



Chet Manly

# THE FLYER

Commemorative Air Force B-29 / B-24 Squadron

# Rock Stars



Coast to Coast with the AirPower History Tour

**June 2014** 



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

Position	Name Telephone		E-mail	
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Executive Officer	Tom Travis	972-241-8102	TomTravis@aol.com	
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Crew Chief	Rick Garvis	Rick Garvis 972-380-8800		
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	
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Safety & Training Officer B-29 Scheduling Officer	John Flynn	717-632-4497	jnaflynn@embarqmail.com	
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	
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Special Photo Feature: On Tour with FIFI and Diamond Lil

# CAFAirPower History Tour

National Air Tour of Historic World War Il Aircraft



#### **Summer Tour A FIFI**

Prescott, AZ	May 14-18
Lancaster, CA	May 19-22
Bakersfield, CA	May 22-27
Santa Maria, CA	May 27-29
Salinas, CA	May 29-June 2
Modesto, CA	June 2-5
Sacramento, CA	June 5-10
Napa, CA	June 10-12
Olympia, WA	June 12-16
Boeing Field, WA	June 16-19
Paine Field, WA	June 19-22

#### **Summer Tour Diamond Lil**

Reading, PA	June 6-8
Buffalo, NY	June 9-11
Hamilton, Canada	June 12-15
Akron, OH	June 17-22
Findlay, OH	June 23-25
Dayton, OH	June 26-29
Dupage, IL	July 25-27
AirVenture Oshkosh, WI	July 28-Aug 3
Kalamazoo, MI	August 4-6
Willow Run, MI	August 7-10

Maintenance BreakJune 23-July 6Summer Tour BJune 23-July 6Fall TourSep 19-Oct 1AirPower EXPOOct 3-5CAF AirShoOct 10-12

Check <u>www.AirPowerTour.org</u> for tour updates and news on other aircraft joining *FIFI* and *Lil*. \*Schedule subject to change.





# **Squadron Report**

Diamond Lil has had a terrific tour. She was the hit of Reading and in Canada. It's amazing, but this is her first several-stop tour in her new livery complete with the Velasco nose art and Neutrality flag. Scores of fans lined up for rides and Lil delivered. Everyone walked away happy. It is a real pleasure to see her on the road fulfilling the CAF mission. As I write this, she is in Akron. Oshkosh is not that far off and I am sure she will be a big hit there, too.



FIFI has had a very successful West Coast tour. Arizona and California love her as do all residents of Washington. She made her first stop at Seattle's Boeing Field in 20 years and was warmly received. Current and retired Boeing employees came out to see what their best designers had produced many years ago. In the shadow of Mt. Rainier, FIFI looked radiant. Everett proved to be another great Boeing stop. There, where 737s, 777s and 787s are rolled out of the factory seemingly by the hour, the star on the field was FIFI. John Sessions and his Historic Flight Foundation gave us a very warm welcome. We had 7 ride flights sold, but due to some ignition issues on the number two engine, we had to divert those riders to the Fourth of July. The scheduled maintenance stop will now begin. Operations begin on our Nation's Independence Day.

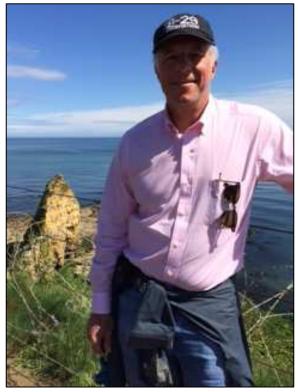
Please note that our next Squadron meeting is next Saturday the 28th at Dallas Executive Airport, our new home-to-be. For those that wish to, we will have lunch at the local airport restaurant and then meet afterward. After all the noise connected with the announcement of the move of our

Headquarters, I know it seems quiet now.

However, rest assured, work by your General Staff and the Headquarters Staff continues to make the move possible. In early July, the first big planning session to design the buildings will take place. The plans for fund-raising are underway. I remain excited.

See you Saturday and then on the road.

Neils Agather Squadron Leader



Neils at Pointe du Hoc, Normandy

# Maintenance Report

I've had the opportunity to spend some time out on the road this year with *FIFI* and *Lil* and I couldn't be happier with the way our bombers are performing, looking and working! I'm also very impressed with our volunteers out on the road with them! What a great bunch of hardworking, dedicated and knowledgeable people that are getting a difficult job done and absolutely great to be around and work with!



The mechanical conditions of our planes are holding up very well especially given the fact how much they are flying. Even though they require constant attention in one way or another, never in our squadron's history have our girls worked so hard and they are getting the job done. This is a true testament to the dedication, hard work and talent of our maintenance crew! Thank you guys!!!

Even though *FIFI* and *Lil* are out of town touring there are still countless things going on back home. We are still moving our stuff from Addison to VFM and trying to set up our full operation. There are still several other things from overhauling maintenance stands to building up wheel and tire assemblies that still have to be done too so don't think for a minute there aren't things to do at the hangar.

As always, thank you for all you do and I'm very proud to be a part of this Squadron and what we do!

Don Obrieter Maintenance Officer

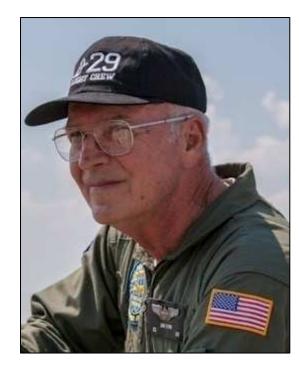


Working the FE station on FIFI

# Training & Safety Report

We are currently out on the CAF AirPower History Tour (Summer Tour A) with *FIFI, The Bucket of Bolts*, the Southern California Wing's P-51 *Man-O-War* and their T-6. As I write this, we are in Napa, California. The tour, thus far, has been operated on schedule and safely by the squadron members who stepped up to the plate and volunteered to participate.

Our hard working crew is finally getting a respite from the five days of over 100 degree temperatures and the blazing sun we experienced at Sacramento. In fact, the temperature



on the tarmac this past Saturday was over 121 degrees. At one time we had three of our visitors being treated by the local EMT's in the ride tent area for heat related issues. We experienced first-hand, the importance of keeping hydrated while working under these conditions.

Safety will continue to be paramount as we continue on the tour, north along the west coast to Olympia, Seattle and Everett.

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

John Flynn Safety Officer



Chief with the C-124 he served aboard called "Old Shakey" at Travis AFB.



Chief at his old station and in the cargo hold

# **PIO Report**

June has been an incredibly busy month. Two airplanes touring on opposite sides of the U.S. has kept us all hopping. I want to thank Chris Trobridge for stepping up to help coordinate the press for *Diamond Lil* during her eastern U.S. tour. The B-24 has done very well and I congratulate the crew for doing an outstanding job.

Promoting two CAF AirPower History Tour stops a week for the past 6 weeks has also been a full time job. I had great correspondents in the field during the tour – particularly Dale Harmer and Steve Schapiro – who both sent many photos and stories to us to post on Facebook and Twitter and the CAF headquarters blog.



I have received several lovely thank you notes from people who visited or took rides in the airplanes. Here are a couple. The first is from Jessica Hoskins who flew with us in Sacramento:

#### Hello Mrs. Pardon.

I wanted to thank everyone in the Commemorative Air Force and all of those who keep your amazing birds flying. Today I was able to check-off a bucket-list item. I was able to ride in FIFI, something I have dreamed of doing since I first set eyes on her when I was 7 years old. It was amazing and I will never forget it. . .

Again, I want to thank all of you for keeping these planes flying. And if you could extend my thank you to the crew who flew FIFI (David Oliver, Jeff Skiles, Katy, and all of the others I do not know the names of) I would greatly appreciate it. They were very generous helping me with making sure I was comfortable flying because of my size. It was an amazing flight, and I appreciate it very much.

#### And from Tim Spencer in Everett:

#### Kim:

I want to thank you and your team members at CAF, particularly Steve Shapiro, for your kindness in hosting my father last Saturday at the B29 exhibit in Paine Field, Everett, WA. Dad remarked multiple times that the warm reception he received far exceeded his expectations and the opportunity to sit in his old bombardier's perch after 70 years was for him a moving experience. He remarked, "It's like I was never away from here."

You might mention to the people who were there, dad had a brief spell while at the exhibit. He passed out momentarily, probably from the excitement and just being 93 years old. All involved were so helpful in getting him back on his feet. We got him home safe and sound and he was off to church today to bask in his glory after the appearance of a beautiful article in the Sunday paper. We have scheduled a visit to the doctor but he seems fine.

Again, many thanks to your group, truly a warm and welcoming team of people and we are grateful for your extra attention and interest in our dad. Please share this with the team at the Everett show.

The Everett Herald article to which Tim refers can be found here:

The daughter of a former B-24 pilot had this to say from Akron, Ohio:

Just a quick note to thank you for accommodating my mother yesterday as she had the chance of a lifetime to fly in the B-24 which was flown by my dad in WWII. The thrill on her face will linger for me and our family long after she has passed on. I didn't mention it, but she has terminal lung cancer and passed her given "expiration date" more than a year ago. STILL, she wasn't going to miss this golden opportunity. And because of your help and compassion, this happened. Thank you all.

Most sincerely, Janis Seward, Daughter, Frances Rohrich

My favorite character from the B-29 summer tour (so far) is Jim Thompson, also a former World War II bombardier. I spoke with Jim several times prior to *FIFI's* arrival. He was SO excited. These two videos of Jim at *FIFI's* arrival at Boeing Field pretty much sum up all of his emotion. Although, he did call me the day after to let me know our crew treated him like royalty. He cried while he told me all about it. It meant so much to a 93 year-old man. . .

#### Two videos:

https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=10152677652712224&set=vb.8855517223&type=3&theater

#### http://youtu.be/McHvMDxhCUA

When I get a minute to catch my breath I will put all of the stories and videos from both the B-29 and B-24 tour on the CAF AirPower Tour media page.

In the meantime, we also received word this month the Telly Awards named Skygate Productions a Silver winner in the 35th Annual Telly Awards for their piece titled "If These Planes Could Talk," featuring the aircraft of the Commemorative Air Force (CAF) and the volunteers who keep them flying. The B-29/B-24 Squadron commissioned Scott Edge from Skygate productions to produce the video about the CAF AirPower History Expo in Dallas last fall. With nearly 12,000 entries from all 50 states and numerous countries, this is truly an honor. I know you all have seen the video – but if not you can watch it here: <a href="http://youtu.be/7Eyy90dS7No">http://youtu.be/7Eyy90dS7No</a>

A couple of days earlier I learned from multimedia journalist Steve Flood that he and reporter Jaye Watson from WXIA in Atlanta won a regional Emmy award in the Television News Gathering Excellence (general assignment) category for their news story about our funeral flyover for a former B-29 navigator in Atlanta last May. You may remember the story, but if not you can watch it again here: <a href="http://www.11alive.com/story/news/local/2014/03/05/1936638/">http://www.11alive.com/story/news/local/2014/03/05/1936638/</a>

So what does this mean? It means we're doing excellent work out there representing the Commemorative Air Force. Let's keep up the good work!

Kim Pardon PIO

# **Financial Report**

#### **Keeping a Sharp Eye on the Numbers**

As has been reported in this column the last few months, we continue to keep a sharp eye on our numbers...both revenue and expenses. Here are some financial highlights from the past month:

#### **B-29**

The B-29 and the AirPower History Tour continue to produce good results. The Florida Spring Tour brought in 20 B-29 ride flights. The just completed Summer Tour A produced 28. We are averaging right at \$900 per rider and almost all of these flights have been full with 10 riders (the max). Whereas we used to go out with several seats empty in years past, the ride desk crew is getting better and has figured out how to maximize the load factor. Even



though the results are good, they are not near as good as last year. Our gross margin revenue before overhead is \$200,000 below last year's results.

#### **B-24**

The B-24 East Coast Tour has been better than budgeted. We budgeted a total of 20 rides for the B-24 Summer Tour A. She has already done 20 with three more tour stops to go. The budgeted gross margin gain before overhead is \$64,000. We feel confident that we will do \$94,000 and be \$30,000 ahead of budget.

The good results will probably not be enough for the B-24 to break even this year. We are averaging right at \$380 per seat sold on the B-24. After we pay for fuel, hotel, rental cars and a fee to HQ there is just not much left. We will be experimenting with different price points to try and make a better profit.

So as you can see from the above, the revenue for the B-29 is down. The B-24 revenue is up. At the end of June, I will be able to give you a report on the expenses and how we are doing against budget.

#### **Volunteers Are the Key to Success**

The Squadron needs to understand the financial impact of our decisions and operations capabilities. These aircraft consume dollars at a huge rate. We need the money to keep them flying and touring. All our volunteers make a very big impact toward keeping them going. This is so important. So thank you for your work and efforts.

Many thanks to John Flynn, B-29 Tour Leader and Greg Trobridge, B-24 Tour Leader. They both have been doing a great job. Thanks to them and their crews.

It's going to be very close as to whether or not we turn a profit this year. I'll keep you up to speed and try to be as transparent and honest as possible. If you have any questions or seek more information, please don't hesitate to write or call. The best way to reach me is by text (312.953.0357) or email at gerald.oliver@yahoo.com.

# DIAMOND LIL

### **B-24 Go Team Report**

Diamond Lil is two weeks into the B-24 Summer Tour A and I am pleased to report that Lil and her crew are doing very well. Tour Leader Greg Trobridge spent several days in advance working to organize supplies with the help of Jim Neill and Flight Engineer Ray Whiteman also got an early start and has put in many extra hours on tour taking care of Lil. Both Greg & Ray have flown most of the flights as well as handling their additional duties. Their dedication and expertise has been a big factor in keeping the tour running smoothly.

It was a 6 hour flight to Reading, PA where we completed 11 Ride flights, 2 Airshow flights and a Currency flight - all flown on schedule. Thanks to the Squadron Maintenance Officer Don Obreiter for being there to handle Mx issues and making it possible to complete every flight on time. Cheryl Hilvert worked the Ride Desk and with 11 Ride flights at Reading, she put in long hours to get the job done - always in good spirits and very professionally.

Continuing to Buffalo, forecast thunderstorms resulted in a decision to fly 2 Ride flights a day early to avoid cancellations. It was a big chore to reschedule 24 passengers and again Cheryl handled this with aplomb. Well done!

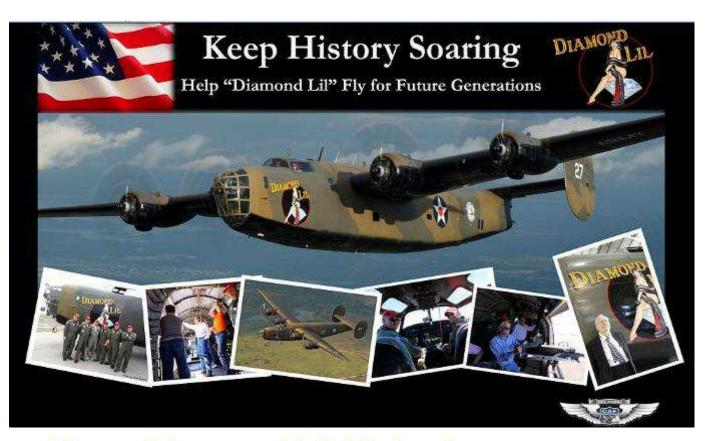
Other crewmembers have put in extra hours to keep everything running well including, Larry Carner, Archie Taylor, Paul Maupin, Dr. Charlie Rodriguez, Tom & Susan Bailey and Nick Weidenkopf. As others who have worked on tour know, it is rewarding to meet Vets who were former crewmembers and their families - but, it can also be challenging if they arrive when the aircraft is not open for tours. The crew frequently made special efforts to provide as much access to the B-24 as possible, which was much appreciated by the families.

The tour continues and I am honored to work with a great team! Thanks to all who work to Keep' m Flying.

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



Photo by Chet Manly



## Keep Diamond Lil Flying!

Diamond Lil is one of the first B-24's built and now one of only two still flying...

During the last airshow season, Diamond Lil experienced a total hydraulic failure, leading to a nose gear collapse during landing. The repairs have required over a year of work by staff and volunteers and many thousands of dollars. Replacement components had to be created by craftsmen, because original parts are no longer available.

Diamond Lil is a very rare B-24A. She was among the very first built, number 18 off the assembly line. She would be followed by over 18,000 B-24's or their variants. As restoration is completed, Diamond Lil will again be flying to airshows and tour stops around the country. Veterans of WWII and their families will have an opportunity to once again see a B-24 Liberator, hear the sound of her engines and even experience a ride on this historic aircraft.

To offset the significant costs of restoration and to keep Diamond Lil flying, we need the help of many. There are volunteers who donate their time and talent, but we also need those who can help with the funds to keep her flying.

Our goal is to raise \$75,000 to replenish the funds required to repair the damage from the nose gear collapse. Please help us meet our goal!

Your tax deductible donation will Keep Diamond Lil Flying!





Keep Diamond Lll Flying Video was produced by Shanty Films LLC

www.Crew713.com

Produced by Kelly McNichol & Fiona Hall Roman Flute-Director of Photography Abel Diaz-Grip/Electric Daniel Montoya-Editor Voice Overs recorded at Janimation Studios Mike Walker-Sound Engineer Produced and directed by Alejandro Mena



# **Member News June**, 2014

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

Bill Eaton, Federal Way, Washington Darryl Hanamura, Roseville, California James Beck, Clarksdale, Arizona Robert Burge, Park Falls, Wisconsin Foster H. Clark, Napa, California

#### **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





Lederman (pictured with Chief). Jeff traveled from Wassila, AK to help at the Ride Desk at Paine Field in Everett, WA.



Congrats to Jack Vos, who is interning on FIFI's West Coast Tour. Jack earned his "black hat" for qualifying at all back-end crew positions on FIFI.

#### For Squadron gear and merchandise, don't forget to visit the Px!



http://www.b29b24px.org/



#### JUNE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**REMINDER -- JUNE 21 MEETING MOVED TO JUNE 28** 

WHEN: Saturday, June 28 at 1:00 p.m.

(note this is one week later than our formerly scheduled meeting date)

WHERE: Dallas Executive Airport Conference Room (next to the Terminal Building)

#### **ADDRESS:**

Dallas Executive Airport Terminal Building 5303 Challenger Drive, Dallas, TX 75237

We invite all Squadron members and their friends to the next B-29/B-24 Squadron meeting on Sat, June 28. Please note the time and place have changed to Dallas Executive Airport at 1:00 pm. There will be quite a few members who will gather early at noon at Delta Charlie's Restaurant located inside the Airport Terminal (great salads and burgers).



www.deltacharlies.com

David Oliver and Phil Pardon in the Stearman

#### Win a Stearman Ride!!!

Special Offer for Squadron Members

The Squadron Stearman will be on site.

During the meeting we will raffle off a

FREE ride in the Stearman (for immediately after the meeting) to one lucky Squadron member. You must be an active Squadron member to qualify for the raffle. Also, if anyone joins the CAF and Squadron at the meeting, they will also receive a FREE Stearman ride.

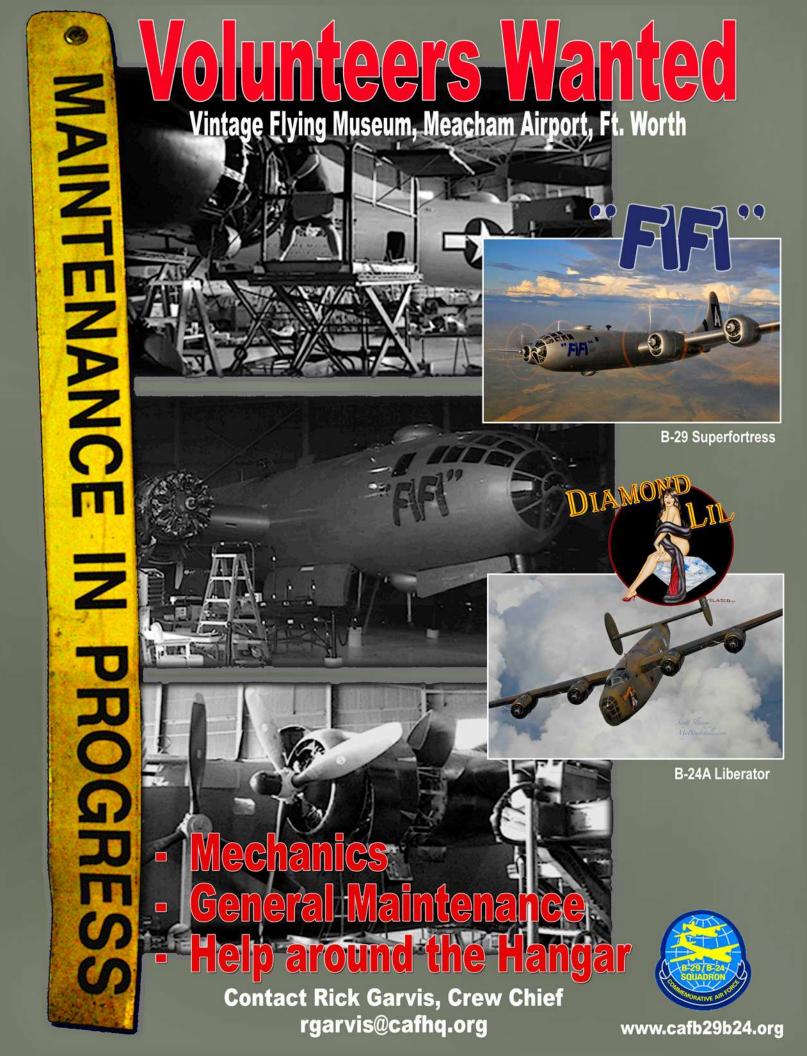
So come early and enjoy good food and friendship. Then stay for the latest in Squadron info and a chance to ride in the Squadron Stearman.

See you there!



# 2014 Squadron Meetings & Activities

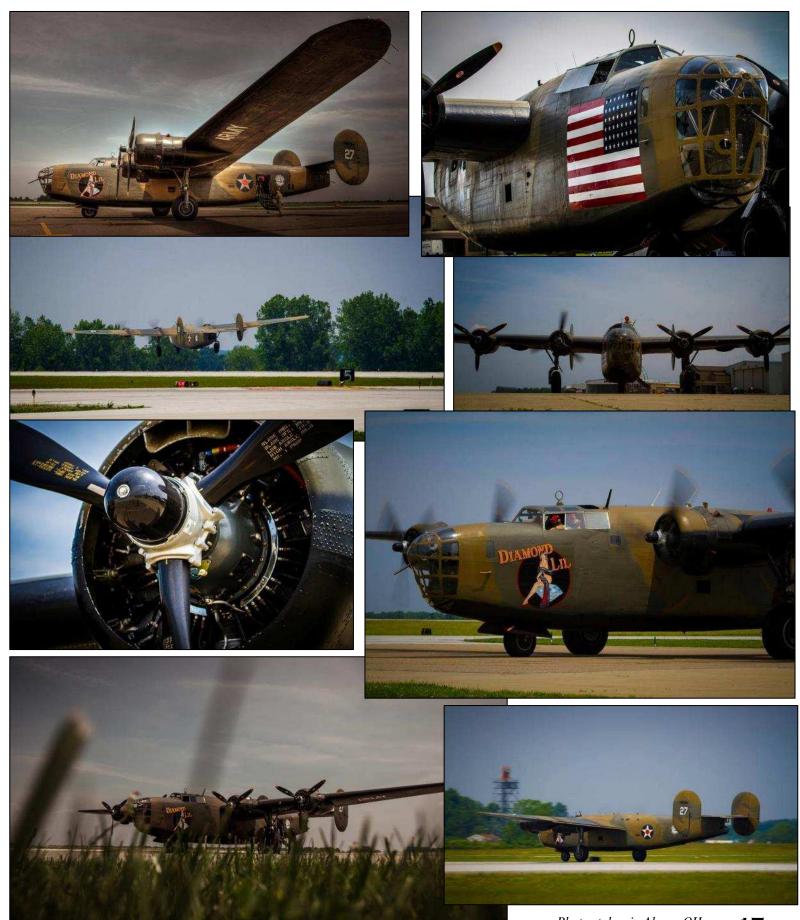
2014 Squadron Meeting Dates & Activities					
B-29 / B-24 Squadron					
	Day(s) of	Meeting			
Month	Week	Date(s)	Squadron Meetings and Activities		
June	Sat	28-Jun	1:00 pm Dallas Exec Airport		
July	Sat	19-Jul	No Meeting		
August	Sat	23-Aug	Ice Cream Social / Dallas Exec Airport		
Sept	Sat	20-Sep	1:00 pm Dallas Exec Airport		
Oct	Fri / Sat / Sun	Oct 3, 4, 5	CAF AirPower Expo		
Oct	Fri / Sat / Sun	Oct 10, 11, 12	CAF AirSho Midland		
Nov	Sat	15-Nov	Annual Meeting and Chili Cook Off		
Dec			No Meeting		
B-29 Schedule Overview					
	Beginning	Ending			
Tours	Date	Date	Destination		
Spring	10-Feb	31-Mar	Florida Tour		
Summer Tour A	14-May	22-Jun	Summer Tour A CA, OR, WA		
Maintenance	1-Jul	10-Jul	MX Break at Paine Field, Seattle area		
Summer Tour B	6-Jul	3-Aug	Summer Tour B WA, ID, UT, CO, KS		
Museum Display	4-Aug	25-Aug	B-29 on display in Midland		
Maintenance	26-Aug	18-Sep	Ft. Worth @ Vintage Flying Museum		
AirPower Expo	3-Oct	5-Oct	CAF AirPower Expo (location TBD)		
CAF AirShow	10-Oct	12-Oct	Midland		
Fall Tour			TBD		
Season Ends		3-Nov			
		B-24 Sched	ule Overview		
	Beginning	Ending			
Tours	Date	Date	Destination		
Summer Tour A	6-Jun	29-Jun	Summer Tour A PA, NY, Canada, OH		
Maintenance	1-Jul	10-Jul	MX Break at Marion, IL		
Summer Tour B	25-Jul	10-Aug	Summer Tour B IL, Oshkosh, MI		
AirPower Expo	3-Oct	5-Oct	CAF AirPower Expo (location TBD)		
CAF AirShow	10-Oct	12-Oct	Midland		
Fall Tour			TBD		
Season Ends		3-Nov			







Photos by Chet Manly







Photos by Mark Loper









































































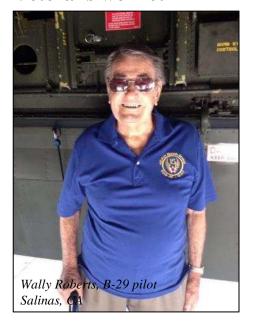






Photos by Squadron members

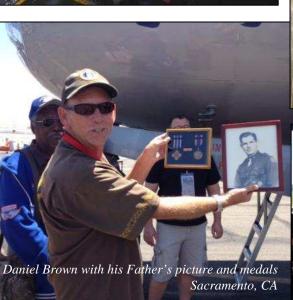
#### Veterans we met















Bob Geist, B-24 pilot

Reading, PA



Photos by Squadron members – sorry if you were on tour and we didn't get your pic on this page











#### **Tour Maintenance**



Crew Chief Rick with FIFI's #2 engine "Mitzi"



Interns Jake and Will working on #2 engine



First day of maintenance in Everett, WA

Crew Chief Rick changing out

bad ignition harness on #2



Working on ignition issue on #2



Assistant Crew Chief, Ben Powers, hard at work



BOB getting a little TLC

# B 29 / B 24 SOUADRON ARE FOR THE AIR FOR T

## **Editor's Corner**

#### In Memoriam Alex Green 1919-2014

Alex Green contacted me last Fall offering story contributions for The Flyer. He contributed features in the October/November 2013 issues and I printed another of his features in the May 2014 issue. I was saddened to hear of



Alex and his wife of 67 years, Freda "Freddie" Green

his passing in March. Alex's connections to B-29 development, targeting and weapons systems were remarkable. You can learn more about his service to our country and post-war career via the links in these three past issues of The Flyer.

#### October 2013 The Flyer

http://issuu.com/lgarvis/docs/the\_flyer\_october\_2013

#### November 2013 The Flyer

http://issuu.com/lgarvis/docs/the\_flyer\_november\_2013

#### May 2014 The Flyer

http://issuu.com/lgarvis/docs/may\_2014\_the\_flyer/1?e=3293382/8182339

#### Ki-84 "Frank" places at EagleQuest XXIII



My late war Ki-84 earned a bronze in the OOB category at Squadron's annual EagleQuest. You wouldn't want to see the real thing if you were a B-29 crewman in WWII. I suggested "Bombs Away!" for next year's theme. I would love to see some heavies in the contest!

# "Rosie the Riveter" lands a new gig

Our local "Rosie the Riveter" (Lisa Foster) is now a living history performer for the Frontiers of Flight Museum. You can see her there some weekends and we're sure to see her at CAF airshows and events in the future.



Rosie makes some new friends in the RAF at the Frontiers of Flight D-Day event in June

#### 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







# **B-29 / B-24 Squadron**

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Addison, Texas 75001
www.cafb29b24.org
972-387-2924 (Hangar)
432-413-4100 (Ride Desk)