



COMMEMORATIVE
AIR FORCE

THE FLYER

Commemorative Air Force
B-29 / B-24 Squadron

Watch the Skies Dallas



Warbirds incoming!

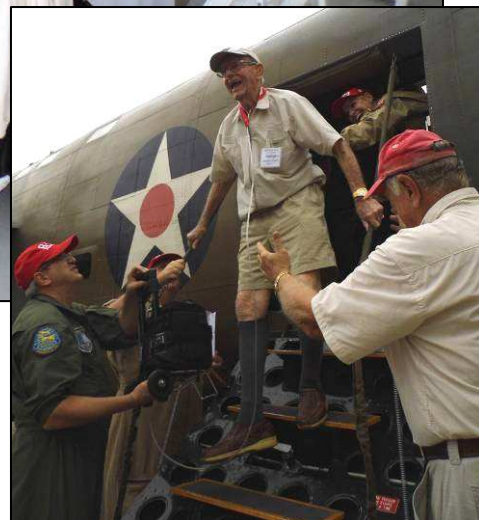
September 2014



COMMEMORATIVE
AIR FORCE

B-29/B-24 Squadron Officer & Staff Listing

Position	Name	Telephone	E-mail
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Finance Officer	Gerald Oliver	312-953-0357	goliver@behringerharvard.com
Maintenance Officer	Don Obreiter	580-471-3048	obreiter@cableone.net
Operations Officer & B-29 Tour Coordinator	David Oliver	630-853-9624	B29ops@gmail.com
Public Information Officer	Kim Pardon	913-636-6250	kmpardon@yahoo.com
Ride Captain	Jon Oliver	312-925-6184	jake8350@gmail.com
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B-24 Go Team Leader	Allen Benzing	214-707-2726	albenzing@gmail.com
B-24 Scheduling Officer	Jim Neill	214-762-5891	jakat2@verizon.net
Facility Manager	Jim Neill	214-762-5891	jakat2@verizon.net
Appearance Captain	Henry Bordelon	972-406-0644	pixiee@sbcglobal.net
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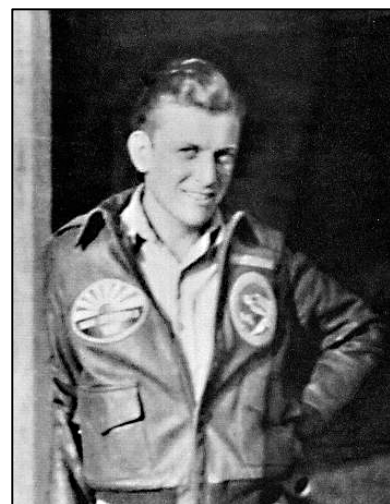
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At the 50th and final reunion of the 485th BG, 93 year-old B-24 nose gunner, Arthur Kain is all smiles after finishing a ride flight on Diamond Lil. The event took place at the Cavanaugh Flight Museum in Addison, Texas on Sept 18. Watch for more stories about the 485th in future issues of The Flyer.

Three flights were pre-booked online by families of the 485th. 15 of the remaining 23 WWII B-24 veterans in attendance took a ride on Diamond Lil.

Special Feature:
Captain Jerry Yellin
By Konley Kelley



CAF AirPower History Tour

National Air Tour of Historic World War II Aircraft



September Mini Tour			
Oklahoma City, OK	Sept 18-21	485th Bomb Group Reunion	Sept 18
Enid, OK	Sept 22-24	Cavanaugh Flight Museum	
Fayetteville, AR	Sept 25-28	Addison, TX	
CAF WWII Air EXPO		CAF WWII Air EXPO	
Dallas Executive Airport	Oct 2-5	Dallas Executive Airport	Oct 2-5
		VFM Hangar Dance, Meacham	Oct 4
Fall Tour		Fall Tour	
Midland CAF AirSho	Oct 10-12	Vicksburg, MS	Oct 16-19
Baton Rouge, LA	Oct 20-22	Baton Rouge, LA	Oct 20-22
New Orleans, LA	Oct 23-26	New Orleans, LA	Oct 23-26

For more tour stop details, go to www.AirPowerTour.org

WWII Air EXPO is just a week away!

Many members will be needed at the WWII Air EXPO scheduled at Dallas Executive Airport on October 2-5. Volunteers are needed to help at the gate, flight line safety, aircraft crew and many other jobs. Please volunteer to help. It will be a lot of fun. Help contribute to a great show at our future home in Dallas!

And, *FIFI* and *Diamond Lil* will have maintenance needs when they come home to rest for the Winter break. Please volunteer to help with maintenance needs at the VFM.

NO SQUADRON MONTHLY MEETING IN OCTOBER. The annual meeting to elect officers and present Squadron awards will be in November. Ready for some chili?



WORLD WAR II AIR EXPO

A GATHERING
OF WWII AIRCRAFT

Featuring "FIFI"

The World's Only Flying
B-29 Superfortress



OCT. 3-5
9 A.M. - 5 P.M. DAILY



DALLAS EXECUTIVE AIRPORT

FEATURING:

B-29 Superfortress
B-24 Liberator
P-51 Mustang
SB2C Helldiver
C-45 Expeditor
Military Vehicles
Vintage Cars
Aircraft Rides
Food, Drinks and More...

SPECIAL GUEST:



See the Red Tail RISE ABOVE
Exhibit and P-51C Mustang.
Watch the *Rise Above* movie
featuring Tuskegee Airmen of WWII
FREE with paid admission.

INFORMATION:

General Admission At Gate
Adults (Ages 18 and up): \$15
Youth (Ages 6 - 17): \$5
Kids (5 and under): FREE

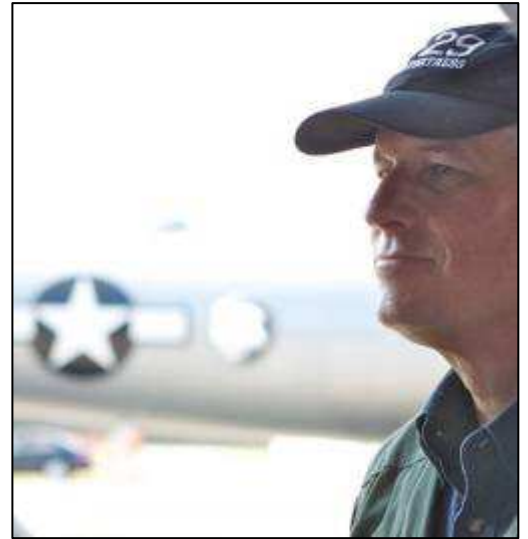
Dallas Executive Airport
5303 Challenger Dr.
Dallas, Texas 75232



www.AirPowerExpo.org

Squadron Report

Our Fall tour is off to a strong start. *FIFI's* stop in Oklahoma City was successful and *Diamond Lil* received a very warm reception in Addison at the bomb wing reunion. Our Squadron-led CAF WWII Air EXPO at Dallas Executive Airport is shaping up to be a large, special event. David Oliver has lined up a large number of the CAF's finest bombers, fighters and support aircraft. It will be one of the larger CAF events of the year. I urge everyone to come out, volunteer and be part of the fun and the success.



Then we are headed to New Orleans for the joint CAF / National WWII Museum air show at Lake Front Airport. This is very exciting because this joint effort furthers our mission and also that of the National WWII Museum. I suspect it will be a very big success too, and being in New Orleans is bound to be a lot of fun.

I would like everyone to welcome Tim Colman as our new volunteer coordinator. It is not always easy to join our unit (or any unit) and know where to start. Tim Colman will help all our new members in finding their way into our activities and find a place and a set of Squadron friends where they will be welcome. So as you recruit new members, please keep Tim in mind. Tim can be reached at: 214-708-2279 or tpcolman@gmail.com And, speaking of new members, we have added in excess of 50 in the last year, so we are all doing a good job of bringing them in. I think Tim will be busy. That said, we are especially short of volunteers in the maintenance area. If you know of anyone who can help out our crack maintenance crew, please encourage them to join. There is much to do.

Because of the many Squadron stops and air shows, there will not be a Squadron meeting in October. We will have our annual meeting in November including the chili cook off, so get your recipes and your cooking skills ready.

I hope to see everyone on the road.

Neils Agather
Squadron Leader



(L-R) Vic Agather, "Red" Erwin, unidentified man
Harlingen, mid-1970s

Executive Officer Report

Probably the most rewarding part of being associated with the Commemorative Air Force is meeting the WWII veterans and hearing their stories. On Thursday, September 18, our crew had just such an opportunity.

Veterans of the 485th BG / 15th Air Force held a reunion at the Cavanaugh Flight Museum in Addison and we were invited to bring *Diamond Lil*. There were about 30 vets and approximately 270 family members present. We did three ride flights which were all sold out. It was an honor to be able fly those folks.

One of the men attending was Mr. Robert Johnson who was shot down over Bulgaria on a Ploesti mission. He wrote a book about his crew and their harrowing adventure. They all managed to bail out and became POWs. I don't want to spoil the book for you and hope you'll buy a copy. The name of the book is "gigi gigi boom boom" and you can buy a copy from the author.

Write to:
Mr. Robert Johnson
4600 Inwood Road
Fort Worth, Texas 76109.

Hope to see you all at Air Expo
October 3-5 at Dallas Executive Airport.

Tom Travis
Executive Officer



Tom and his co-pilot for the 485th Reunion, his daughter Debbie.

Maintenance Report

B-29 / B-24 Maintenance Photo Collage
by Rick Garvis, Crew Chief



FE Steve Rabroker and trainee Larry Dauer looking Diamond Lil over after getting to Oshkosh earlier this summer.



New volunteer, Al Herum, is doing a little sheet-metal work on the #1 nose bowl. Great job by the way!



Ben, Don and Bob working on Lil during the 50 hour inspection



Crew chief and FE, Don Thurston, fueling FIFI and at the throttles for the start of the tour



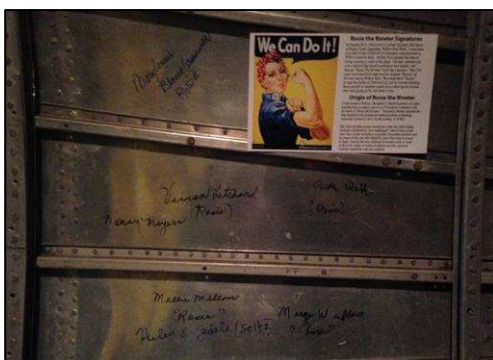
FIFI in Midland waiting on the weather for the Oklahoma Tour to start.



James West doing a post-flight inspection on Lil at Warbirds in Parade in Lancaster, TX



Al Herum and Johnny Schauer fabricating a new lower step on Lil's entrance door.



Lil's tribute to all the Rosie the Riveters that put the B-24's in the air!



Crew Chief Rick installing new harnesses for the Stearman and adding CAF branding to the fuselage



Training & Safety Report

Our long and successful summer tour season is behind us. We had a safe and productive season and our Squadron members who participated, can be very proud of their accomplishments. As you are reading this, the AirPower History Tour is in the September portion of our fall tour, with stops in Oklahoma and wrapping up in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

After the September tour, we all will be involved with the really big Dallas Air Expo; October 2-5 at what will be our future new home; Dallas Executive airport. Then, the following weekend, it's off to AIRSHO in Midland and then on to the remaining October tour stops in Texas and Louisiana.

Let's all work together to continue our good safety record during these remaining September and October events.

REMEMBER, IF THE JOB IS DONE RIGHT, IT IS SAFE!

John Flynn
Safety Officer



Diamond Lil pilot, Tom Travis, briefing passengers before a ride flight.

Photo by Angie Whitney

Financial Report

Need to Finish Strong

The touring of the Squadron's airplanes wraps up at the end of October. We need a big finish to help us financially.

Two Big Events Coming Up

Two of our biggest events of the year are coming up in October. They are the **WWII Air EXPO at Dallas Executive Airport** and the **WWII AirPower EXPO at New Orleans Lakefront Airport**. Both are events based on the successful concept we have developed with the AirPower History Tour...only supersized. We are expecting a number of CAF aircraft on the ramp and are aiming for 10,000 people to attend each event. If the weather holds out and the advertising works, then we should be able to reach our goals.



Our partner for the New Orleans event is the National WWII Museum. This is a new relationship that was originally sourced by Steve Brown at HQ. He put us together and helped launch the new event. The NWWIIM is a great group with lots of resources. If you have not been to the facility in downtown New Orleans, it's worth the trip. If you want to attend a really great tour stop, then get to New Orleans on Oct 24 – 26. It will be lots of fun with many great CAF aircraft on the ramp. Plus, we can use the help.

2014 Results

We have not made as much money this year as last. Our gross revenues are \$300,000 behind 2013. That makes a big difference. As discussed last month, the reasons are many, but basically it boils down to the soft market for airshows and some tour stops that did not produce as much result as we hoped. I am projecting the Squadron will lose a little over \$100,000 in 2014. The officers have identified this problem and are taking proactive steps to deal with it. We know what we need to do and have begun that process of implementation.

We will be talking in more detail at the Annual Meeting about these financial issues. Please put November 15, 2014 on your calendar and plan to attend. The meeting will be held in Ft. Worth and will include our now famous, Annual Chili Cook Off.

If you have any questions about the finances, please don't hesitate to write me at gerald.oliver@yahoo.com. Hope to see you all at our home show...the **WWII Air EXPO at Dallas Executive Airport, Oct 3 – 5**.

Best Regards,

Gerald Oliver
Finance Officer



DIAMOND LIL

B-24 Go Team Report

Lil has been getting some TLC at the hangar. The only recent flying event was Warbirds On Parade at Lancaster on August 30. But now the Fall schedule begins. As I write this from a foggy farm ridge in Wisconsin, Tom and Debbie are heading a crew to take 485th BG vets on three ride flights out of Addison.

The next event for *Lil* will be the WWII Air Expo at Dallas Executive the first week and weekend in October. It will begin with a Tues, Sept 30th transition from FTW to Exec, to clear the VFM hangar. Of course much work will need to be done with setup at Exec, for activities leading up to the weekend. *Lil* will have a number of flying events, giving an opportunity for local crewmembers to participate. Thursday and Friday will be for special groups and VIPs with the weekend for the general public. This will be a chance to put our best foot forward and bring the history of the B-24 and *Diamond Lil* to the DFW public. Next will be 10 days on Tour, see below.

Staffing for the aircraft tours and flight crews will involve myself, John Flynn and Jim Neill so be sure to be in touch to let us know of your availability, and THANKS for volunteering! Here's the latest version of the B-24 schedule:

<i>Tue, Sep 30</i>	<i>Fly FTW to RBD (Dallas Exec)</i>
<i>Fri, Oct 3</i>	<i>Fly Ride Flight at 4pm fm RBD</i>
<i>Sat, Oct 4</i>	<i>Fly RBD to FTW at 3pm for VFM Hangar Dance</i>
<i>Sun, Oct 5</i>	<i>Fly FTW to RBD at 9am</i>
<i>Sun, Oct 5</i>	<i>Fly Ride Flight at 4pm fm RBD</i>
<i>Mon, Oct 6</i>	<i>Fly RBD to FTW to return to VFM</i>
<i>Fri, Oct 17</i>	<i>Fly FTW to TVR (Vicksburg-Tallulah)</i>
<i>Fri, Oct 17</i>	<i>Fly in Twilight Airshow (unconfirmed)</i>
<i>Sat, Oct 18</i>	<i>Fly in Southern Heritage Airshow (unconfirmed)</i>
<i>Sat, Oct 18</i>	<i>Fly Ride Flight at 4pm</i>
<i>Mon, Oct 20</i>	<i>Fly TVR to BTR (Baton Rouge, LA)</i>
<i>Wed, Oct 22</i>	<i>Fly Ride Flight at 4pm</i>
<i>Thu, Oct 23</i>	<i>Fly BTR to NEW (New Orleans Lakefront)</i>
<i>Sat, Oct 25</i>	<i>Fly Ride Flight at 4pm</i>
<i>Sun, Oct 26</i>	<i>Fly Ride Flight at 4pm</i>
<i>Mon, Oct 27</i>	<i>Fly NEW to FTW to return to VFM</i>

Keep'm Flying!

Al Benzing
B-24 Go Team Leader
214-707-2726
albenzing@gmail.com

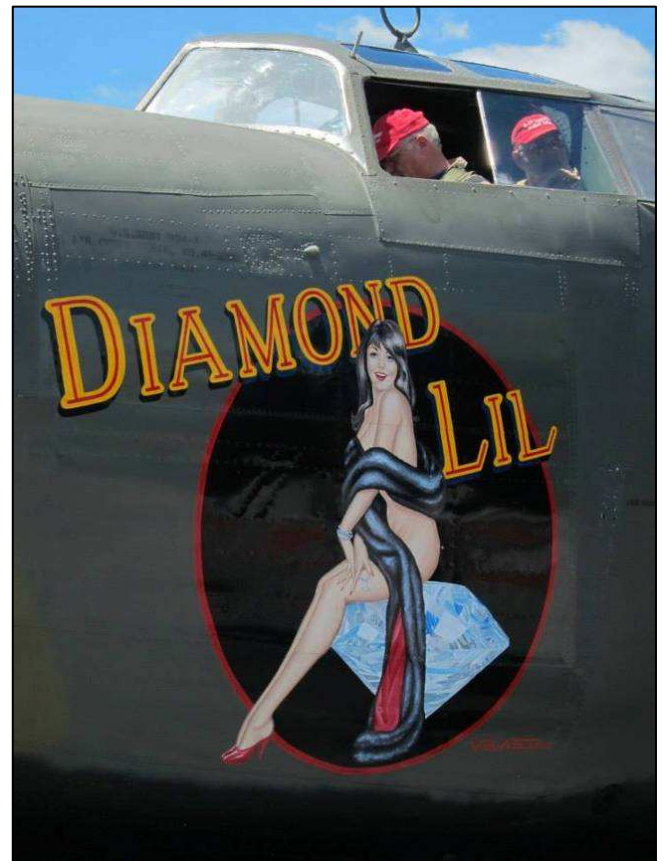


Photo by Steve Schapiro

CAF AirPower History Tour

National Air Tour of Historic World War II Aircraft



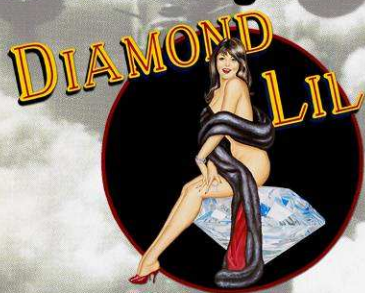
Experience

DIAMOND LIL

One of the last flying B-24 Liberators

Travel back to a time in WWII when heavy bombers ruled the skies and thousands of young airmen risked their lives to defeat tyranny. Over 18,000 Consolidated B-24 Liberators were built, more than any other Allied aircraft of the war. *Diamond Lil* was built in May, 1941 in San Diego, CA. She was 18th off the assembly line.

**Tour the aircraft
Take a ride flight**



Friday, October 17

Arrive noon

Tours 2-5 p.m.

Saturday, October 18

Tours 9-1 p.m.

Ride Flight 4 p.m.

**Vicksburg Tallulah
Regional Airport**

179 VTR Airport Road
Tallulah, LA

Sponsored by



Ride flight prices

\$449.00 day of show

or \$425.00 booked online

www.airpowertour.org

Up to 12 riders

30 minutes flight time

Explore the aircraft from the
cockpit to the tail in flight

24TH ANNUAL BIG BAND HANGAR DANCE

Silent
Auction!

C-47 Flights
Available!



Purchase Tickets
Online!!!

MUSEUM
October 4, 2014
8 p.m. until midnight

“REMEMBERING D-DAY PLUS SEVENTY”

Tickets
\$30 Advance
\$35 At the Door
\$20 Dinner
(Dinner 6:30 - 8:30
sold in advance)



**Reserved
&
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FEATURING THE ALAN GLASSCOCK ORCHESTRA

Optional Dress
1940's, military
or civilian

SHOWCASING
THE B-24
DIAMOND LIL

Vintage Flying Museum

Meacham Field (FTW)
505 NW 38th Street
Fort Worth, TX 76106



For additional information
call 817-624-1935 or
e-mail vfm@VintageFlyingMuseum.org
Visit www.VintageFlyingMuseum.org





Member News

September, 2014

The CAF B-29/B-24 Squadron welcomes these new members in September, 2014

Tony Gomes of Krum, Texas

Kenneth McDaniel of McKinney, Texas

James Harris of Oklahoma City

Amy Olmstead of Arlington, Texas

Zane Belcour of Ft. Collins, Colorado

Eddie Enrique of Modesto, California

Darryl Tyson of Dallas, Texas

Milton Painter of Carrollton, Texas

James Bowerman of Terrell, Texas

Wayne Swearingen of Dallas, Texas

Steven Colman of Rineyville, Kentucky

Membership Info

If you have any membership questions, please feel free to contact me at

squadadjutant@gmail.com

Dues and new member applications can be mailed to:

Debbie King

13562 Braemar Drive

Dallas, Texas 75234

B29/B24 Squadron Adjutant

469-688-1709



Squadron adjutant, Debbie King

So what do you think of the new CAF flight suit?

Actually this is a survival suit for long overwater flights. David and Jon Oliver just completed flying a Twin Otter from Oregon to Vietnam via the South Pacific. They mirrored the route flown by the B-29s on their way to Tinian from the US. One of their stops was at Guam, a former B-29 base.



For Squadron gear and merchandise, don't forget to visit the Px! See you at the CAF WWII Air EXPO at DEA



<http://www.b29b24px.org/>

Find us on **facebook**



Member Congratulations

Squadron Member Brad Pilgrim and the Olympic Corsair

The Olympic Flight Museum recently announced its 1945 Goodyear FG-1D Corsair took home two prestigious national awards by the National Aviation Heritage Invitational. The Corsair won the Henry "Hap" Arnold trophy in the military aircraft restoration category and the National Aviation Hall of Fame People's Choice award, sponsored by the Air and Space Smithsonian. The awards were presented at the 2014 National Championship Air Races in Reno, Nevada.

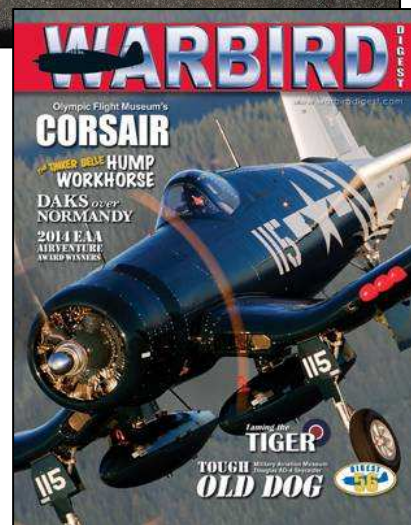
Squadron member and B-29 FE, Brad Pilgrim was brought in as project manager to finish the decade long restoration project. He assisted with keeping the project on deadline, approving invoices, inspecting the work and research duties. The engine was overhauled by Ray Anderson's Anderson Automotive, the same people who built the B-29 engines. According to Brad, 99.9999 percent of the true restoration work was done by John Lane and his employees at Airpower Unlimited.

John was one of the founding members of the AZ wing, a very long time CAF member and was an engineer on *FIFI* for a couple of years back in the day. He also engineered *Fertile Myrtle* in the 1970s when it was still flying and before Kermit Weeks bought it. More about John's company can be found at the following links:

<http://airportjournals.com/john-lanes-airpower-unlimited-a-world-leader-in-warbird-restoration/>

<http://www.airpowerunlimited.net/>

The Corsair made the cover of the September/October 2014 issue of Warbird Digest. Brad wrote an article about the restoration of the Corsair. You can find it on newstands or order a copy now. Congratulations to Brad and the crew who faithfully restored this beauty.



Brad, his wife Kristine, and pilot Bud Granley



Brad and John Lane



BuNo. 92436 taxiing out to take-off

MAINTENANCE IN PROGRESS

Volunteers Wanted

Vintage Flying Museum, Meacham Airport, Ft. Worth



B-29 Superfortress



B-24A Liberator

- Mechanics
- General Maintenance
- Help around the Hangar

Contact Rick Garvis, Crew Chief
rgarvis@cafhq.org



www.cafb29b24.org



Special Feature

Master Sergeant Henry E. “Red” Erwin, USAAF Medal of Honor Recipient



Henry “Red” Erwin was born in Adamsville Louisiana on 8 May 1921, where Erwin would spend much of his childhood. Unfortunately Erwin’s father would pass away early in young Henry’s life, putting the family in a difficult financial position. Growing up in a large family during the Depression, Erwin soon left school to get a job in the steel mills. Shortly after the outbreak of World War II, Erwin and many of his friends enlisted in the military.

After being ‘washed out’ as a pilot candidate, Henry “Red” Erwin was reassigned to Keesler Army Air Force Base to become a radio operator aboard the new Boeing B-29 Superfortress. Erwin continued his training at Sioux Falls, SD and Madison, WI before beginning crew training at Dalhart, Texas. Erwin was assigned to the crew lead by aircraft commander Captain George Simeral whose B-29 was named “City of Los Angeles”. From Dalhart, the crew flew their assigned aircraft to the Pacific Theater. In 1945 after marrying his wife, Erwin was assigned to the 52nd Bomb Squadron 29th Bomb Group as part of the 314th Bomb Wing, 20th Air Force stationed at Guam.



It was Erwin’s tenth mission, 12 April 1945, which was to be like no other. On that day the 52nd Bomb Group was assigned the target of Koriyama, Japan (about 100 miles north of Tokyo). The target was a plant which produced high octane aviation fuel. In addition to his duties as radio operator, Erwin also was to drop phosphorus bombs through a tube directly below his seat in the cockpit. The time delay phosphorus bomb was to signal the other aircraft in the formation to form on the lead aircraft after the initial seven hour flight before proceeding to the target. For unknown reasons, the bomb detonated in the cockpit burning at some 1,100 degrees and generating enough smoke to blind the flight crew.

Losing control of the aircraft due to the blinding smoke, the “City of Los Angeles” entered a steep dive.



Erwin front row second from right

Already having suffered serious burns, from when the phosphorous bomb reentered the aircraft, Erwin took it upon himself to locate and dispose of the burning bomb. Erwin, knowing that if the bomb were not located the crew would all perish, put himself in great danger and continued his search for the bomb. On his hands and knees, crawling around the floor Erwin eventually located the bomb and made his way forward to throw the bomb out the co-pilot's window. Upon doing so, the smoke cleared allowing the pilot to regain control of the aircraft, only 300 feet above the ocean. After regaining control, Captain Simeral ordered the crew to attend to Erwin's injuries. Erwin was the medic for the crew and remaining conscious through the entire ordeal insisted that he not be given too much morphine. Capt. Simeral aborted the mission and landed the "City of Los Angeles" at Iwo Jima in an effort to get Erwin immediate medical attention.

After receiving initial treatment at Iwo Jima, Erwin was moved to Guam, where there were better medical facilities. After initial examination, the doctors did not believe the Erwin would survive his burns, nor his pain. Army Air Force leaders including Major General Curtis LeMay approved the nomination of Erwin for the nation's highest honor, the Congressional Medal of Honor. President Franklin Roosevelt approved the nomination, with an order to expatiate the presentation of the Medal of Honor to Erwin at Guam. The approval and award was done so quickly to honor Erwin before he passed from his wounds.

Less than a week later, with his crew, and his Marine brother at his side, Erwin received the Medal of Honor from General LeMay. After LeMay read the citation, Erwin was able to thank the General. Over the next two years Erwin underwent over 40 surgeries. Despite the severity of his injuries, Erwin continued to surprise the doctors and all those around him and fought on. In 1947, despite his injuries Erwin was discharged and returned home after regaining his eyesight and the use of one arm. For nearly forty years, Erwin aided returning soldiers as a Veterans' Benefit Counselor at the VA Hospital in Birmingham, Alabama.

In 1997, the Air Force created the Henry E. Erwin Outstanding Enlisted Aircrew Member of the Year Award. It is presented annually to an airman, noncommissioned officer or senior noncommissioned officer in the active-duty or reserve forces. It goes to members of the flight engineering, loadmaster, air surveillance and related career fields. It is only the second Air Force award named for an enlisted person.

In January of 2002 Erwin passed from this earth.

Video of Red Erwin <http://www.hulu.com/#!/watch/190770>

An interview with Red Erwin by his son http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtPc9_teMgY

SkyGate Studios trailer <https://www.facebook.com/video.php?v=10151147911889242>



The crew of the City of Los Angeles, Major General Willis Hale, and Red Erwin at the presentation of his Medal of Honor.



Erwin-here with his wife, Betty (standing), and mother



Special Feature

Captain Jerry Yellin

By Konley Kelley

Captain Jerry Yellin had just turned 21 years old when his squadron of P-51D Mustangs landed on Iwo Jima. The date was March 7, 1945. It was D-Day + 16. On Iwo Jima there were still battles being waged with entrenched Japanese soldiers. As Yellin taxied his Mustang to the parking area, he saw piles of dead Japanese being pushed into mass graves. There were no barracks to bunk at. No beds to sleep in. Yellin was handed a shovel to dig a fox hole. The stench of death was everywhere.

Yellin was a pilot in the 78th FS “Bushmasters.” On March 10, the squadron started flying close support missions for Marines mopping up the last pockets of Japanese resistance. The larger mission lay ahead. The 78th was to provide escort to B-29s launching from islands south of Iwo Jima (Guam, Saipan, Tinian) to bomb the Japanese home islands.



The 78th FS “Bushmasters” on the flight line and squadron patch

They were called VLR Mustangs. VLR stood for “Very Long Range.” The trip from Iwo Jima to Japan was roughly 1,300 mi RT. The pilots were belted into cramped cockpits for missions lasting up to 8 hours. Most of the trip was over open water with harsh winds and extreme weather. Without the B-29s, the Mustang pilots were at risk of not finding Iwo Jima on the return home. Without the Mustangs, the B-29s were left to fend for themselves against a desperate enemy willing to risk everything to defend “The Empire” – even ramming a B-29 to take it down.

Jerry Yellin is a prolific writer. He has written four books to date and will soon have a new book out titled *Legacy*. With Jerry’s permission, following is an excerpt from *Legacy* about his first combat mission to Tokyo.

Chapter Thirty Two Combat

It was a very long afternoon and night for me. I was prepared as a pilot to fly and fight for my country, to die if necessary, outwardly. But could I face the reality knowing now what I had to do tomorrow? How would I perform? Would I perform? I knew I was going to fly on the wing of Vic Mollan and we would be high cover for the 78th. What was he thinking? How would he perform? I was 7 weeks into my 21st year and this was the biggest test I would ever take. A test I could not fail. Time seemed to be standing still, I kept looking at my watch waiting for dark and sleep. Dark came, sleep did not. I left my tent at 0500 and walked to the flight line. Every plane was being attended by their crew chief, armorer, and radio man. External wing tanks were being attached and fueled. The planes would be ready, would the pilots be too?

It seemed that I was not alone, most of the pilots were with their planes. We nodded to each other but did not speak. It was quiet in the mess tent too. We had powdered scrambled eggs and toast, told not to take the coffee and do not drink any water. I wondered what I would do if I had to urinate while I was flying, or take a dump. More questions that could only be answered by doing. At 0700 the squadron gathered in the Quonset hut. We gathered by flights at small tables, went



P-51s, B-29s and P-61s on the airfield with Mt. Suribachi in the background.

The morning was clear as the sun rose. Blue skies, light wind, a perfect day for flying was in store for this first ever land based fighter mission over Japan. The sound of the engine starting always thrilled me. The puff of smoke, the smell of the fuel burning, and the excitement of what was going to happen kept me alert. The engine sounded smooth, Joe smiled, then waved as I started to taxi away from our squadron area toward the runway. P-51's from the 78th were lined up in front of us, we would be the last of the Bushmasters to takeoff. We taxied to the end of the dirt strip to await our turn to takeoff on the runway heading north.



Mustangs over Iwo Jima

We flew a heading slightly westward toward the snow covered peak in the distance. Mt. Fuji, a picture seen in school books years ago, the symbol of Japan. In my wildest dreams I could not have imagined seeing this sight! And from the air of my own airplane!

We had to focus our gun camera on the tip of something in order to evaluate how we fired our machine guns. I turned the camera on, picked the top of the mountain and pulled the trigger for a few seconds. How peaceful it looked, how green the earth was below. Then the hundred and fifty B-29's came into view, thoughts of beauty turned to thoughts of war and destruction.

over all of the code signs and radio channels, marked our charts and bowed our head when Chappie Jamison said a prayer. He and I played cribbage against each other and bridge together as partners. He was a good guy and I respected him a lot. We were friends but I was not a Christian and prayers meant nothing to me. What meant something to me was what you yourself did.

I climbed into the cockpit of the *DORRIE R* at 0730. Joe helped me with my chute straps, shoulder harness and seat belt. "She's ready, sir, won't let you down." He shook my hand, slammed his hand against the side of the plane and jumped down from the front wheel. He turned, gave me a thumbs up as I yelled "Clear," and hit the switch to start the engine.



P-51D Mustang DORRIE R

I followed Captain Mollan on to runway, lined up slightly off his right wing and pushed my throttle forward as he began his roll down the runway. The takeoff run was longer than usual due to the weight of the fuel in the external wing tanks. We used our fuselage fuel tank for takeoff and cruising until it ran dry. We did not want any fuel in that tank to slosh around when we did radical maneuvers. Our squadron gathered in formation, four flights of four planes each, and headed towards the B-29 circling in the distance at 8000 feet. Three of our P-51's flew behind us as backups in case one of our planes malfunctioned.

The three hour flight to Japan passed slowly. Too much time to think about the unknown is always difficult. It was like a dream when I heard "This is Kodak Red One, get ready to drop your tanks now." The squadron fanned out to make sure that there were no planes below us. I reached forward, flipped the red bomb release cover up, made sure my fuel tank lever was on an internal wing tank and pushed the switch releasing the external tanks. There was a noticeable change in the attitude of the plane. I made the adjustments and tucked in close to Vic Mollan's *Vivacious Vivian*.



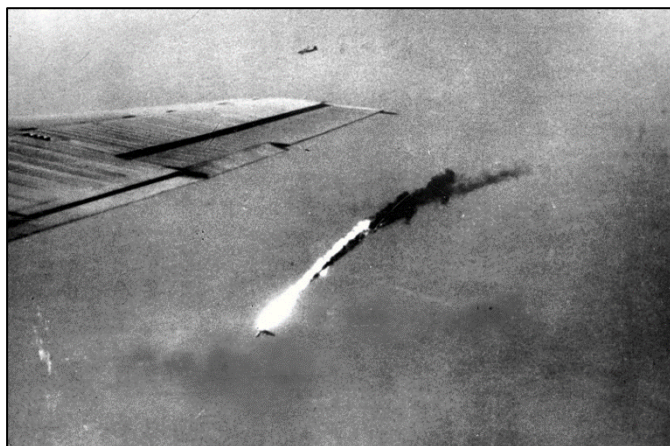
P-51s seen from the cockpit window of a B-29

The squadron climbed to 12,000 feet and took their position alongside the Super Bombers. Green flight, our flight climbed to 14,000 feet and watched as the bombers lined up to drop their bombs into the square of fire in the distance.

The flak began as soon as the bombers reached the outskirts of Tokyo. I had never flown over any city and the view of this city was huge. We were 10, maybe 15 miles from the target area when the sky was blotched with small black explosions. Japanese fighters approached from all sides. Just a few at first, then more. Our fighters kept pace with the bombers and did not engage the Japs before they and the B-29's were over the target area. That is where the action got heavy. There must have been hundreds of fighter planes in the air. I know we had more than one hundred flying escort and the Japanese defended their homeland with ferocity. Dog fights where all over the sky and smoking planes could be seen falling towards the ground. I didn't know if they were ours or theirs.

I watched from above as the bombers dropped their fire bombs into the square of fire. Little fires became bigger fires and before the last bomber left the scene, the entire area was burning. Debris reached to our altitude from the intensity of the fire. Not once did I think there were people on the ground.

What bothered me deeply was the sight of falling B-29's. It was as if I was watching a slow motion film. At first the falling bomber started a slow, nose down turn. Then one parachute opened then another as the smoking bomber lost altitude and disappeared from my view. I saw several bombers go down during the attack and I knew that those Americans who bailed out were in deep trouble.



B-29 lost to flak



Mustangs over Iwo Jima base

The radio blasted the call from the B-29 "Hotrocks in sight." It raised our attention and we tightened up the formation. Colonel VandeHey called "Look sharp guys, we will buzz the field and land soon." It was hard to see our small Island home from the air. Shadows from the clouds all looked like islands from our altitude. I was wide awake when I saw Suribachi and we began our run over the field.

Roseberry ran out of fuel as we approached the field and he bailed out. Jim VandeHey's plane ran out of fuel on the runway. Colonel Beckwith, the 15th Fighter Group Commander picked him up in his Jeep and told him "That's it for you, Jim. You are going home." Our flight was last to land. I had seven gallons of fuel left, enough for a missed landing approach, not much more. ***end excerpt

I never fired a shot on that mission, I thought our flight should have gotten into the fight. But we did not see any Japanese fighters attack the bombers from above, we just did our job. Someone called "Ninety gallons." I looked at my gas gauge, knew that I had enough fuel to get home, when Vic turned our flight toward the sea and the waiting B-29.

The tension of combat, the nerves and strain of unknown territory that kept me high disappeared as soon as we leveled off behind the B-29 at 8,000 feet. It seems to have been the same for other pilots too. The squadron was spread wide across the sky. Every once in a while one of the planes propellers stopped spinning and the call was made to switch gas tanks. I looked at my watch a lot and it did not seem to be moving very fast. I smoked cigarettes then and took my oxygen mask off to light one after another. The letdown affected my ability to really pay attention to my duties in the air. I didn't seem to care about how I was flying as long as I kept up with the B-29 it was OK.



Captain Jerry Yellin (motioning with hands) and Lt. Danny Mathis in front of the P-51D Mustang DORRIE R..



The men of the 78th FS. Jerry Yellin is 5th from the left with his signature.

On August 14, 1945, Yellin's squadron was ordered to strafe airfields around Tokyo. The men were anxious because the code "Ohio" transmitted to the group would mean the war was over. No signal came and the mission proceeded. On the flight back, Yellin's wingman, 1st Lt. Philip Schlamberger, disappeared in a cloud bank and was never seen again. When Yellin landed on Iwo Jima, he learned the war had been over for three hours.

The horrors of war took their toll on Yellin. For years afterwards, he suffered from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). It wasn't until 1975 when Yellin discovered Transcendental Meditation (TM) that he got his life back. Today Yellin is a champion for meditation over medication. He travels the country promoting TM for soldiers of all conflicts suffering from PTSD. In particular, he wants to help returning veterans cope with PTSD, many of which are waging war using strategies and technology we don't completely understand. However it is fought, a soldier never forgets the horrific waste of war.

He has authored four books to date:

Of War and Weddings

The Blackened Canteen

The Letter

The Resilient Warrior, Healing the Hidden Wounds of War

Yellin is also the national spokesperson for the "Spirit of '45." The movement was founded in 2009 to call on Congress to vote for a national holiday to honor the legacy of the men and women of America's "greatest generation."

Yellin is also a member of the CAF and frequent VIP at air shows. He co-chairs the WWII Airpower Legacy project, a collaborative initiative of the Air Force Association, CAF, and EAA. This group is organizing flyovers of vintage WWII aircraft to commemorate the 70th anniversary of WWII the weekend of August 15-16, 2015. www.spiritof45.org



Jerry Yellin speaking at a "Spirit of '45" event near the USS Midway in San Diego

B-29/B-24 Squadron members, Angie Whitney and Lisa “Rosie the Riveter” Foster met Jerry Yellin at *Diamond Lil’s Willow Run* tour stop in August. Angie called me and learned I knew something about the 78th right away. Awhile back, I made a 3D model of Charles Chauncey’s B-29 *GOIN’ JESSIE*. Chauncey suggested adding some “little friends” so I modeled a 3D P-51D Mustang. I created a texture map for Major James Tapp of the 78th FS. Tapp was the first Mustang ace over Japan. It turns out Tapp was a close personal friend and mentor of Yellin.

I’ve since added Yellin’s P-51D, *DORRIE R*, to the image. As Yellin told Angie and me more about his cause to help others with PTSD, I offered to create unique artwork of Yellin’s Mustang flying alongside Tapp with B-29s in the distance. We collectively chose to include the text from the Afterword section of Yellin’s new book within the rendering. This artwork has really taken off as a fundraising piece for **TM for Veterans** and I am unbelievably proud to be able to help Captain Yellin make a difference in the lives of our soldiers.

Please visit www.tmforveterans.org and contact Jerry Yellin directly at jerryellin@gmail.com if you would like a signed print or to offer your support for **TM for Veterans** any way you can. You can also contact Jerry Yellin for speaking engagements. When *Legacy* is available to purchase, I’ll announce it in The Flyer.



Jerry Yellin signing posters at DFW a few weeks ago.

There have been two wars fought in America that defined our country. The Revolutionary War created our Nation and the Civil War defined it. One Nation, with Liberty and Justice for All. And America fought one war that helped define the World, World War Two. Every major Nation participated and an estimated 60 million people were killed around the globe.

I served my country for nearly four years, as did 16 million other young American men and women, fighting against the evil of one man, Adolph Hitler, and a country, Japan. Had America and our President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, not been alert to the dangers of foreign rule by aggressive Nations then, we might not be speaking English now.

Looking back 70 years later, I find that the countries I fought against, Japan, Germany and Italy, rebuilt by American financing and ingenuity have become valued friends. And Russia and some of its political friends, former allies of the free world, seems to have become our enemy. In actuality, Japan is the home and motherland of three of my six grandchildren.

War is not a pleasant enterprise. It is devastating to everyone involved, civilian and military alike. It is fought by the youth of the world at the behest of the elderly, seemingly, wiser rulers of Nations, sects, religions, believers and followers. The weapons now used began when a caveman first used a rock to get power over someone for something. Now science has brought us forward to the Nuclear Age with weapons that can destroy Earth and life for centuries to come.

Is war necessary? It seems the answer has to be yes, but a qualified yes. When evil men and governments run by evil thinking people start exporting their wants and needs, expanding their lands and their philosophies, war becomes necessary. Not wars of attrition or conquest, but wars by all humankind against those opposed to freedom of life for all citizens and creatures of our Planet. For only when that Freedom becomes Universal, can we be assured that the next generations will be alive to pass on their lives in perpetuity.



***I flew for Freedom!
I live for Peace!***

**Captain Jerry Yellin
DORRIE R #134
P-51 Pilot “Bushmasters”
78th FS/15th FG
Iwo Jima**

3D Modeler/Artist, Koriey Kelley



Photo Album
Warbirds on Parade
August 30, 2014, Lancaster, TX
Photos by Konley Kelley





Editor's Corner



The Flyer gets a new home

Thanks to Squadron member, Ross Martin, the B-29/B-24 newsletter “The Flyer” is now going to be available on the Squadron website www.cafb29b24.org. When a new issue comes out, you will be notified by e-mail and given a link. A user-friendly archive of past Flyers will be located here as well. Just click on an issue to read or print. Share the site with your friends, too.

B-29 Scale Model Progress

I’ve built my share of models but this huge B-29 kit takes the cake. Like any model, it takes time management. I spent a good couple weeks finishing up the interior detail. After that, it took some muscle and a lot of super glue to seal her up. Exterior painting has begun and custom decals are in the works for GOIN’ JESSIE, the B-29 flown by Squadron member, Charles Chauncey. Stay tuned.



Available at Hobby Lobby stores ☺



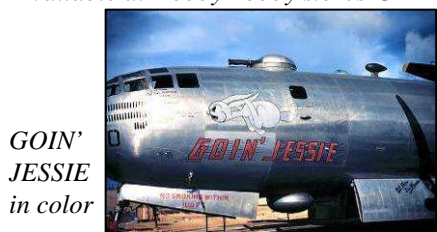
Chauncey’s office



Bunk beds?



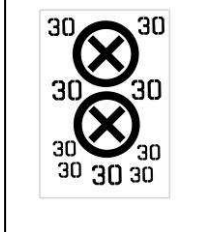
Tail gunner



GOIN’ JESSIE in color



Preparing decals



My 1:72 B-29 FIFI is tiny compared to a 1:48 B-29

THE FLYER WANTS YOU!

You are welcome to contribute a story, photographs and artwork for this decades-old newsletter. If you are a veteran, please tell us your story. Squadron members continually meet veterans at the hangar, on tour and in everyday life – let us know their stories. We’re also looking for contributors for “This Month in History” and news spotlighting our aircraft and members.

Thank you and
“Keep ‘Em Flying!”

Konley Kelley
THE FLYER editor
konartist@verizon.net

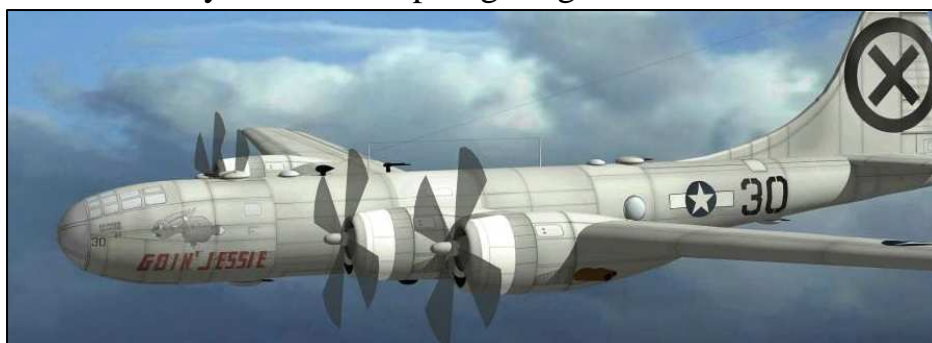




Photo by Rocky Smith

B-29 / B-24 Squadron

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