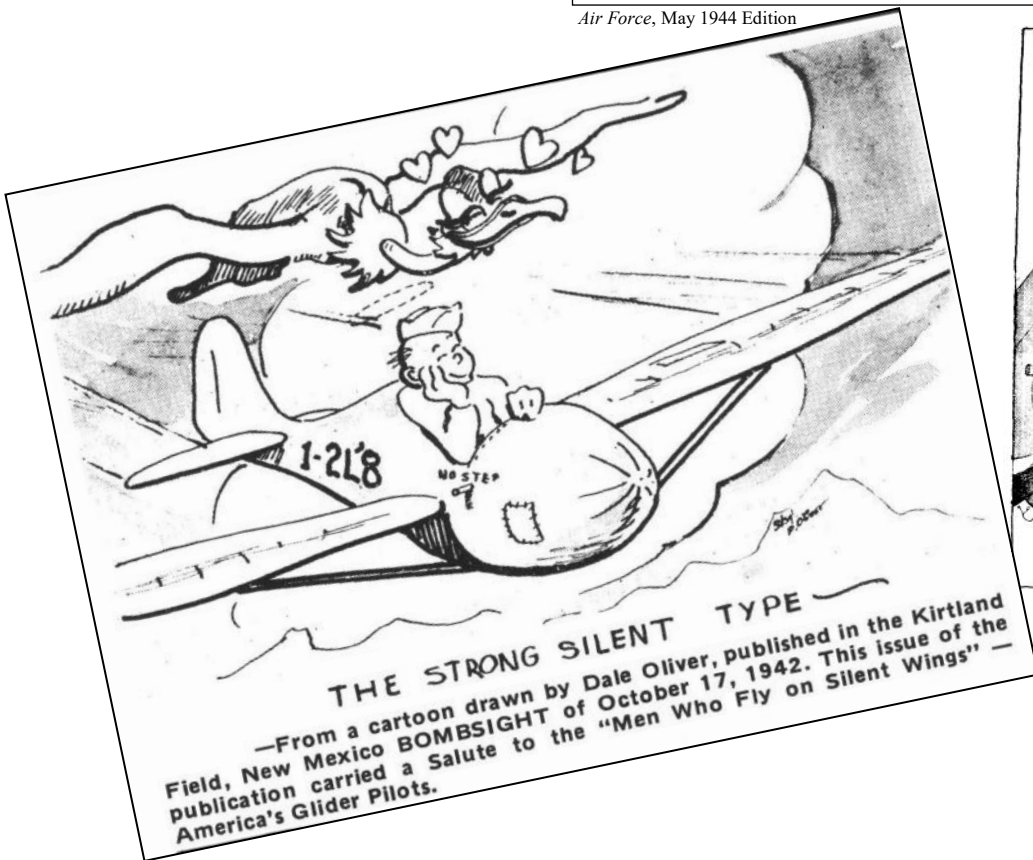
Our veterans will remember that in the midst of WWII the USAAF started publishing a monthly magazine with the snappy title of, “*Air Force: The Official Service Journal of the US Army Air Forces.*” In addition to articles on the current events of the war, this service magazine also included maintenance quizzes, “Do’s and Don’ts,” and fun illustrations.

We hope our members will enjoy reading the inside jokes of the greatest generation, acquired from personal collections, national archive repositories, and other period cartoonists. This quarter’s Briefing has two selections from the May, 1944 Service Journal and one from cartoonist Dale Oliver.

-Trevor Shimulunas



Air Force, May 1944 Edition



—JIM RAWLS & PFC. R. R. RIEKER



MAJOR RAY J. WELTY, (USAF RET.)

KEEPING THE MEMORY THROUGH THE 50 YEARS OF REUNIONS

BY DAUGHTER CATHY L WELTY



RAY J. WELTY's WWII background: a lifelong love of flying began when Col. Charles Lindberg gave Ray his first airplane ride in 1936 at Roswell, NM. Two years later, he joined the New Mexico National Guard and in 1941, entered active service at Ft. Sam Houston, TX, his native state. Ray joined the Glider program in 1942 at Randolph Field. He finished dead-stick at Spencer, IA; Basic at Twenty-nine Palms, CA and graduated at Lubbock, TX, on February 14, 1944.

Ray's tactical glider training at Laurinburg Maxton, NC was delayed for him to perform a special mission with the OSS. He parachuted into Normandy on June 3, 1944 with radio direction finding equipment which helped D-Day troops find their landing zones.

Ray joined the 44th Troop Carrier Squadron, 316th TC Group in England and later, the 349th TC in France.

He was in the European Theater during five major invasions and flew the CG-4A glider in the *Market Garden* operation. His chalk was #38 loaded with ordinance equipment of the 82nd Airborne and one paratrooper who sat in the copilot seat. Casualties were high, and he became a company commander for a short time. For their services to the Netherlands, the grateful Dutch awarded Ray and his fellow glider pilots the Orange Lanyard for Valor, their highest award. The Dutch government had no idea that the American glider pilots were not part of the 101st or 82nd Airborne when the OL was awarded in 1945, the glider pilots did not receive the Orange Lanyard until 1982 at the 12th Annual Reunion of the National WWII Glider Pilots Association. Had it not been for reunions this may not have happened. The value of the Reunions!

FORM G/P 1

SECRET

TROOP CARRIER MISSION AUTH: CO, 316th T.C.G.
INTERROGATION CHECK SHEET - G/PILOTS INTT:--
DATE:--

Hq., 316th Troop Carrier Group
APO 133 U. S. Army
1 October 1944

A. GENERAL INFORMATION:
Name Welty, Ray J. Rank 2nd Lt. ASN 0-713080
Group 316th Sq. 44th Glider Serial 38 (Chalk) Glider No. & Type CG-4 A

F.O. No. 7 Serial A 42 LZ or DZ DZ"O" Take Off Time 1200
Time over target 1500 Time & date returned to home station 1530 27 Sept.

B. ENEMY ACTION ENROUTE TO TARGET:
1. Type of attack (Air, Naval, Flak): Flak and heavy machine gun fire.
2. Enemy A/C sighted: Where None.
Course _____ Speed _____ Type _____
Number _____ Remarks _____
3. Enemy Naval Craft Sighted: Where None.
Course _____ Speed _____ Type _____
Number _____ Remarks _____

C. ENEMY INFORMATION:
1. A/A activity:
a. Amount of Fire: Weak _____ Moderate X Intense _____
b. Accuracy: Accurate Hit left wing. Inaccurate _____
c. Type: Heavy _____ Automatic Weapons _____
Small Arms: Perforated glider, what Calibre Not known.
Location (exact if possible) 30 minutes from DZ"O".
2. Other weapons used by enemy enroute: Type _____ Number _____
accuracy _____ Intensity _____ Location _____
3. Any points not covered above: _____

720 approach.

ider still in safe condition.

ate? No.

sort of map if possible.

our part in the operations
n to your unit. Use

Normal.

eeper. Upon landing I reported
to Div. C.F., so I joined a
anticipated in some action as a
nd Div. C.F. Some Glider Pilots
a detail. I went with them, as C
as happening, some Capt. had us
1 for 8 hours. After watching
not working, but watching the
en and joined a Battery of Art-
ted as a gunner for 10 hours,
handy.
reac area where several Glider
ug) with utter disregard of the
ed us to what was called the front
les to hold Jerry until the 325th
e several of Major Nevins wild
to benefit himself. Myself and
be Div. Commander about evacuation.
we found out that the Div. Comm-
VACATED Ray J. Welty
interrogator John P. May
1st Lt. Mc Section B-2

National Archives, LBS Research Team collection

INDEX

This is a story told in pictures and narratives about a Glider Pilot and the person he lovingly referred to as his “co-pilot.” Two long-time members of the National World War II Glider Pilots Association: Major Ray J. Welty (USAF ret.) and his wife Patricia- and their long and dedicated service to the National World War II Glider Pilots Association.



Photo by Cathy L Welty

Co Pilot Patricia Welty

A profile of my parents, their partnership and their work with the NWWIIGPA is just a single chapter. As my father’s story alone, like those of so many who fought in World War II, could fill a book- perhaps two. I suggested to him from time to time that he should write one- and that I could assist. But with his rapidly declining health, that would not be possible.

Our entire Glider Pilot group is rich in history, and all of the stories deserve to be told and memorialized. We have already lost so many GPs, and we cannot let their memories go with them.

Gratitude and thanks is extended to those who encourage us to tell these stories- and who provide needed

background history to help complete them. My personal thanks go especially to the Leon B. Spencer Research Team: Patricia Overman, National Wing Commander of the National WWII Glider Pilots Co; Gary Stripling, Research Team Leader; Chuck Hobbs, National Treasurer; Sharon McCullar, Curator of the Silent Wings Museum and Mark Vlahos, noted author, research specialist and WWII historian- for their assistance and additional documentation needed for this story. We write about historical experiences not for ourselves, but for future generations interested in our collective history- and what that means to all of us as we move forward into the future.

Ray and Patricia (Pat) Welty were early members of the National World War II Glider Pilots Association- and they quickly became very active in its day to day operations, including the now legendary annual “reunions.” They worked tirelessly with others on the long-range planning of these reunions, as well as providing boots on the ground at the reunion events themselves. Together, Ray and Pat also coordinated a highly attended and very popular mini-reunion in San Antonio- their hometown. Patricia made sure there would be plenty of great food (which San Antonio is noted for) great speakers at the historic Menger Hotel event site- plus lots of fun sightseeing around this popular tourist mecca!



Ray hard at work and loving it!

Photo by Cathy L Welty

Meanwhile, throughout the rest of the year, the important day to day work for the GP group continued nonstop. Mother would often say (without complaint!) that my dad was “on the phone a lot!” and “on the computer”- working alongside other leaders in the organization. He was always encouraging more membership- plus more participation by current members, as well. My dad made working together fun- and people responded.

As a result, NWWIIGPA membership grew and grew! And many Glider Pilots and their wives (and ultimately their extended families, as well) began looking forward to the adventures that awaited them with each October reunion that took place in different locations around the country: Dayton, Ohio; Lubbock, TX; Washington, D.C.; Mt. Pleasant, TX; Reno, NV; Dallas, TX; Omaha, Nebraska; Colorado Springs... [the list goes on](#). Members would pack their bags and have good times with old friends, while together they enjoyed exploring the sights surrounding each reunion location. Joined by World War II historians and guests, and later Troop Carrier members, the group became literally one big family over the years.

At the reunions, “the hospitality suite” became popularly known as a fun and relaxing place to unwind in the late afternoon after a full day of activities- before the start of each evening’s festivities. After some time there, off everyone would go to get ready for that evening’s meal and speakers. And finally on the last day came the big event- the Saturday night awards banquet. It was a dressy affair- and very festive!

The evening program began always with an opening prayer by the chaplain; I remember Walter G. Light then later Otto Lyons. Then, more traditions such as the pledge of allegiance, and then a delicious meal. And, for many years, live music and dancing! Then on to presentations- and of course the evening’s entertainment and speakers. And on Saturday night, the guest speaker.



Founders of the National WWII Glider Pilots Association and the beginning of the reunions. Back row; Left to right: John V. Tyndall, Sam Southall, Jack Hamm, Edward Hillyard, James Pritchett, Lowell Bowers Front row; left to right: Tipton Randolph, Charles Ellington, and Earl Dust.

SNIPPETS OF SOME PAST REUNIONS:

REUNION No. 1 (1971)

Sixty-five glider pilots were on hand on August 15, 1971 at the Aolphus Hotel when the Dallas meeting was convened. General rules of conduct were adopted, duties of officers set up, and a permanent Steering Committee named. In the first election, Bickett Ellington was selected as the National Flight Commander, Frank Kehr named Senior Flight Commander, S. Tipton Randolph selected as Junior Flight Commander, with Thomas Post named Adjutant and William Van Winkle as Chaplain. All GPs attending this reunion were considered to be the Charter Members of this new association. Those members were: Donald H. Akin, Harry W. Andrews, James W. Andrews, Robert L. Atkinson, James V. Baxter, Pat L. Baxter, Robert B. Beasley, Gerald L. Belding, William Blessing, Clifford E. Bond, Valton H. Bray, L. W. Brook, Jr., William G. Browne, William W. Burnett, Carl C. Clendenin, Edward L. Cook, Richard C. Cramer, James C. Drain, Charles C. Dunn, Bickett Ellington, Harry F. Engel, Adlai C. Ferguson, Newton H. Foster, Harry L. Furr, Joe N. Gilreath, Clyde C. Graham, Lem C. Green, Jack R. Hamm, Harry A. Harp, William L. Harper, John R. Hauselt, William E. Henley, John D. Hill, A. W. Hoyt, Homer G. Huntley, Charles Inghlish, C. S. Jackson, Richard Jay, Robert C. Jeep, Stan Jirovsky, Frank L. Kehr, Carey M. Lee, Tyrus J. Lockhart, James T. Madigan, Jr., Douglas Maltby, Howard E. Mitchell, William McDonald, Thomas R. Post, John P. Prescott, S. Tipton Randolph, Richard F. Riley, Edwin P. Rood, T. V. Sampson, William H. Seibold, Allen T. Shepherd, Frank H. Sherer, Charles D. Skelton, C. P. Simpson, William R. Slack, Chester C. Sloan, John H. Smith, William Van Winkle, Robert D. Vocke, Russell Whitlock, Louis H. Zeiden



SILENT WINGS



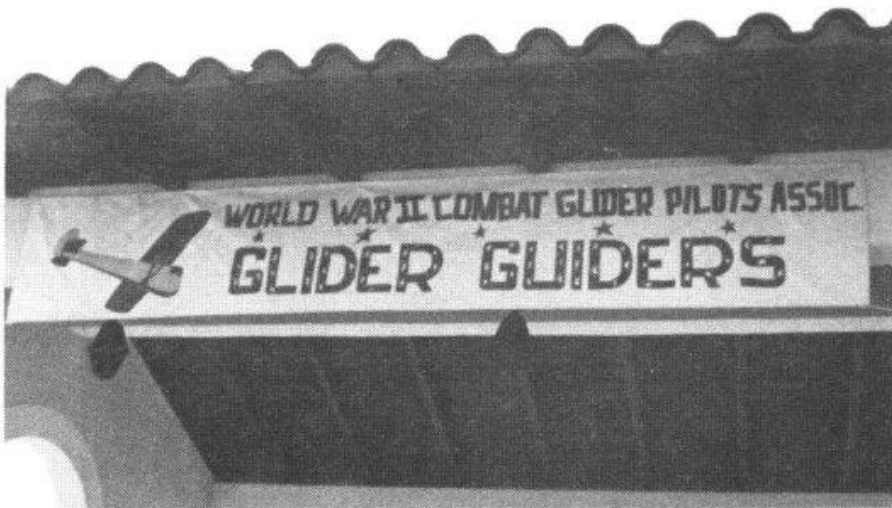
Volume No. 1

November, 1973

Number 1

Louisville Attracts Large Glider Pilot Turnout For 1973 Meet

Hugh Glider Guider Banner Welcomes Arriving GPs to St. Pete Reunion in Great Style



This big Glider Guider sign greeted members of the National World War II Glider Pilots Association as they arrived at the pink Don Ce Sar Hotel in St. Petersburg for the 4th annual GP Reunion. A local GP, Joe Haggerty, was responsible for this outstanding work of art. This banner was added to the War Room collection when the St. Pete affair was closed out.

This welcoming banner was hung over the main entrance to the hotel so that it was impossible to miss it as you arrived for registration.

MILWAUKEE SAYS 'HI' TO GLIDER PILOT VISITORS



BRITISH GLIDER PILOTS ATTEND 1976 REUNION

One of the most outstanding features of the Reunion in San Francisco was the attendance of a good representative group of the British Glider Pilots Regimental Association. On the occasion of the American glider pilots visit to England last year and the dinner hosted by the British GPs at the RAF Club in London, an invitation had been extended by Reunion Chairman Dick Kennedy to all the British glider pilots in the hopes that they would be able to attend. A total of seven British GPs made the long trek from the U.K. to San Francisco and they were warmly received by their American counterparts. Those in attendance included Victor Wade, London secretary of the Glider Pilot Regimental Association and the chairman of the Executive Committee; W. J. Wells, treasurer; and members James Davies (a U.S. resident

SEE BRITISH GLIDER PILOTS—on Page 11

MILWAUKEE'S GERMAN FOLK DANCERS GET GP VOLUNTEERS AT DANCE !!!



You can say it again! Old Glider Pilots never give up. When the German style folk dancers at Milwaukee called for some volunteers to assist them, low and behold, John Hauselt (on the left) and "Lightfoot" Carl Zahn (in center) rolled up their slacks and got with it.

Photo by Bill Horn

REUNION ATTENDANCE RECORDS FALL AGAIN AS GPs STORM MILWAUKEE

Another record-breaking attendance record has fallen by the wayside as a result of the highly successful Milwaukee glider pilot Reunion held September 25, 26, 27, 1975. Ginny Randolph, Reunion Secretary, has released an official count of 485 registrations including 292 glider pilots as being at the 1975 meeting. These registrations coupled with additional guests put the attendance at the Saturday night banquet and dance at well over 500, this being by far the largest group yet to attend a Reunion function.

Off to a great start with the Thursday afternoon check-in, the buffet that evening was well attended with the highlight being the welcoming address made by Paul Poberezny, president of the EAA, who is also a member of the glider pilot association.

The Friday morning business session was well attended with a majority of bright-eyed GPs on hand for the 9:30 A.M. start. Proceedings of the business session on Friday and on Saturday morning will be detailed elsewhere in these columns. An outstanding feature of the Friday meeting was the presentation of the newly acquired official flag of the Association to Executive Chairman Frank L. Kehr. This presentation was made by National Representative George Brennan who was instrumental in getting the flag designed and produced. The beautiful result of George's effort was received by the membership with a standing ovation. It is an item that will be treasured by the members for many, many years.

'77 ALBUQUERQUE REUNION SETS ATTENDANCE RECORD

SPRINGFIELD REUNION HUGE SUCCESS !



A trio from the group of young Scottish dancers who entertained so very well along with the Scottish bagpipe band on Friday evening after the buffet.

It doesn't seem possible that the national reunions can keep getting better and better but such is the case. The eighth annual conclave held in Springfield October 5, 6, and 7 did not prove to be an exception. Host Wing 13 (New England) rolled out the plush red carpet and no one went away from the Massachusetts city except with high praise for the job done by Reunion Chairman Connie Nanarionis and his co-chairman Joe Boylen and their able staff of committee members. The final count from Reunion Secretary Ginny Randolphs tallies up as a grand total of 495 in attendance and this included 255 glider pilots, five associate members and three British glider pilots.

Regretfully, space limitations will not permit us to print the list of attendees.

All of those attending owe a deep debt of gratitude for the tremendous job done by the New Englanders. Talk about your Southern hospitality. We found out that it has a counterpart - Northern (or Yankee) hospitality. It will never have to take a back seat to any other part of the country.

A few GPs showed up late Monday and by the SEE "REUNION" On Page 8 - - -

DALLAS MEETING SHATTERS ALL PRIOR REUNION MARKS

As was expected, the Ninth annual glider pilot reunion held at the Anatole Hotel in Dallas, Texas September 20-23 turned out to be a big record breaker. A final count from Reunion Secretary Virginia Randolph states that the total number present for the festivities amounted to 844. This by far outstrips any previous reunion and may indeed set an all-time high mark for attendance.

Reunion Chairman Frank Kehr hosted the outstanding meeting and

TIPTON AND GINNY RANDOLPH NAMED AS 1979 ELLINGTON AWARD WINNERS

The Bickett Ellington Award for 1979 goes to the team of Ginny and Tip Randolph. This announcement was made by Executive Chairman Bud Caldwell during ceremonies at the Dallas reunion and came as a surprise to both parties. Which is a little hard to do since Tip is a member of the Executive Council, the body who makes the selection of the recipient each

The Ellington Award is a memorial award to the late Bickett Ellington who worked so long and hard to get the National World War II Glider Pilots Association organized. The award was initiated by the members of Wing 11 in his honor, shortly following his death. Bickett was a leader in getting the association organized in the late 1920's. He served as its first

THE RESTORED CG4A MAKES DEBUT AT DALLAS REUNION

WE MADE IT!!! The glider pilots CG4A Waco combat glider is at last a reality as can be attested by any and all of those who were in attendance at the 1979 Dallas Reunion. One of the two completely restored CG4A's in the world, and the only one to be restored by a private association with private funds made its maiden appearance for the public and for the attendees at the 1979 Reunion on Thursday, September 20, at the Phil Hudson airport in Mesquite, Texas.

Due to the very bad weather which hit the area during the early part of reunion week, plans for placing the glider on display at the Hotel Anatole park-

ing lot were cancelled. Instead, the glider was assembled in the large maintenance hanger of Aeronautical Services and was fully protected from the rain and mud. Early arriving glider pilots got an unexpected early glimpse of the "Big Bird" when a call went out Tuesday for help in putting the components together and making the glider ready for display. Plenty of help was forthcoming and the final touches were made Wednesday and Thursday morning. Shuttle busses were scheduled to run from the Anatole hotel to the restoration site beginning on Thursday afternoon. The bus schedule was maintained through Saturday.

The exhibition of the combat glider attracted a great deal of media attention as was expected and newswire services carried the story of the glider and of the glider pilot reunion nation-wide.

Most of the glider pilots who made the trek to the exhibition site were seeing the CG4A for the first time in some thirty-five years. Many were the expressions of awe and amazement but the major remark turned out to be: "Gawd, I can't believe it was that big!"

"I can't believe that I was crazy enough to fly that monster" came in a close second.

SEE CG4A RESTORATION - on Page 2

George Brennan leads everyone in the traditional Saturday night Toasts which becomes the closing event of the annual reunions.



A real big TEXAS WELCOME was in store for the arriving English glider pilots at the DFW Regional airport. Signs, songs, a little marching music welcomed them to Big D.

FINAL CURTAIN FALLS ON GREAT TUCSON REUNION

Prop Wash

By Bill Horn

A feature of the War Room at its 8th annual appearance at national reunions was the 10 dioramas depicting action scenes during WWII. Created by Dallas Historian Paul Swan, these dioramas were acquired by the Silent Wings museum during the summer. When the Tucson reunion committee came up with the excellent space for the War Room, a decision was made to transport and exhibit these dioramas at the reunion. They were very well received by those attending the reunion and were one of the reunion highlights. So much for that — it was the transporting out from Dallas and the return trip with them that caused the problem!

Picture if you will a little single axle trailer loaded down with 10 cabinets, each one 2 feet x 2 feet x 8 feet. Well tied down and well covered with tarps for protection. The little green Chevy pickup is tooling down the Interstate closely followed by Joe Cannella's "Brown Bomber" with the co-pilots aboard. This is about 10 p.m. and we

Senator Goldwater



Barry M. Goldwater, a native of Arizona and the senior Senator from that state, was the principal speaker at the Saturday evening banquet at the Tucson Reunion. Senator Goldwater reminded us that as veterans of WWII "It is up to us, a generation that has seen a war that was necessary, to instill in the younger people of this country a sense of patriotism that seems to be lacking"

The 1981 Tucson Reunion was highlighted Saturday night, September 26 with an address by Senator Barry Goldwater, the selection of George Brennan as the Bickett Ellington Award winner, and revelation that Mel Brockman had been chosen as the Outstanding Wing Commander of 1981. These events climaxed a gathering that saw some 575 glider pilots, wives, and guests mark the end of the 11th annual reunion.

This reunion effort was headed by Reunion Chairman Dr. James J. DiPietro ably assisted by State Commander Jack Marsicano and a host of hard-working committee members who made the occasion one that will long be remembered. From the pre-reunion tours and Wednesday golf tournament to the finale, the Sunday morning Break-away Brunch, the affair was well handled, expertly conducted and a pleasure to all in attendance. Dr. DiPietro and all his committee people are to be highly applauded for their outstanding efforts.

Senator Goldwater's speech was well received. In it he made two main points: First that we as a nation should not rely too heavily on a missile capability to fight any possible future war or wars. He pointed out that there is still the need for a strong and conventional force both as a deterrent and as an actual combat force to "take the high ground" and hold it. Secondly, he said, it is

22nd NATIONAL GP REUNION IN DALLAS LURES RECORD CROWD

ORANGE LANYARD AWARD HIGHLIGHTS RENO REUNION

SILENT WINGS

Pro, Page 10

Dutch Award Glider Pilots Orange Lanyard

This issue (number 4, Vol. 9) for 1982. Wh continued in upon the indi

This issue of Silent Wings contains the names of 174 men who were recipients of the Orange Lanyard in Reno, plus two deceased glider pilots whose widows accepted the Award for them.

I have gone through all my records from the Reno Reunion and listed all those that I know attended the Reunion. I have checked this list against the cards

that were filled out at the Registration Desk.

If I have missed any who received the Lanyard will you please let me know.

If you are eligible and have not notified your Wing Commander please do so. Include your Group, Squadron, the date you landed and your LZ in Holland.

If you know of a deceased member who was eligible and can give the name

over 200 deserving the Holland invasion. were presented the John F. L. by Colonel Herman Larson, C Netherlands Army Sendon, Hugh Otto Lyon at the Dutch Em-Ketih Mat D. C. The text of Moore, Widress may be found Theo Moo Donald, T way at the reunion Donald, P on Page 9 — John A. I

TEXT OF SPEECH

Text of the speech given by Colonel Herman Tummers, representing the Dutch government, delivered to the glider pilots and guests attending the annual reunion in Reno, Nevada:

"Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a great honor and a distinct pleasure for me to be here tonight as your guest at the annual reunion of the National World War II Glider Pilots Association and I wish to thank you for your invitation. I thank you on behalf of our Ambassador, who is in Holland at this time, on behalf of the Minister of Defense, Dr. Van Mierlo, and on behalf of Secretary General of Defense, Dr. Peynenburg. These three gentlemen instructed me personally to convey their best wishes for the Association and to wish you a happy reunion. I am not going to present a dramatic speech tonight. Who am I to do that? After all, I was a sixteen-year old boy at the time you flew your gliders on their one-way mission onto our soil. But, although I was young, the war, the occupation, and the liberation have made a very deep and lasting impression on me and I have drawn a few conclusions from that.

"To me, it seems that one must have lived under a totalitarian regime to fully appreciate a democratic system. To me, it seems that one must have experienced a ruthless dictatorship and years of merciless suppression to really understand what

freedom means. Freedom of speech, freedom to write, think, to gether, freedom of religion, freedom to move, freedom to educate your children in a way of your own choice.

"I remember vividly that we in the Netherlands experienced the dictatorship, the totalitarian regime, the merciless, bloody suppression, the unfreedom. During Operation Market-Garden, we knew that our liberation was near and I felt strongly, and still do so, that the allied soldiers who contributed to that liberation deserved our eternal gratitude, not only of the generations then alive, but also of the generations to come. So our gratitude goes to you and of course to many, many others who risked or lost their lives to give us back our freedom and our basic feeling of human dignity after four to five years of NAZI Regime.

"Many people in Holland feel that way and that is why you have many friends in my country.

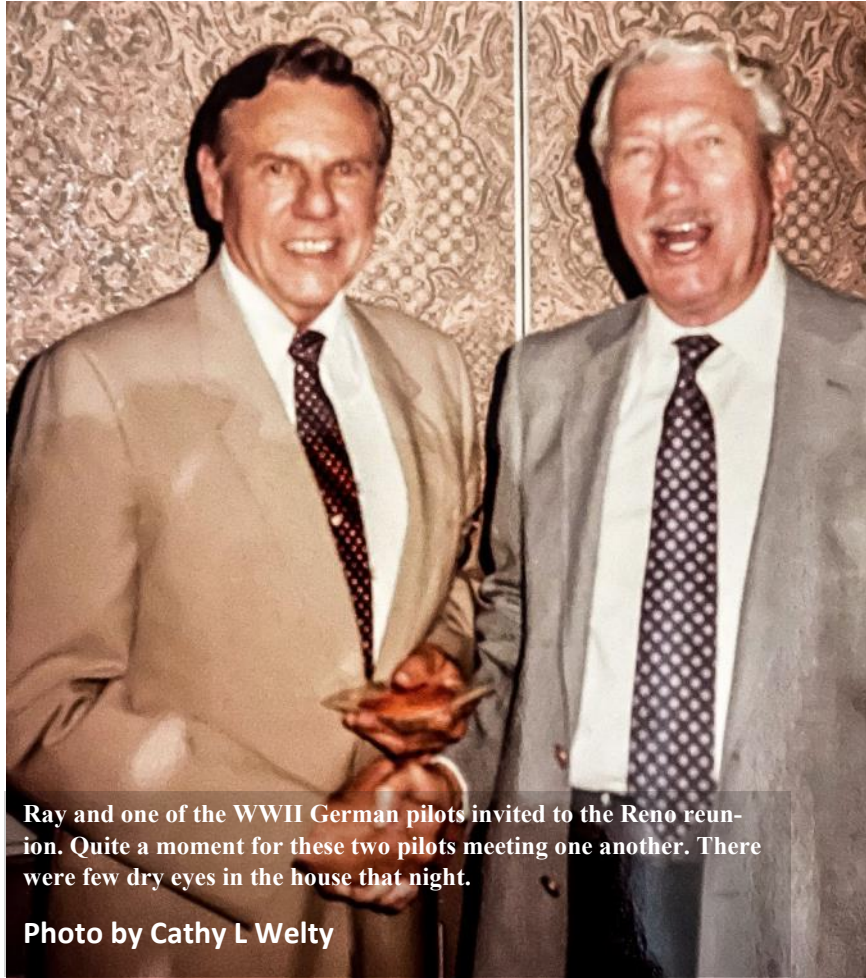
"I am extremely happy to be able today to express the gratitude of the Dutch people by presenting a token of appreciation to the veteran glider pilots of the IXth United States Army Air Forces Troop Carrier Command who took part in the Operation Market-Garden in September of 1944.

Ray and his fellow Operation Market Garden GPs were presented with the Order of the Orange Lanyard for their service in liberating the people of Holland.



"As you already know, the Minister of Defense of the Netherlands, Dr. Van Mierlo, has decreed that this category of courageous people deserve the right to wear the Orange Lanyard award that earlier was awarded to the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions when they received the highest Dutch Order for Valor. You had to wait 38 years for the recognition that your valor was at no lower level than that of the troops you carried which of course is too long. I apologize for that. But, let it be symbolic for the friendship between our Nations that your recognition comes in the year in which we commemorate the fact that two hundred years ago diplomatic relations were established between your country and my country. It was in 1782 that John Adams became the first envoy to Holland.

"I will read the Ministerial Order now and then present the Orange Lanyard to each of you."



Ray and one of the WWII German pilots invited to the Reno reunion. Quite a moment for these two pilots meeting one another. There were few dry eyes in the house that night.

Photo by Cathy L Welty

LIST OF THOSE RECEIVING ORANGE LANYARD

Deceased - Awarded to members of family; Samuel H. Green, Houston, Texas; Barclay Larkins, Holt, Michigan.

Awarded in Holland in May, 1982: William Marks, Don McKinley, Connie Nanartonis, William Richey, T. V. Sampson, John Hauselt, Roy Barbata, William Edwards, John D. Hill

Awarded at Reno: Harold Axelson, Harry Andrews, Drew Anderson, Albert W. Adams, Clyde Akers, Eddie Anderson, Leolin Brush, George Brennan, Elmer Bacon, Mel Brockman, Kenneth Bowers, Richard Bowling, Thomas Berry, Wade Beckwith, Werner Birkelbach, Oscar Benson, Clifford R. Buck, Raymond Bean, Robert L. Bowman, Ralph Bridges, Richard Batlan, Robert B. Beasley, Garth Caldwell, Leo Cordier, Robert Coleman, Marion O. Case, Clayton J. Cederwall, Jack Cassidy, Robert H. Coffey, Robert Coe, Carson E. Crabtree, Bernie Cantwell, Neil Clark, A. J. Chevalier, Kenneth Dressler, Milton Dank, James Drain, John Dorr, Vearl Day, Dan Donovan, James DiPietro, Robert Deuster, Wendell H. Drefke, Kenneth Ensor, Harry Engel,

Samuel Fine, Harry Furr, Newton Foster, Dick Fort, Frank Fornear, Shelby Folland, Harold Farr, John M. Foss, William Foster.

Clifford Gahm, Lee Gardiner, Carl Gwartney, Oliver C. Faris, Dale Flynn, Norman Gates, Joe Gilwreath, Joe Horchler, Louis Hamilton, John Hinman, Paul Huxhold, Haskell Hazelwood, John C. Hulme, Stuart W. Hawkins, Gene Holley, A. W. Hoyt, Jack R. Hamm, Thomas Hurd, John C. Hanscom, Edward L. Hilliard, Ray Hoersch, Warren Hill, Leo Hansen, Earl Ivie, Danon Judevine, George H. Johnson, Edward Klein, Anthony Kolka, Milton Kamenitz, Arnold Ketner, W. D. Knickerbocker, Charles W. Konopa, Lyle B. Kinney, Jack Lockhart, Jack Lester, Richard G. Leverling, John B. Lamb.

John F. Lawton, John Lowden, Richard Larson, Clifford Lewis, Greg Van London, Hugh B. Long, George L. Lindner, Otto Lyons, Martin Laffey, James Magee, Ketih Manfull, Robert Meyer, R. C. Moore, William Meisburger, James Melle,

Theo Moore, H. S. McVey, Gerald McDonald, Thomas McGrath, William McDonald, Paul McCollum, Bill McFadden, John A. Neary, Donald D. Martin, C. Nuessler, Verne Ogden, Earl Owens, Dale Oliver, Steven S. Place, Richard Poggensee, Stanley Plekowski, Ring Ringdahl.

Eric Rafter, Richard Redfern, Isaac E. Rhodes, Oran Ramsey, Jack Rice, L. C. Riley, S. Tipton Randolph, Leon Rounds, Louis Schlatterer, C. B. Slaughter, Marshall Shaut, Robert Scobie, Jess B. Sylvis, Keith Silver, Horace Sanders, Harvey Seiple, Thornton C. Scofield, George Scheier, John Schumaker, Guy Snyder, Philip Schott, Bruce Stitzinger, Robin Savitzky, Bryan Sims, Larry Sidler, Earle Shoup, Robert Small, Harry Sweeney, Norman Thomson, T. Travers, David Truman, William Toland, James Townsend, Howard Thompson, Robert A. Tisdale, Robert B. Vaughn, Robert D. Vocke, Earl L. Stay, Doug Wilmer, Darlyle Watters, Wayne Weber, Ray J. Welty, Keith Woodward, John H. Wesley, Orville Welch, Lambert Wilder, George Williams, Burnis Watts, Lou Zeiden.

Glider Pilot Reunion in St. Louis Draws Record Crowd and Plaudits

The curtain has fallen on another | bers. They were Tom and Gerry Berry,

● Another Milestone !
**ST. LOUIS REUNION RATED
TOPS BY VISITING GPS**

Five Executive Council Positions Are Decided at Annual Reunion in Dayton

The largest number of Executive Council positions since the original election of the council in St. Petersburg, Florida in 1974 were decided at the recent Dayton, Ohio reunion on October 10, 1987. A total of five council posts filled with one incumbent being re-elected, one acting position verified, two new councilmen winning seats, and a new National Wing Commander being appointed. Primarily this situation was

brought about by the vote of the members to eliminate the past NWC from the council and replace that position with an elective spot. Since the council was expanded to nine members several years ago, with two posts permanent and two appointive, that has left only five positions open for general elections, two places in odd years, and three places in even years. With the adoption of the amendment eliminating the past NWC



At the Reno reunion in 1982- it was a chance to enjoy a glitzy, glamorous experience.

Photo by Cathy L. Welty

22nd NATIONAL GP REUNION IN DALLAS LURES RECORD CROWD

No successful meeting of this scale can be accomplished without a lot of work on the part of many people. The hotel management and personnel were the best. Service was simply excellent. On behalf of the association, many thanks are extended to the Sheraton Park Central. But beyond that, the chairpersons, LeRoy and Yvonne Erwin, wish to thank most sincerely those who worked so dilligently to bring about this most enjoyable weekend. Their gratitude goes to: Frank and Mary Kehr, Ray and Patricia Welty, Stuart and Helen Crow, Robert and Eloise Hall, John and Bernie Schumacher, Bill and Patsy Lane, Judge Harry Loftis, Evelyn Merryman-Jean Kennedy, Margaret Hampson, Lois Warriner, Charles Giallanza, George Brennan, Helen Conger, Cathy Chandler, Helen O'Hara, Phyllis Sanders, Bill Horn, Doug Wilmer, Jane Cook and our guiding light — Ginny Randolph.



Members of the glider pilot association's OSHKOSH '92 TEAM are joined by former World War II Glider Pilot and Experimental Aircraft Association Board Chairman Paul Poberezny in front of the restored CG4A fuselage from the Kalamazoo, Michigan Aviation Museum. The fuselage was on exhibition in the glider pilot pavilion at Oshkosh, WI during the 1992 EAA Airshow. The glider pilots of WWII were one of the featured groups at this year's convention. Left to right (top row): Bill Horn, Kenneth Rathke, Darlyle Waters, Douglas Wilmer, Paul H. Poberezny, and Richard J. Redfern. Bottom row: Theo L. Moore, Melvin N. Piner, Gilbert H. Slaughter, Shirley R. Hartline (82nd A/B), and Otto Lyons, Jr.

DECEMBER, 1995

WWII "VICTORY REUNION" IN ATLANTA SHOWS DROP IN ATTENDANCE! IS THIS OMEN OF THINGS TO COME ??

GLIDER PILOTS RECIEVE AWARDS FOR ACTION AT "BURP GUN CORNER"

Glider pilots who took part in the ground action at Wesel, Germany, during the VARSITY mission were finally recognized for their unique action when the Air Force approved the issuance of four Silver Stars and two hundred and eighty five Bronze Stars to all those who engaged a persistent enemy under the flag of the 435th Troop Carrier Group's Provisional Combat Team. Led by the 435th Group Glider Officer Major Charles O. Gordon, of Johnsons TN, many glider pilots from other units were attached to the 435th unit for duty. The 434th Group furnished a contingent of TDY glider pilots since 47s flew paratroopers on the mission. Surprisingly, in addition to 70 dual-rated paratroopers "teered" for this

performed well. For most of them it was their first taste of combat, especially ground action and they proved to have the 'right stuff,' and their lack of basic airborne combat skills.

Next the citations for the Bronze Star medals were read. Each awardee received an enclosed Certificate and a copy of the General Order awarding the medal. General Dula then had each recipient step forward, and he individually pinned the medal and made a few personal remarks of thanks to each man. Receiving remarks of thanks to each

The 75th Squadron
Joseph R. Lanou, (accepted by his son, Rick Lanou), Grady W. Miller, Jr., Charles T. Nuessler, (accepted by his daughters Pamela Nuessler and Judith Kondon), Charles F. Lucas, Jr.

76th Squadron
Walter C. Knapp, Alvin F. Holderbecker, Richard F. Jasionkowski, Robert N. Kennedy, (accepted by his widow, Virginia), Kennerly, (accepted by his widow, Virginia), Raymond T. Swanson, (accepted by his widow, Margaret), Drew S. Anderson, Jack E. Lambrecht, Noel D. Addy, Emil J. Babuska, John W. Branch, Delbert C. Elkins, James A. Peninger, Marvin B. Sullivan, (accepted by his son, Daniel).

77th Squadron
Garnett F. Holland.

vice in 1947, the U. S. Army reserved the right of awards on all former USAAF personnel to everything except the DFC and the Air Medal. Also no recommendations older than 1950 were to be considered. Waivers had to be secured for all that before Major Gordon could even start the process. Needless to say, it was done and the "mission accomplished" flag flew at full staff. Again, on May 25, 1995 the recommendations were made to the Headquarters AF Personnel Center, Awards and Decorations Department, Randolph Field, Texas and backed by approvals from General Ronald Fogleman who said, "I am very interested in getting recognition for veteran pilots who set our Air Force on the path to success . . . there is enough information archived to pursue a decoration for these outstanding aviators." The awards received an OK on August 21, 1995. In addition to the 285 Bronze Stars, there were four Silver Stars awarded to F/O Elbert Jella, F/O C. L. Deshurley, F/O A. N. Hurlev, F/O Robert Campbell. Plans . . . ately

SEE GLIDER
78th Squadron
Carl F. Heires, Willard C. Woods, Carley E. Bilbrey, Jr., William K. Horn, Neal W. Jamieson, Raymond Jansen, Jack G. Murphy, Thomas E. Pleger, Earl A. Davis, Steven B. Painter, Jr., Donald C. O'Neil.

As you may imagine, it was an emotional evening for the recipients as they shared this moment with old comrades of fifty years ago.

1996 PORTLAND, OREGON GLIDER PILOT REUNION DRAWS VERY HIGH PRAISE

The 1996 GP Association reunion held in Portland, Oregon October 2-5, drew high praise from those attending. Although the attendance was down from past reunions to slightly over 300, those that did attend called it one of the best reunions in recent years. Reunion Co-chairmen Russ Houghton and Charles Anderson, along with their hard-working committee members, out did themselves in putting on a "great" show. The facilities were excellent, the service and food top-notch, and the people friendly. What more could one ask? Topping it all off was the trip down to Hubbard, Oregon to see the two beautifully restored CG4A gliders brought back to life by Jack Lenhardt and his co-horts under the banner of Lenair Restorations. This visit to this small private airport where a grand show was put on for our entire group had to be the highlight of the reunion. More about that elsewhere in this issue.

The reunion got off to a good start on Wednesday, October 2 when the remaining hardy golfers in our association showed up for the annual tournament which unofficially began the festivities. Dick Sheehan was the first to tee off and the golfing included Cl...

**1997 MEMPHIS REUNION
CHALKS UP HIGH MARKS
FOR A "GOOD ONE"**

December, 2000

Reunion in Ft. Lauderdale Hailed as a Great Success

By Virginia Randolph

The 30th National Reunion held at the Embassy Hotel in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida was a great success. Everyone had a suite with a bedroom and living room. Each room boasted a TV set, the living room was furnished with a couch, chairs, a wet bar, a refrigerator, and coffee maker. All rooms opened onto a balcony overlooking a beautiful atrium where a complimentary breakfast was served every morning and cocktails every evening. Having everyone together for breakfast each morning was an excellent way to start the day.

The highlight trip of the reunion was the Friday afternoon trip to the docks in Ft. Lauderdale where we boarded the "Jungle Queen" for a trek through the canals of millionaire's row. The waterfront mansions and yachts were magnificent. We visited an island and had a delicious chicken and waffles dinner. Entertainment was funny. The quiet was broken by many music of special. small age 7

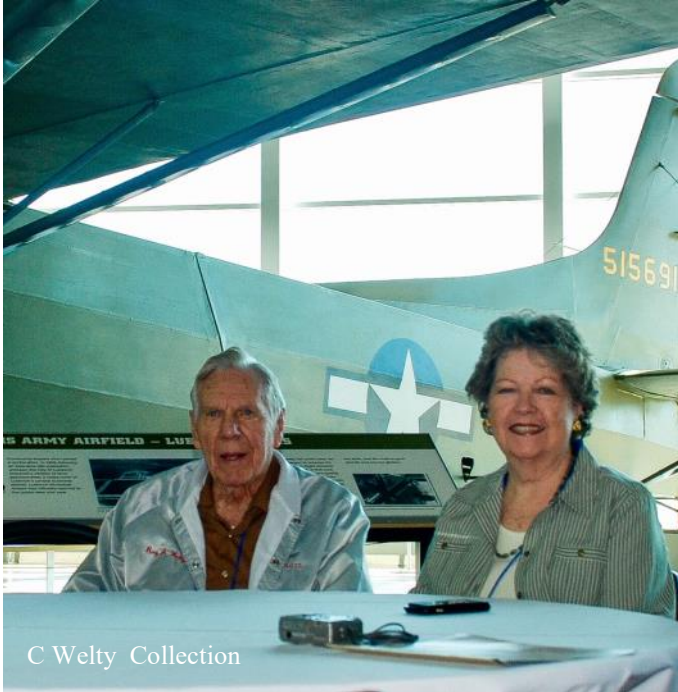
REUNION

The 2001 Annual Reunion was held in Branson, MO, November 8th to November 11th 2001. Ginny Randolph was Chairperson with help from Tip Fitzgeralds. There were 197 present in spite of the September 11th terrorist attack on the U.S.A. Thursday registration day also quite a few members arrived early so they could attend some of the shows. Dave Trexl spent the day at the airport Springfield greeting our members their flights arrived and advising the about our bus schedule to Branson. See Reunion Page

WING-2 NEWSLETTER

By Wing-2 Commander Ray J. Welty
Greetings to Everyone,

I am happy to report that the National WWII Glider Pilots had a great reunion this year. It was held in Branson, MO where everyone could see some of the finest entertainment in the country. Patricia and I really outdid ourselves by seeing Yakov Smironoff, the great Russian comedian who kept everyone laughing throughout the entire show. The Andy Williams Show which was equally great, and Shoji Tabucki, the greatest fiddler that you ever hope to hear, and the Radio City Rockets who put on a wonderful Christmas show.

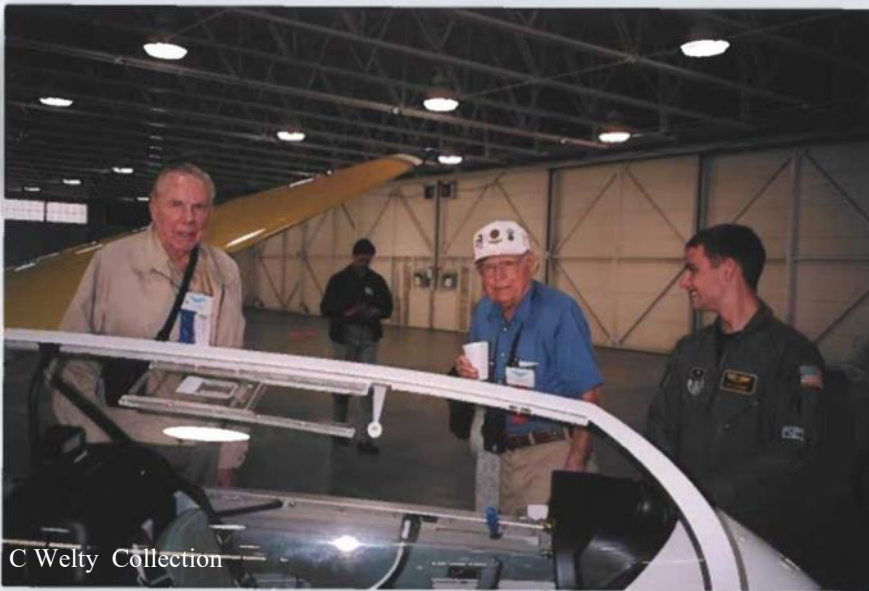


C Welty Collection

REUNION No. 32 (2002)
 Thursday, October 17, 2002 the glider pilots gathered in Lubbock, TX. Douglas Flynn and Otto Lyons were co-chairmen. The occasion was the opening of the new "Silent Wings Museum" at the former South Plains Army Base. There were approximately 750 glider pilots, friends and relatives present. ... The official opening ceremony was held on Saturday morning with the glider pilot group in attendance...

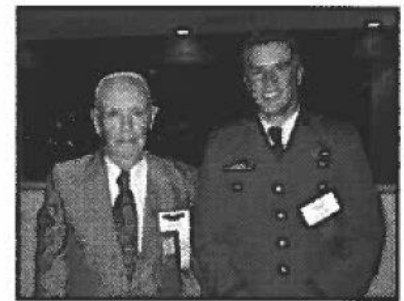
Ray and Patricia back in Lubbock for the dedication of the Silent Wings Museum.

36th Annual Reunion of the National World War II Glider Pilots Association



C Welty Collection

Ray Welty and a fellow glider pilot with a Cadet at the Air force Academy



George Theis with guest Cadet 1st Class Will Parks



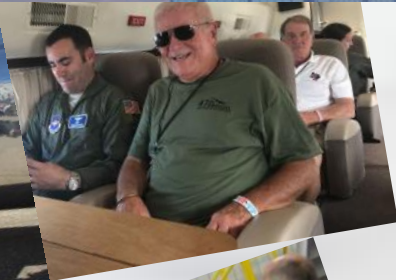
Glider pilot Ray Welty and his wife Patricia of San Antonio, Texas stopped by the museum on September 26 on their way to the NWWIIQPA Reunion.



Guy Snyder and Michael Samek at the Wing Commanders Meeting

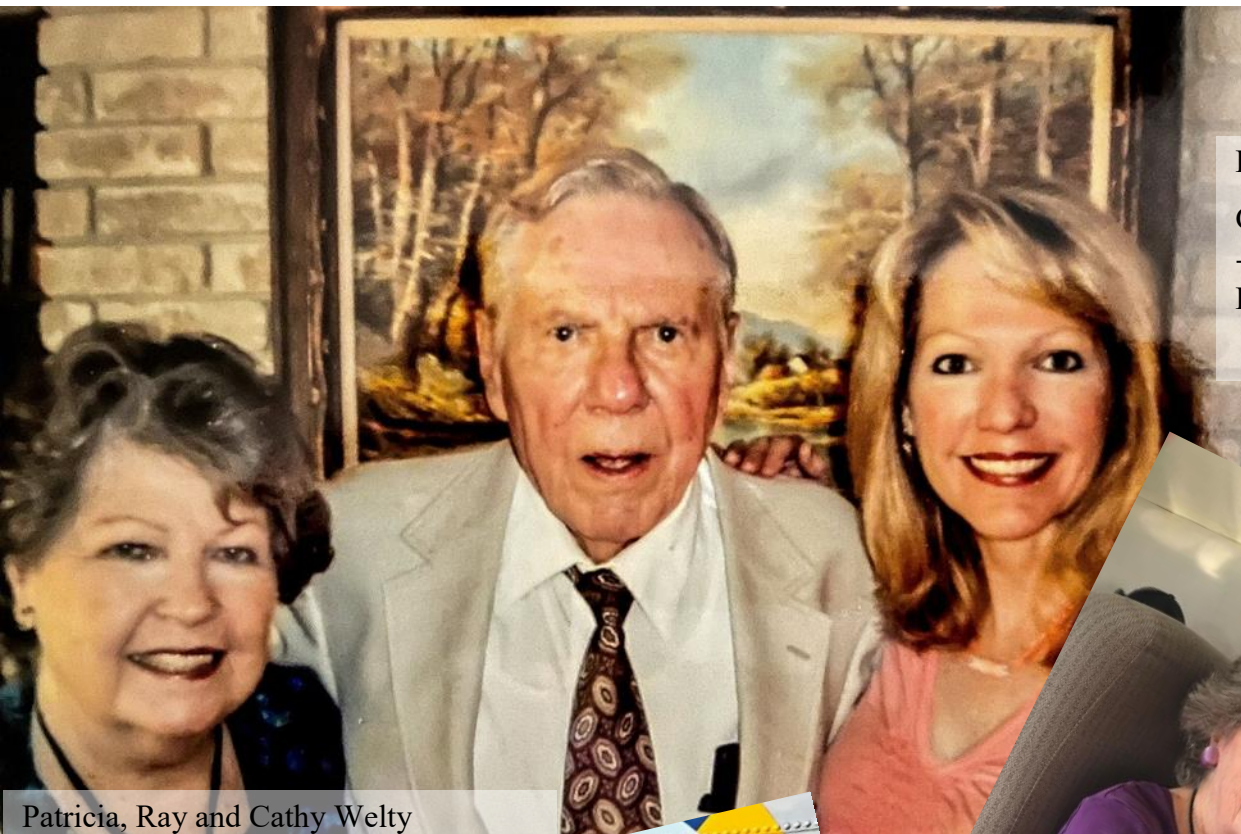


Verbon and Mary Houck pose with the USAF Academy falcon mascot at the USAF football game



Photos by Cathy L Welty

Cathy is a Photographer
- Storytelling through
Photography



Patricia, Ray and Cathy Welty
Photo by Chandler Welty





Ray at his final Reunion in Lubbock.
(2010)
Photo by Cathy L Welty

BROTHERS

BY HANS DEN BROK

AIRBORNE TROOP CARRIER RESEARCHER



During WWII it was common for brothers to serve in the armed forces. One such pair is Maj. George Preddy, an ace in the 8th Air Force, and Lt. William Preddy, both buried at Lorraine American Cemetery. This article is about the Coutts brothers, who were fortunate to have a reunion in Germany in 1945. While researching my book, "A Breathtaking Spectacle (Volume 2)," this story came into view.

Missing in Action

2nd Lt. Harold K. Coutts was from Paupack, PA. He had entered the service on 27 February, 1943. After training and a furlough, he went overseas. He was with the 614th Bomb Squadron (Heavy), 401st Bomb Group (Heavy) where he flew B-17 bombers.

On April 18, he and his crew departed Station 128 Deenethorpe for Traunstein in Germany. This was his 26th mission. Harold, as co-pilot, and his nine other crewmembers flew B-17G number 43-38646. The crew's names are as follows:

1st Lt. Eugene A. Vielman (pilot)
2nd Lt. Harold K. Coutts (co-pilot)
2nd Lt. James J. Stalzer (navigator)
S/Sgt. Peter Orlando (Chin turret operator)
S/Sgt. James A. Retzlaff (radio operator)
S/Sgt. Edwin D. Schwarz (top turret)
Sgt. Kenneth E. Hobson (ball turret)
Sgt. Joseph E. Rutkowski (tail turret)
S/Sgt. David M. Hay (waist gunner)
S/Sgt. Joseph S. Allaire (RCM operator)

Observers from other aircraft reported that 2nd Lt. Coutts' #4 engine was feathered at 1310 Hours and his #3 engine was similarly feathered at 1416 Hours. They were approximately four minutes from reaching their Initial Point. At that moment, Coutts' aircraft swerved out of formation. The plane quickly lost about 3,000 feet and released its bomb payload. The home base received a message that one of the escorting fighter pilots had seen nine men bail out near Crailsheim.

Resupplying

On April 25 in the same year, 2nd Lt. George E. Coutts landed his C-47 at an airstrip in Germany. George was a pilot with the 88th Troop Carrier Squadron, 438th Troop Carrier Group. He was born in November, 1921 in Wisconsin. Two years after he was born the family returned to Paupack, PA. There he went to Paupack Grade school, and on to Hawley High School where he graduated in 1939. After graduating high school, he studied agronomy at Penn State University where he was also a proud cadet of the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps, and a member of the Scabbard and Blade honorary military society. He graduated in December, 1943. His Army career took him to Fort Benning where he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant. At that point he was part of the 188th Glider Infantry

Regiment, 11th Airborne Division. After he received his commission, he was transferred to the Army Air Corps.

In December 1944, George moved to England and was assigned to the 88th Troop Carrier Squadron, 438th Troop Carrier Group. His first flight overseas was on January 4, 1945, which was also his first flight since November 6 of the previous year. He flew the resupply drop for Patton's troops at Prüm on February 14. On March 24 he flew the Rhine mission as co-pilot on C-47 42-93003. The crew's names are listed below:

1st Lt. Andrew Chambers (pilot)
2nd Lt. George Coutts (co-pilot)
T/Sgt. Dennis Holliday (crew chief)
S/Sgt. John Salisbury (radio operator)

They were flying chalk # 90, the last aircraft of serial A-2, dropping 18 paratroopers. This was followed by [resupply missions](#) to airfields in Germany, to bring the much-needed gasoline and other supplies that kept the United States Army rolling east. For a period, these resupplies were regarded as combat missions.

On the 25th of April, 1945, George flew two supply mission to R-44 at Goppingen in Germany. It was on George's second trip that he met his brother, Harold, and heard the story of what had happened to him. George had not yet heard that his brother was missing in action. Word had, however, reached back to their home, and the parents of the brothers. The fact that news traveled slowly in those days is evident when we examine a letter sent to 2nd Lt. George Coutts by his father. Dated May 5, the letter from the boys' father mentions that their parents had received a telegram from the government. The telegram stated that Harold was missing in action. Plainly the boys' father did not want to upset George, and it is clear from the letter that the message was written in hope – hope of gaining further information about what had happened to Harold. The name given to the B-17, Be Coming Back, was also one of hope and was mentioned in the letter. Such letters are touching to read, especially when combined with these details.

25 April 1945

34 aircraft despatched to R-44 carrying 173,000 pounds of rations and 94,000 pounds of gasoline. Four American POW were taken to Y-78 and one returned to A-79. Total flying time: 130 hours 10 minutes.

Airplane 174 being transferred to the 97th Service Team for salvage.

Entry of the 88th Troop Carrier Squadron diary. Note that not all seven ex-POW's were flown back.

4	25	"	R-26, Bayreuth, Ger.	"
4	25	"	A-7 R-44, Goppingen, Ger.	"
4	25	"	"	C-47 "B"

Entry of Lt. George Coutts' logbook. Two flights to Goppingen in a C-47B.



Lt. George Coutts, S/Sgt. John Q. Salisbury (radio operator) and S/Sgt. Dennis O. Holliday (crew chief) during a resupply mission into Germany.

INDEX

Harold's Experience in Germany

Bailing out of the B-17, 2nd Lt. Harold Coutts landed in a pine tree. When he climbed out of the branches, he switched his flying boots for GI shoes and moved off into a thicket to take stock of the situation. In about 30 minutes he was approached by a youth who trained a machine pistol on him. Harold was captured, unarmed and turned over to SS men at Ellwangen.

At Ellwangen he was interrogated for two hours. He remained at that place for the night and was taken to Ulm by bus the next day. There he was turned over to the Wehrmacht. One night Harold and six other Americans were driven to Biberach. For unknown reasons, the POWs were then returned to Ulm. There they were liberated by the 10th Armored Division and 44th Infantry on April 24, 1945.

The group of American POWs included two medics from Ellwangen, a P-47 fighter pilot named Captain Jones, and various members of Harold's crew. The names of the POW B-17 crew members were not

listed. However, their functions were. According to those records we are able to infer that the members of Harold's crew included in the POW group were: 2nd Lt. James J. Stalzer (navigator), Sgt. Kenneth E. Hobson (ball turret) and Sgt. Joseph E. Rutkowski (tail turret).

Meeting at Goppingen

On April 25, 1945 the liberated men rode to Goppingen on GI trucks, guarding German POWs. "It was the day after we were freed that I spotted some Troop Carrier planes," said Harold.

At the field Harold recognized the 88th Squadron code, M2, and tracked down his brother.

Harold yelled, "Hey lieutenant, how about a ride to France?" Lt. George Coutts, without turning around, replied with the question, "Any orders?" This answer was short and out of character.

George then asked, "What's your name?"

"Lt. Coutts," came the reply. George and Harold Coutts met and took the advice of the airplane's name: "Stand up and Cheer."

It seems that George flew that mission with C-47 43-49030, a C-47B. His logbook was signed by Lt. Chambers.



Lieutenants George (left) and Harold Coutts posing in front of "Stand up and Cheer."

Capt. Jones and the three B-17 crewmembers were dropped off at the fighter strip of Capt. Jones' outfit at Worms. Harold flew along to the 438th Troop Carrier Group base at Prosnes. During the flight he even piloted the C-47 with his brother.

Aftermath

Two days later, April 27, 1945, George and Harold flew to Paris for a two-hour interview with American radio broadcaster Ted Malone. This turned into a 15-minute broadcast about how the two brothers met. After touring Paris and spending the night at the 53rd TCW HQ at A-55, George went back to his unit while Harold went to Le Bourget for his return trip to England.

During these events, the communication with the homefront was pacing up behind the scenes. Letters sent from Europe to the States crossed those that were coming to Europe. Both brothers sent a letter to their parents on 27 April, even before their father sent his first letter to George to tell him that his brother was MIA.

In the letter to his parents, Harold wrote,

"Right now we are about ready to go to Paris. As far as we know we are to make a radio broadcast, a meeting like ours doesn't happen every day.

-continued next page-



Probably taken at the Operations Room of the 438th TCG, the two brothers point out on a map the area where it all happened. It looks like Harold's finger is on the town of Ulm.

[INDEX](#)

**Harold and George in
the door way of a C-47**

When I get back to England I'll let you know more about my experiences, unless I have the good fortune of being returned to the States right away.

There is no need to worry about what had happened to me. I wasn't in a concentration camp or even a regular POW camp. I also received good treatment and enough to eat. In fact, I think it was really a valuable experience. I'll be even more sure of that if I get home in the near future."

George goes into more detail in his 27 April letter.

"Day before yesterday I flew a released POW by the name of Harold Coutts from an advanced German airfield to my home base in France. Yes, that's the way it is, and it is a screwy war, isn't it?

He came to the small field we were operating from and happened to recognize our squadron insignia from our 'get together' in England. So it was he suddenly appeared in the companionway of my C-47 cockpit. He was a rough looking character with a week's growth of beard, blood-shot eyes, and carrying a huge Nazi flag. On either side he carried a pistol for war trophies, which he seemed to be prouder of than any other single thing. He was a cocky, scrappy little cuss, and I'm just now able to handle him in the old way. Nevertheless, he had received good treatment at the hands of the Germans and is in a good shape. We flew together out of Germany, and I landed him in France. The whole affair has been quite a novelty and several photos of us have been taken. Keep your eyes on all of the hometown papers because our intelligence officer plans to send a story through.

Harold has been spending a couple of days with me, but probably tomorrow he will leave through channels for a return to England."



Six days later, Mr. Coutts Sr. wrote another letter to his son George. The joy comes through in the letter.

“It is perhaps with a clearer eye that I can pen these few lines to you, but probably not as clear a head, for the events the past 14 hours have made me giddy. First your letter about the rescue of Harold, it is even impossible for me to even begin to tell you the joy of thankfulness the welcome words from you and Harold brought to us here at home...”

The news that Harold was safe, and to think that his Bro was the one who brought him out of Germany is more like a dream than a reality, and has been the cause of the shedding of buckets of tears of joy and expressions of thankfulness to the Almighty for his protection and deliverance. May he guide and protect you always.

Mother, upon receiving the great and glorious news first called the Milford office to let me know, then she called the high school to let Donald and Dick know, then she got most of the folks down the road on the

phone together, and read them the letter [from Harold]. From then on wires were hot. The news spread like wildfire. The second event of the past 24 hours was a letter from the cocky tree rooster himself, written May 4, the day we received word of his missing (I hope the letter I wrote you at the time and which you must have received by now has not caused you too much concern especially about us, in as much as you are so familiar with the events of the occasion). My, my, Bud I am overwhelmed with so much good news...”

The war was ending. George’s flights during those last days, and the first of peace, included flying Bob Hope's entourage during a USO tour.

After the war in Europe ended and troops had been sent back to the USA, George was in Paupack on a 30-day furlough anticipating deployment to the Pacific when Japan surrendered. He continued on reserve status for several years, attaining the rank of Captain, but resigned due to an expanding list of job responsibilities and a growing family. ■

¹ In his memoirs George Coutts mentioned he flew ship ‘030, a new C-47B, named “Stand up and Cheer.” “Stand up and Cheer” seems to be C-47 42-100760 which was flown earlier in the war by Capt. Earl Jackson. C-47 43-49030 was another aircraft within the 88th Troop Carrier Squadron. It is possible that the photo opportunity with the nose art ‘Stand up and Cheer’ caused this mix up of the two aircraft.

Sources:

Flight log book

Flying diary

The Scranton Republican – April 19 1945, Scranton, PA

The Wayne Independent – 12 May 1945, Honesdale, PA

All photos from the collection of George Coutts

A very special thanks to the daughter of George Coutts who provided me the core information for this special story.



Hans den Brok with WWII C-47 Pilot Neal Earl, October 2014 .

Hans is one of the founders of the Leon B Spencer Research Team . He has been researching Airborne Troop Carrier history for over twenty years. He has been instrumental in providing the history for many of the memorials that dot the Netherland

landscape. During his research he has authored several books: *Wings of Freedom*, *Battle of Burp Gun Corner*, *Troop Carrier Nose Art in the ETO: 1944-1945*. Currently he is co-authoring *A Breathtaking Spectacle* and in 2019 published the first volume, *A BREATHTAKING SPECTACLE: A Written and Pictorial History of IX Troop Carrier Command in England During WWII, Volume 1: The 52nd Troop Carrier Wing*. Recently, he completed a series of booklets that he titles *Market Flights* covering the Operation codenamed “Market”, for each Troop Carrier Group. Hans is a native of the Netherlands and lives in the town of Oss.

LOCATING FLIGHT OFFICER ROBERT CHARLES HALL

—FROM THE JUNGLES

BY: CAPT. TREVOR SHIMULUNAS (USMC)



Photo captured from newsreel taken by the Signal Corps, Army Pictorial Center, National Archives. 4:37-4:46

"Return of Former Japanese Prisoners' shows a large group of American & British prisoners from Rangoon Central Jail that were force marched from Rangoon to Pegu, Burma then abandoned by the Japanese. It shows the newly freed men relaxing, smoking and eating. Also shows the men being issued new British clothing."

—————From researcher Leslie Roane.



Readers, when last we met, I explained the details of the 1st Air Commando Group in Burma, and their mission: Operation THURSDAY. To briefly recap, THURSDAY's objective was to allow Allied troops to penetrate behind Japanese lines in order to allow the resupply of beleaguered Chinese forces resisting the Japanese occupation. Overwhelmingly, the mission was a success, though not without cost. Landing zones were seized, and supplies began to flow as British and Indian Chindit guerillas prosecuted objectives behind the Japanese lines.

In the course of the Research Team's efforts, we often catalogue MIA and KIA names from National Archive reels. We also regularly research the careers of our glider pilots on behalf of their descendants. On rare, exciting occasions, there are mysteries that unravel. The story of F/O Robert Hall is one of the latter.

F/O Hall was a glider pilot assigned to the 1st Air Commando Group during Operation THURSDAY, the secret Allied invasion of Burma.



“The first gliders of the 1st Air Commando Force take off from Lalaghat, India for the flight to Broadway, Burma.” —10th Combat Camera Unit, National Archives, College Park. This is Operation THURSDAY.

Northern Burma 1944

MAP SHOWING BROADWAY

BROADWAY

Office: 1/2	Slider Pilot	Gl. No.	Tom P.
Col. Scott	Taylor & Capten	1	Baker

Snippets of operation orders showing crew list and formation position.

Slider Pilot	Gl. No.	Tom P.
Newell	8P	Go
Waver & Arnold	8P	Sanborn
Bracchiello	10P	Ulery
Everett	12P	Walker
Don	12P	Triscoll
Hankins	14P	Lewis
Randall	14P	Paris
Quiz	14P	

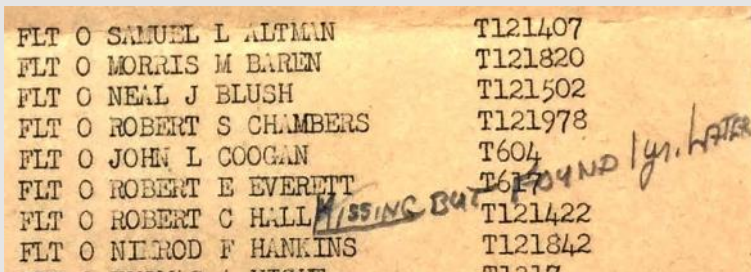
Slider Pilot	Gl. No.	Tom P.
Luk	16P	Hopler
Clements	16P	Ward
Shaw & Wh. clock	19P	Huxley
Hennie	18P	Gilmore
Newland	20P	Triskon
Johnson	20P	Wardley
Hall, M.	22P	Johnson
Gowan & Sanderson	22P	Richard
Kuenstler	24P	Benjamin
Hight & Hovey	24P	Lewis
Schritzer	26P	Holt
Moland & Henderson	26P	Berhan
Arkfield	28P	Cherry
Hedley	28P	Watts
Hedsell	30P	Baker
Scott	30P	
Googan	32P	
Chambers	32P	
Wienke	34P	



MAP SHOWING RANGOON

Hall's glider was one of many that flew in the invasion, glider number 22P. A firsthand account from one of his fellow glider pilots, Anthony Bracall, acquired by fellow researcher Keith Thoms, tells us that Bracall assumed Hall was dead. (Bracall's last name in 1944 was Bracaliello and he flew in position 10P.) As they flew their mission into LZ BROADWAY, Bracall, after landing, thought he saw Hall's glider go down in a wall of flak.

The 1st Air Commando Group records listed Hall as missing, and news of him fades during the war. It would seem most of his fellow glider pilots never learned what happened to Hall. Various accounts have



A snippet of Special order Number 53, Troop movement, 1 Troop Carrier Command, from Bowman Field, Kentucky to India shows Flt O Robert C Hall's name. Someone cared to update the list.

since been located that shed more light on this pilot's experiences.

Years after the war, a declassified Judge Advocate General (JAG) dossier¹ was located detailing the release of prisoners from Rangoon Jail in Burma. Many Allied prisoners of war were held in Rangoon Jail throughout the war. They suffered unmentionable atrocities at the hands of their Japanese captors. I will not go into detail here as to the specifics the prisoners endured by their tormentors, but suffice it to say that the prison guards were creative in their work. As Allied Forces drew near, the Japanese soldiers evacuated the healthiest prisoners and attempted to flee towards their own lines. This resulted in a 50+ mile forced march along the Old Burma Road towards Pegu, during which many more of the Allied POWs were killed or succumbed to wounds and sickness. Many were barefoot. On 30 April, 1945, the Japanese – cut off by the advancing British 14th Army – abandoned their prisoners and fled. How the prisoners escaped summary execution is unknown, though it is speculated that their Japanese captors feared retribution at this stage. The Allied prisoners were recovered by the advancing British, were clothed, fed, and treated. [Video reel footage obtained from the National Archives](#), and shared by POW researchers Matt Poole and Leslie Roane, shows a newly-freed Hall smiling with another liberated prisoner.

Among the reunions on the road were three members of the 1st Air Commando Group:

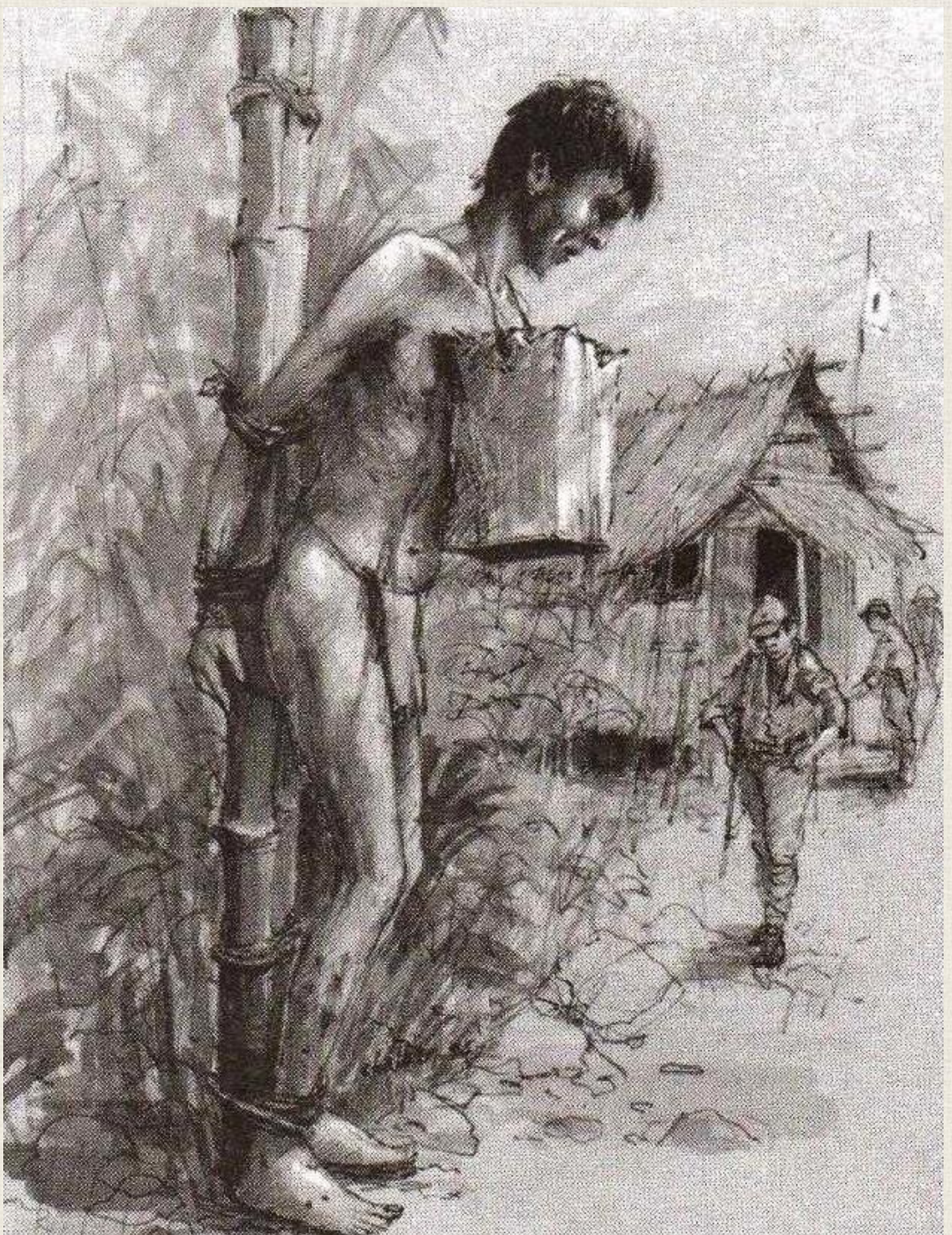
S/Sgt Robert Bicknell, of Friona, TX. (Back Left)

Cpl Fred Pugh, of Athens, TX, who was the LZ BROADWAY co-pilot for KIA glider pilot Leroy Shimulunas. (Front Middle)

And a third name, F/O Robert Hall. The three are pictured in this photo provided by Jim Miller, the son of Capt "Red" Miller who is pictured front right. (F/O Hall, Back Middle)

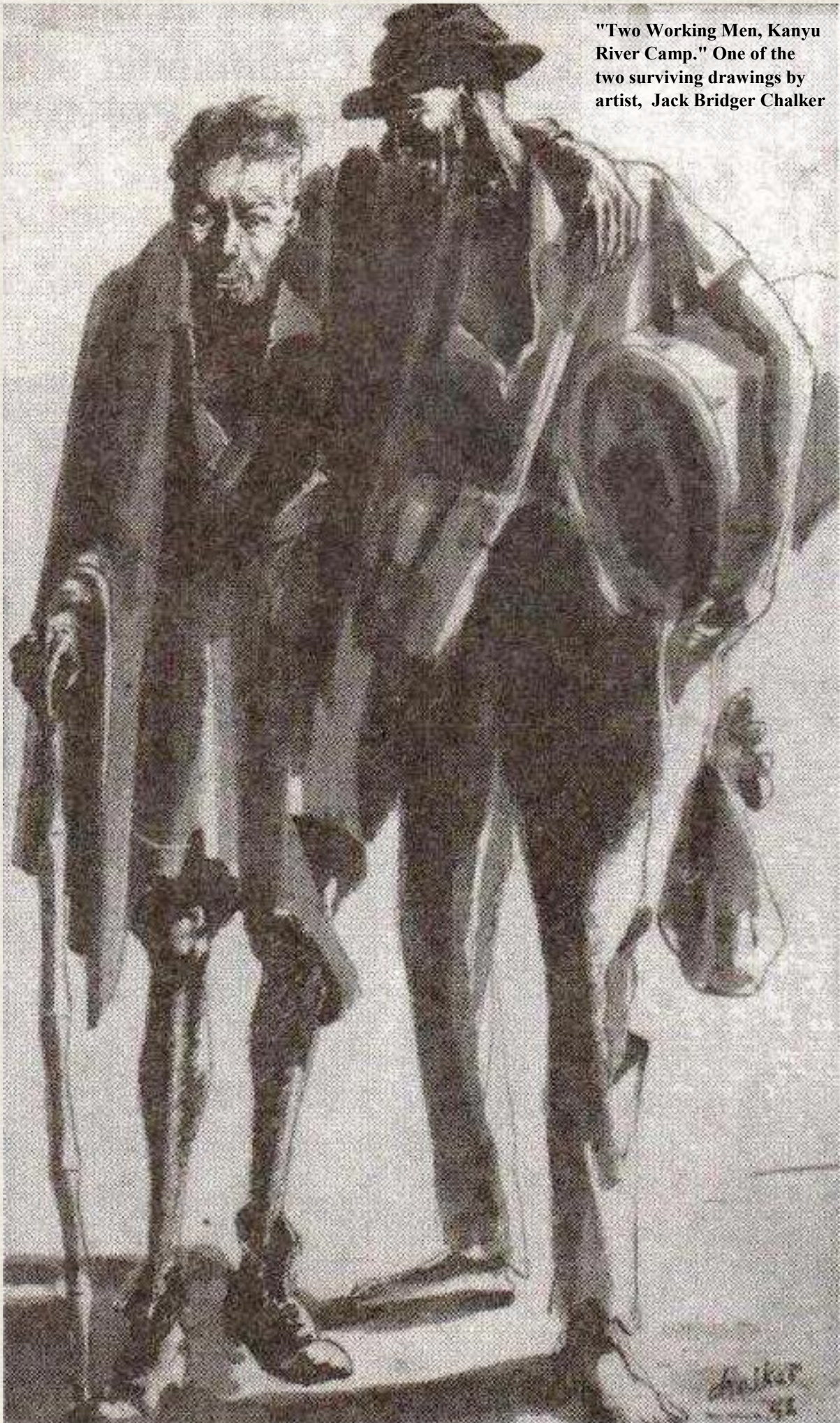
"Flight Officer Robert Hall of Spokane, Washington, S/Sgt. Robert Bicknell of Friona, TX, and Cpl. Fred Pugh of Athens, TX had been forced down behind enemy lines during the first night of the Wingate-Cochran airborne invasion of northern Burma on March 5, 1944." (Buttrick, 26)²





(Chalker) The two hand drawn pictures, "Punishment" and "Two Working Men, Kanyu River Camp." These are from an article on the prisoners being released that was put out in an ex-POW news bulletin. The artist, Jack Bridger Chalker, was interviewed and said that he drew pictures to document atrocities in the camp. One day, a Japanese guard caught him with his drawings. They beat him and made him tear them up. After the ordeal was done he noticed that these two had escaped destruction.

"Two Working Men, Kanyu River Camp." One of the two surviving drawings by artist, Jack Bridger Chalker



Records from the JAG dossier note that while F/O Hall may have been captured that first night in the jungle, the Japanese finally processed him as a prisoner on 26 March, 1944. From there he was transferred into Rangoon Jail on 10 April. After more than a year of brutal captivity, he and the other residents of Rangoon were liberated on or about 30 April, 1945.

“Hall looked confused and said, ‘Second Air Commandos? My God, is there a ‘Second’ over here now, too?’” (Buttrick, 27)²

During my research into the prisoners of war listed in the JAG file, I made contact with a group of POW researchers. I had found a reference to Hall in a newsreel from the liberation of the jail. This reel mentioned the glider pilot by name as well as provided a time stamp to where he appeared in the video. These researchers were able to provide me a copy of an ex-POW news bulletin that included interviews with those liberated. The above quote shows just how long Bob was out of the action – when he went down there was only the 1st Air Commando Group! The bulletin also details how lucky Hall and the other pilots and aircrew were to survive. Overwhelmingly the Japanese treated airmen far worse than ground soldiers.

Reading this news bulletin was like a whisper from the past. It feels so rare to uncover verbatim quotes tied to our glider pilots so long after the fact. Over 400 prisoners were liberated that day and expedited back to the United States to reunite with their families.

The communications technology of the time would largely have prevented the rest of Hall’s comrades in Burma from learning of his capture and subsequent release. For years in the community, he was thought of as MIA. Despite this, F/O Hall made it home to Spokane, WA. There are numerous paper clippings that detail a large welcoming party. Hall also received his Air Medal there for his actions in the China-Burma-India Theater, published in a newspaper article by The Spokesman-Review June 16, 1945, pictured at right.

Our quarterly briefings have highlighted a lot of excellent histories. They also detail the number of requests the Research Team receives from families. In my own research process, I get attached to names. It started with my great uncle, Leroy Shimulunas. I had exhausted all avenues on him, and so began looking into his co-pilot, Fred Pugh. Through numerous online sources I tracked down Pugh’s name in the JAG dossier. From there Hall’s story came to light. I am nearing the end of several avenues on Bob Hall, but there are still open doors.

SPOKANE MAN GETS AIR MEDAL

Flight Officer Hall in Calcutta Hospital.

F/O Robert C. Hall of Spokane, now recuperating in an army hospital near Calcutta after spending more than a year in a Japanese prison camp, has been awarded the air medal.

He was released, along with other allied soldiers, when Rangoon



Robert C. Hall.

was recaptured by the British. One evening all prisoners were given supplies and told they were to march to a new prison. After two days the Japanese left, saying their captives were released.

For example, the Spokesman Review replied to my inquiry. I am hoping they have a high resolution photo of Hall receiving his air medal in their archives. Currently, the archives are being moved and catalogued. One of their archivists told me that things would be back in order by 2022, so we may see a better photo of Hall.

In addition to the photo, and in my opinion a more exciting prospect, Matt Poole informed me that in The National Archives, London, there exists a post-war affidavit credited to R.C. Hall, in sections relating to Rangoon Jail. Archival research here has been on pause due to the pandemic, but once things open up again it should be possible to acquire that affidavit which would provide more testimony on Hall's experiences. Personally, I'm hopeful there may also be one from my uncle's co-pilot, Fred Pugh, that could shed a more firsthand light on my family history.

Thank you to all those who made this research possible, including Matt and Leslie with the POW research team, Libby with the Spokesman Review, Jim Miller for his photo, our own Keith for his interview with Anthony Bracall, and Patricia for help with photo and layout.

References:

- (1) JAG Dossier, declassified. Accessed from http://www.mansell.com/pow_resources/camplists/death_rr/deathrailwaycamplist.html
- (2) Liberated Prisoners of Pegu, by PFC Jim Buttrick

Other sources:

- Personal Orders and crew lists of John H. Price, Jr., declassified, Silent Wings Museum, Price collection
- 319th Troop Carrier Group, 1st Air Commando Record Group historical records 1943—1945 declassified. U. S. Air Force Historical Research Agency, Maxwell AFB, Alabama.
- National Archives Photos, Record Group 76; National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD.
- U.S. Air Force Historical Research Agency, Burma 1943– 1945



Trevor SHIMULUNAS
Captain, USMC
Research Assistant Leon B. Spencer Research Team
Area of Study: China-Burma-India Theater
Unit focus: 1st Air Commando Group,
319th Troop Carrier Squadron

Trevor is the great-nephew of KIA F/O Leroy Shimulunas, who was a WWII Glider Pilot in Burma during Operation Thursday. Trevor's area of study is the CBI Theater with a focus on the 319th Troop Carrier Squadron. Right after joining the LBS Research Team he published in the *US WWII Glider Pilot's Briefing (USWWIIGP Briefing)* from his research the story of his great-uncle who was killed in action during the

Burma invasion. He went on to research other members of the 319th which lead to this article on Flight Officer Hall. He helps families find their relatives' history and to provide details of the military operations in the CBI. His military experience gives a great perspective and knowledge in assisting the Research Team. Trevor is also the editor of the *USWWIIGP Briefing*. He holds a Degree in English with an emphasis on Creative Writing. We hope that he will not be on deployment as much in the near future. —Patricia Overman, National Wing Commander

HONORING OUR TROOP CARRIER MEMBERS

GERALD C BERRY	PHILIP R HOWLAND	JOHN JOSEPH MASON
FRANK T BRANDON	GEORGE M JOHNSON (RET)	JUDSON W. PITTAM
CURTIS R. CAMERON	FRANK KOLOGY *	LAWRENCE ALDEN SIDLER
BILL S CHEOLAS	JOHN LAMM	ROGER W SMITH
ERNEST E DUTCHER	FRANK LAWLER *	JACK W TEMPLIN
RICHARD T FORD	GEORGE W LOCKLIN *	JOSEPH J. TURECKY
JOHN H GEIST	FRED H LUNDE	MARSHALL W. WILLIAMS
MYRON GUISEWITE	EUGENE E MENKING	WILLIAM WEAVER
JAMES O HAMMERSMITH	JAMES W MAGEE	JAMES R WINNIE

*Have lost contact. If you know where they are please contact us

MISSIONS

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

Compiled by:
A-2 Section,
Hq, 53rd TC Wg.

391

Nathan Chancellor, researcher - F/O Thomas Bonfils Lockard Jr

Alisa Norris, granddaughter - 2nd Lt Donald Lloyd Daves

Michael C Neff, son - 2nd Lt Robert B Neff

R. Bryan Blake, grandson - F/O Robert Elmer Biggers

Graham Hall, nephew of Aunt engaged - F/O John R Bissell

Kelly Henry Chefson, granddaughter - Laverne Idus Henry

Douglas A. Gardner, son - Judson Morgan Gardner Sr

Patricia Victor, mother-in-law - F/O Orville Lloyd Hall

Terry Farrar, great nephew - F/O George John Henry Zelle

B. David Schwarze, researcher - Market Garden research

Kevin G. Hammett, nephew - George Edward Gregory

Joanne Barraclough, daughter - F/O Alex P Barraclough

Sheryl Bergstrom, daughter - Gerald F Lindsey

David Hill, nephew - John G Hill

Kees vd Loo, museum historian - F/O Roy Bailey

Skybooby, son-in-law - F/O Charles Francis Doberneck

Cathy L Welty, daughter - 2ndLt Ray J Welty**

Chuck Bell, grandson - 2ndLt James M Gamet

Raymond Linsky, son - F/O John E Linsky

Thomas Labuszewki, son - F/O Edward S Labuszewki

Lynda (Booth) Scheibel, daughter - 2ndLt John J Booth

Mike Weston, great nephew - F/O Victor J Malenfant

Leroy Bennett, son - 2nd Lt Morris J Bennett

Peter Monk, son in law - F/O Leo Joseph LaPlante

Course _____

**current member

Type _____

SECRET

Auth: CO, 53rd TC Wg.

Date: 1 Aug 1944

Initial: *AS*

C. Group,
U.S. Army,
1954.

Pilot: James B. Addison

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

OP: Donald B. Washburn

Group 437

F.O.No. 5

Time Over Target 1045 hrs

B. ENEMY ACTION

1. Type of attack

2. Enemy A/C Sighted: none

43-36664

CG-4A

Time 0735 hrs

Home Station 28 Mar 45

FROM SPECIAL ACCOUNTS

MARKET GARDEN

SEPTEMBER 23, 1944

59TH TROOP CARRIER SQUADRON

1st Lt. Lester G. Carson

The crew of 927 walked into the 59th Intelligence Officer on the afternoon of September 23rd to be interrogated. They were just returning, four days late, from a combat mission into Holland. They all wore [a] broad smile, but Lt. Mullins, the pilot, limped on his right foot. Sgt. Labelle, the radio operator, limped on his left foot. T/Sgt. Mattson, the crew chief, wore a white patch on his left ear; and Lt. Conlin, copilot, just a wide grin of satisfaction. Their plane had taken off in formation with the rest of the squadron's planes flying in "Market" 52nd Wing FO #7 mission, loaded with bundles of supplies to be dropped into Holland, just before 1300 hours on the 19th of September.

They had crossed the Channel and the Dutch border. Then Jerry cut loose. Flak was coming up on every side, but they kept on flying. It seemed they were dodging it all. And then a thud on the underside! A few moments later Lt. Mullis smelled the smoke of burning rubber! T/Sgt Mattson looked out and saw a jet of flame. A quick call to the next plane, "Is my ship on fire?" from Lt. Mullins, drew a terse answer, "Hell yes, and bail out in a hurry!" The ship was pulled out of formation. Mattson salvoed the bundles, Labelle plugged in the detonator on the radio. The pilots left their controls with a last look at the panel where the altimeter read 2500' and the speed indicator 140 mph.

They hit the silk and floated earthward, while they watched old "927" go flaming down with explosive crash and listened to the swish of rifle bullets tearing through their chutes. A passenger, T/Sgt Ly C Cry from a quartermaster Company had preceded them in their descent by several minutes.

Background Photo of Power Pilot receiving awards for Market from General Paul Williams.

They found themselves in a hedge-bordered potato patch, separated from each other by only a few hundred feet, near a highway where curious civilians were numerous. Nearby was a wooded patch infested with "krauts". They chucked their chutes into the hedge. A patrol of five American paratroopers emerged from the throng of civilians and escorted them to the nearest Dutch home where they were given food and shelter. The paratroopers left and soon returned in a captured German vehicle to deliver them to Battalion Headquarters located in a village about eight miles north of Son. Here their sprained ankles were taped and Mattson's wounded ear, hit by a bullet on his descent, was dressed. From here they were taken to Regimental Headquarter for a brief interrogation, thence to Division Headquarters at Son.

Nearby a furious battle for control of a strategic canal-bridge soon started. Headquarters building received a direct hit and the 927 crew members took shelter in the cellar of a civilian home while the battle raged on and JU 88's bombed the city. Later they retired to the local parsonage where they were fed and given beds for the night. The next morning the battle was resumed, and they were awakened by the crash of the church spire as it received a direct hit from artillery.

Later in the day they were evacuated to the 24th evacuation Hospital at Bourg Leopold. Upon being released from here they made their way to Brussels where they obtained passage by plane back to the United Kingdom.

—Source: U.S. Air Force Historical Research Agency, War Diaries, Group- 61-HI B0158- 0250

OPERATIONS

What are our members doing?

Wendy Cameron



Wendy is the daughter of Curtis R. Cameron. Every weekend she visits her father. During the height of Covid our research team started corresponding with Wendy. Patricia Overman took over the research in the end. The historical document for each month for Curtis's Squadron was very legible and very well written. Patricia asked Wendy if she thought her dad would like copies of these monthly reports. They detail what is happening in the squadron for the month. Curtis was a Glider Engineer and he was involved with the reclamation of the gliders after the Market Garden operation along with other events, which were documented each month. Due to time constraints and the work it takes to pull each month out of these huge PDF files, Patricia decided to give Wendy a couple of months at a time. So over the course of several months Wendy, during her weekend visits to her father, began reading these monthly reports, due to Curtis poor eye sight. She said he could really identify with what she was reading to him and enjoyed them very much. Patricia also had a phone interview and is planning an article soon. We commend Wendy for her thoughtfulness and being so caring to her father. They were planning on attending the reunion.

Curtis Cameron (95 TCS (9X) /440 TCG Glider Engineer, Holland Reclamation) and his daughter Wendy Cameron

Mark Vlahos



In addition to being a valuable member of our Leon B. Spencer Research Team and authoring numerous article for The Briefing, Colonel Mark C. “Plug” Vlahos (USAF – RET) is an accomplished Historian and Author. For those of you familiar with the detail that went into Mark's last book “*Men Will Come,*” A History of the 314th Troop Carrier Group 1942 – 1945 by Merriam Press, 2019; Mark has now completed the manuscript on his next work and is actively searching for a Publisher. So here is a peek under the tent. Troop Carrier Group to deploy to the ETO in 1942. Spearheading Operation TORCH, the invasion of North Africa, the Group flew the first combat Paratroop Drop in US Army History. The string of firsts continued with Aeromedical evacuation missions in North Africa. More importantly for us, during the mission the 60th Troop Carrier Group accomplished the first combat glider-tow in U.S. Army History. Later, the Group flew thousands of missions behind enemy lines in Greece, Albania and Yugoslavia as part of “the Secret War in the Balkan.” For the first time ever, these missions will be described from the U.S. Troop Carrier and Glider pilot points of view. The book will contain many never before published facts, including complete crew lists for all missions. This is one all of us will want to get. We look forward to its publication!

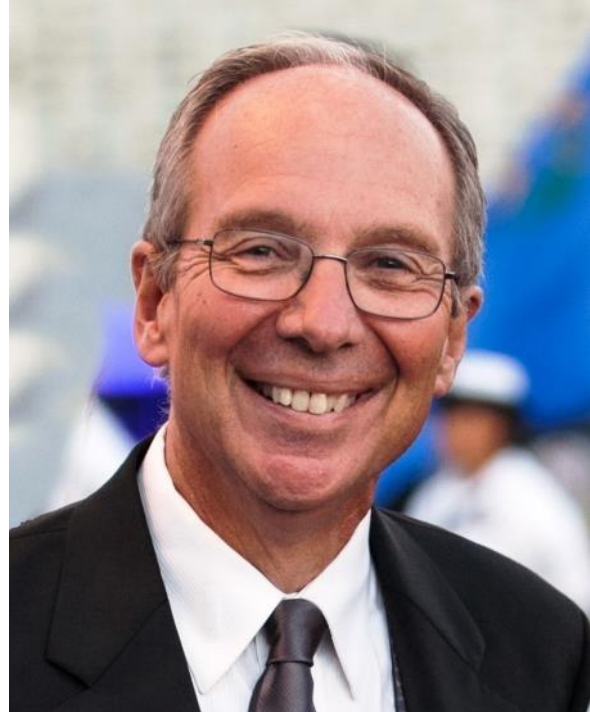
Scott McGaugh

An upcoming book about World War II glider pilots, *The Brotherhood of the Flying Coffin*, has been written and will be published next year by Osprey Publishing.

The author, Scott McGaugh, has worked closely with the Research Committee's Patricia Overman and curator Sharon McCullar extensively for more than a year. It focuses on the glider pilots' personal stories, their experiences, and reflections and is McGaugh's 11th book.

Others have included New York Times bestselling *Surgeon in Blue* (Civil War biography) and *Honor Before Glory* (Japanese American soldiers' heroics in World War II) whose movie rights have been optioned.

A publication date for *The Brotherhood of the Flying Coffin* has not yet been sent.



Albert Henry Nephew II, PhD. October 20, 1940 ~ June 27, 2021



Sadly, we lost our dear friend and long time member Al Nephew the husband of Elizabeth "Anne" Nephew, niece of KIA Flight Officer Sylvan R. Lucier who was killed on double tow training flight in England 10/13/1944. Al and Anne had been married for 57 years and attended many of the reunions. Al loved gliders and he happily flew his radio control (RC) airplane on his lake with his great grandchildren just a week before his death. His last days were spent happily preparing his many RC gliders for his grandsons.

Al had many years of enjoyment in the company of World War II glider pilots, exploring airplane hangers, visiting World War II landing sites and friendships with authors preserving glider history. Anne and Al researched endlessly to discover the truth about Anne's nephew Sylvan. Rest in Peace. Al's Obituary:

Glider lover left on a thermal

Glider lovers might enjoy the verse Al recently wrote to the song, "I'll Fly Away" this was sung at his funeral:

*"No more sink cycles, I'll fly away
Tent lifter thermals, I'll fly away
Lift cycles, I'll fly away,
Sun's warm on me, I'll fly away,
Air is rising, so am I, I'll fly away,
Skied out, going out of sight, I'll fly away,
Way downwind, too far to come back, I'll fly away."*

—Al Nephew

Al's wife, researcher Anne Nephew, at one of the many reunions. Anne and Al have generously shared historical documents with the research team.

These document have helped other families.



*Memorial Donations to the
National WWII Glider Pilots Committee
Silent Wings Museum Foundation.*

We have added a field to our donation form to allow donations to be made in memory/honor of a specific person or unit. If you donated before the field was added and you would like us to add a name to your donation please send a name to nwwiigpa@gmail.com and we will add it to the next Briefing. Thank you for helping to keep the history.

Betty Cox in memory of Van R **HATCHER**

John Laney in memory of 2ND LT JOHN ARIS **LANEY**

Mark Vlahos on behalf of the **60th and 314th TC GROUP**

Gary & Elizabeth **STRIPLING** in memory LTC **CHUCK BERRY**

Ken Lamour in memory of SSGT **ROBERT LAMOUR,**

Steve Knott in memory of F/O **GERALD D. KNOTT (KIA)**

Dale Duck in memory of F/O **ROMMIE LEROY DUCKWORTH**

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Thorn Cary in memory of F/O **THORNLEY C. CARY JR**

Craig Lecce in memory of F/O **PETER J LECCE**

Sharon Hohmann in memory of F/O **EVERARD HOHMANN**

Sharon Hohmann in memory F/O **TIM HOHMANN**

Karen Wall in honor and memory T/SGT **EDWARD WALL**

Ria Leonard in memory of F/O **THOMAS ANDREW LEONARD**

Denis Clark in memory of F/O **DANON STILLMAN JUDEVINE**

Jim Hooper in memory of FO **WILLIAM E. HOOPER**

Timothy Summers in memory of 1st Lt **ROBERT W. SUMMERS**

Alana Jolley in memory of F/O **WALTER BERT LINDBERG (KIA)**

Robert Barnes in memory of F/O **RALPH EDWARD BARNES**

Bettye Adams in memory of F/O **THURMAN MITCHELL SCOTT**

Jeff Schumacher in memory of **JOHN J. SCHUMACHER**

Dawn and Lee Gayer in loving memory of 2ND Lt **RICHARD J. ZAPP**

Bruce and Patricia Overman in memory of Maj. **LEE WHITMIRE**

Dana Harris in memory of F/O **DANON STILLMAN JUDEVINE**

Annemarie Monique Taylor in memory of Lt. Col **PAUL W. MOUSSEAU**

Mike Squillo in memory of F/O **Piero SQUILLO**



TROOP CARRIER MOVEMENT

“Keep Mobile!” See you next quarter!

JOIN OUR COMMITTEE AND HELP PRESERVE TROOP CARRIER
AND COMBAT GLIDER HISTORY

DONATE TO THE SILENT WINGS MUSEUM FOUNDATION

ON THE CALENDAR

Upcoming missions:

HOLLAND

Sept 17 - 26, 1944

BASTOGNE

December 23-27, 1944

BURMA

March 5, 1944

REMAGEN

March 22, 45

RHINE CROSSING

March 24, 1945

NORMANDY

June 6-7, 1944

LA LONDE

June 10-13, 1944

LUZON

June 23, 1945

SICILY

July 9 & 13, 1943

SOUTHERN FRANCE

July 15, 1944



Paratroopers from the 501st Paratroop Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division are getting a last minute bulletin on plans for the invasion of Holland by the Allied airborne army before stepping on the waiting C-47 Troop Carrier plane in the background. The ID nose code proudly indicates to all present that this plane will be flown by a Troop Carrier crew from the 434th Troop Carrier Group stationed at Aldermaston air field. The Chalk number 68 near the end tail lets the paratroopers know which plane they should board. This plane will be in the Serial A-6 formation to Landing Zone A located at the top of the Eindhoven sector. Photo was taken on the first day of the invasion of Holland, September 17, 1944.

—Signal Corps Photo #ETO-HQ-44-14986. Photographer: Klosterman. U.S. National Archives

COVER PHOTO: George and Harold Coutts in front of George's C-47 "Stand up and Cheer!" Photo is in the collection of George Coutts

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