



THE FLYER

Commemorative Air Force B-29 / B-24 Squadron

Maintenance time



Getting looked over before Wings Over Dallas next month

Photo by David O'Connor

September 2016



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

B-29 / B-24 Squadron Directory									
Position	Name	Phone	Email						
If you would like to get scheduled on a Tour Stop as a Crew Member Contact the following:									
B-29 Personnel Scheduling Officer	John Flynn	717-632-4497	jnaflynn@embargmail.com						
B-24 Personnel Scheduling Officer	Jim Neill	214-762-5891	jakat2@verizon.net						
If you are a New Member Looking to Get P	lugged In or Want to Vol	unteer Contact th	ne following:						
Volunteer & New Member Coordinator	Tim Colman	214-708-2279	tpcolman@gmail.com						
Squadron Officers:									
Squadron Commander	Neils Agather	817-946-9950	vnagather@agathertx.com						
Executive Officer	Tom Travis	214-763-0147	tomtravis@aol.com						
Adjutant & Personnel Officer	Debbie King	469-688-1709	squadadjutant@gmail.com						
Maintenance Officer	Don Obreiter	580-471-3048	obreiter@cableone.net						
Safety Officer	John Flynn	717-632-4497	inaflynn@embargmail.com						
Operations Officer	Archie Taylor	817-944-3226	taylor2014@tx.rr.com						
Assistant Ops Officer	Al Benzing	214-707-2726	albenzing@gmail.com						
Public Information Officer	Kim Pardon	913-636-6250	pardonb29@gmail.com						
Deputy Public Information Officer	Chris Madrid	770-655-3315	cjmadrid@yahoo.com						
Finance Officer	Gerald Oliver	312-953-0357	gerald.oliver@yahoo.com						
Squadron Staff:									
Squadron General Manager	Brad Pilgrim	843-991-3814	bpilgrim@cafhq.org						
Administrative Manager	Liz Vue	972-387-2924	evue@cafhq.org						
Sr. Crew Chief	Rick Garvis	972-380-8800	rgarvis@cafhq.org						
Crew Chief	Don Thurston	903-714-8037	don@donseye.info_						
Crew Chief	Ben Powers	214-277-3150	f14_ad@yahoo.com						
Facility Manager	Jim Neill	214-762-5891	jakat2@verizon.net						
B-24 Team:									
B-24 Go Team Leader	Al Benzing	214-707-2726	albenzing@gmail.com						
Diamond Lil Century Club Chairman	Toni Rabroker	972-740-4601	rabroker@hotmail.com						
B-24 Volunteer MX Coordinator	Steve Rabroker	469-387-6439	rabroker@hotmail.com						
B-24 Flight Ops Coordinator	Al Benzing	214-707-2726	albenzing@gmail.com						
B-24 Aircraft Tours Coordinator	Jim Neill	214-762-5891	jakat2@verizon.net						
Deputy Public Information Officer	Chris Madrid	770-655-3315	cjmadrid@yahoo.com						
B-29 Team:									
B-29 Flight Ops Coordinator	Archie Taylor	817-944-3226	taylor2014@tx.rr.com						
B-29 MX Coordinator	Rick Garvis	972-380-8800	rgarvis@cafhq.org						
B-29 Flight Engineer Coordinator	Rick Garvis	972-380-8800	rgarvis@cafhq.org						
Stearman Team:									
Stearman Flight Ops Coordinator	Archie Taylor	817-944-3226	taylor2014@tx.rr.com						
Stearman MX Coordinator	Bill Goeken	817-308-1916	wk.goeken@verizon.net						
Squadron Volunteer Leaders:									
Docent Emeritus	Jack Bradshaw	214-987-1963	jackbshaw@sbcglobal.net						
The "Flyer" Newsletter Editor	Kon Kelley	214-995-5184	konartist@verizon.net						
Appearance Captain	Henry Borderlon	972-406-0644	pixiee@sbcglobal.net						
PX Co-Captain	Rocky Smith	214-565-8562	diverock@hotmail.com						
PX Co-Captain	Alma Smith	214-284-9128	alma@b29b24px.org						
Social Chairman	Open								
	- 1								
Tours/Ride Desk/Marketing:									
Tour Manager & Scheduling	Jon Oliver	312-925-6184	aphtwarbirds@gmail.com						
Ride Desk Captain	Mary Mount	209-605-4313	mgmount@aol.com						
Tour Marketing Coordinator	Kim Pardon	913-636-6250	pardonb29@gmail.com						
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Photo by Steve Nelson

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Major Gregory Boyington"



Special Feature: "LB-30 Diamond Lil Memories" by Max Rawlings

National Air Tour of Historic World War II Aircraft COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE



Fall, 2016

Sacramento, CA — Sep 27-Oct 2

Prescott, AZ — Oct 5-9

Lubbock, TX — Oct 12-16

Wings Over Dallas Air Expo – Oct 28-30

New Orleans, LA ——Nov 4-6



See FIFI
and many other classic
aircraft at the CAF's
"Warbirds Over Dallas"
October 28-30
Dallas Executive Airport



*Schedule subject to change Check www.airpowertour.org The Central California Valley Squadron really showed *FIFI*'s crew a good time at the Modesto, CA stop.



Squadron members Cheryl Hilvert and Paul Maupin swing dancing



FIFI lit up beautifully



Squadron and CCVS member, Glenn Mount on the drums

Squadron Report

By now I am sure everyone has heard that *Lil* lost two engines on a training flight on the day she was returned to service. Fortunately our crack crew did a perfect job of handling the emergency. No one on board was hurt and *Diamond Lil* is undamaged. The impact of this, however, is big. This is deflating after all the hard work by the volunteers and our Squadron maintenance staff. It was also deflating to those who planned the Branson and subsequent stops. Calling and cancelling those stops was a difficult process. It impacts not only the financial support that *Lil* so badly needs, but also has a financial impact on the other CAF aircraft that were tagging along on the stops.



Then, of course, we have engines to replace. Besides the two that failed, there is a third engine that has 1100 hours logged and is at the end of its service life. Members of your Squadron staff and volunteers have met and are developing and will be implementing a \$300,000 capital campaign for the replacement of these engines. As this unfolds, please do your part to support the campaign directly and to encourage others to do so as well. I am very confident we can get this done and *Lil* will be back up and flying soon.

FIFI continues on tour. She is currently on the west coast. This year will soon come to a close. All in all, this will go down as a good tour year, though unfortunately not a great year. We will be taking a very hard look at our budget this year and will be making appropriate adjustments to remain solvent. All in all, FIFI is running well.

We will participate in the CAF Wings Over Dallas airshow at the end of October. Our Squadron is hosting the dinner for Colonels and volunteers on Friday night after the General Membership meeting. Toni Rabroker and Brad Pilgrim are working on this event. They will be needing volunteers. If you are able to provide time and talent, please give them a call. It will be a fun event. Also, if you have musical talent, Henry is "Getting the Band Back Together" - an all Colonel's band. After Wings Over Dallas, we will be participating in the National World War II Museum's air show collaboration with the CAF. Our unit will be providing planes and volunteer support.

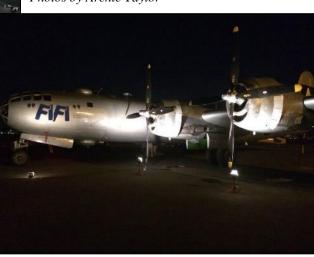
As you can see, even though our 2016 activities are drawing to a close, we finish them with a flair and will end them with the annual Chili Cook Off in November. Start working on your recipes. the competition is tough.

See you on the road.

Neils Agather Squadron Leader



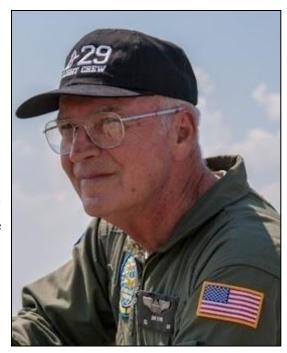
Day and night in Modesto, CA Photos by Archie Taylor



Training & Safety Report

As you are reading this, the Summer B Tour is currently in California and will soon be heading back to Meacham, with stops in Prescott, AZ and Lubbock, TX, on their way home. We had a safe and productive season thus far and the large number of our squadron members who participated, can be very proud of their accomplishments. By the end of the tour season, we will have had well over 80 squadron members on the tours again this year. Thanks to all those who volunteered.

We all know that it takes many hard working and dedicated volunteers both out on the tour and back home behind the scenes; all working together to keep the tour operating smoothly and safely. Special thanks go out to our tour leaders who always work long hours every day to handle the financial paperwork, personnel assignments, safety and security issues, the media, and many other challenges that confront the tour on a daily basis.



Phil Pardon was the tour leader on the entire Spring Tour as the crew dealt with the weather, an engine change and the resulting schedule changes.

Glenn Mount headed up the first 9 stops on the Summer A tour and will be finishing the Summer B tour next month. He will have over 12 weeks as tour leader by the end of the tour season

Curtis Wester was the tour leader for 11 stops during the Summer Tours. He will also be the tour leader for the Dallas Air Expo and New Orleans.

Cheryl Hilvert is currently our tour leader for the California stops. Cheryl was the tour leader last year for Diamond Lil in Florida and is doing a great job during her first time as tour leader with *FIFI*.

As we wrap up this tour season, let's all work together to continue our good safety record during the remainder of the year.

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

John Flynn Safety Officer



FIFI in Monterrey, CA

PIO Report

As the tour season winds down I am looking forward to a little bit less hectic pace although, as the season ends, planning for next season's tour stops begins. So, no rest for the weary. Jonathan Oliver did a great job planning our tours this year and we had outstanding crew members throughout.

I just updated my list of news stories and it looks like we had at least one news story in every city we visited during Summer Tour A and B with the exception of one – Monmouth NJ. *FIFI* landed in Sacramento this morning and has two stops to go to complete Summer Tour B – Prescott AZ and Lubbock TX.

But that's not all. . .

I am also managing the PR for Wings Over Dallas WWII Air Show which is just around the corner, October 28 -30. It should be a great weekend at

Dallas Executive Airport. Details about this event can be found at <u>WingsOverDallas.org</u>. Just a reminder that the annual general membership meeting will take place at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, October 28 at the CAF hangar. Our squadron is hosting dinner and drinks following the meeting.

The following weekend, November 4 - 6, the squadron will co-host the 3^{rd} annual WWII Air Expo in New Orleans along with the National World War II Museum. *FIFI* will be headed to New Orleans for that event. So put this on your calendar. We will have a lot of CAF aircraft there.

We have met with headquarters to brainstorm about fund raising to replace *Lil's* engines. We have several things cooking, but *Lil* will be featured in the 12 Planes of Christmas fund raiser this December. Nik Coleman, the *Plane Resurrection* producer, was kind enough to put together a short, but very moving video about the B-24 using footage he shot when he was here for *Lil's* maintenance flight. I will debut the video at our annual meeting in November. We are keeping it under wraps until then because we want it to make a big impact during the first days of the campaign.

I leave you with this link to a short video created by our friends at Aero News Network. They flew along with us at AirVenture.

Aero-TV: Cruisin The Superfortress - ANN Rides Along with "FIFI" and the CAF | Aero-News Network

That's all I have for now.

Kim Pardon Public Information Officer CAF B29/B24 Squadron p / (913) 636-6250 e / pardonB29@gmail.com

www.AirPowerTour.org





Financial Report

September Finance Report

The short summary of our 2016 financial situation is this... we expect to end the year somewhere around \$1.55 million in revenue, and \$1.65 million in expenses. That means we should end the year with a deficit of around \$100,000.

Tour stops have been good, with strong ride sales again in 2016. Gate receipts are down a little from last year. From year to year we never know how each of our tour stops will perform. There are many factors including local media, weather, and competition from other activities. But throughout the year, things tend to average out.



Our cash position is shown below. It shows our accounts, the amount of cash we had on hand at the beginning of year and our balance on Sept 15 of this year.



B-29 / B-24 Squadron & the AirPower History Tour									
For the Year to Date through Sept 15, 2016									
	Cash		Cash		Cash				
	Balance at		Balance at		Gain				
	1/1/2016		9/15/2016		<loss></loss>				
Chase Bank Account	\$	69,642	\$	187,366	\$	117,724			
Bank Of America Account	\$	85,355	\$	30,969	\$	(54,386)			
B-29 Aircraft Account	\$	313,006	\$	248,049	\$	(64,957)			
B-24 Aircraft Account	\$	98,168	\$	44,739	\$	(53,428)			
Aircraft Reserve Account	\$	-	\$	50,000	\$	50,000			
Stearman Aircraft Account	\$	4,430	\$	(257)	\$	(4,687)			
T-6 Aircraft Account	\$	1,476	\$	184	\$	(1,292)			
Cash Balance Totals	\$	572,077	\$	561,050	\$	(11,027)			
Less Invoices to pay:									
Partner aircraft ride sales		\$	25,000						
Balance of '16 ANUAC			\$	26,000					
B-29 Tour B Rider Fee to HQ			\$	5,100					
Subtotal			\$	56,100					
			_	504.055	Ļ	(57.407)			
Adjusted Balance			\$	504,950	\$	(67,127)			

Generous Donation

We received a letter not long ago from a trust officer of a bank. Ms. Sheila J. Hewitt passed away on March 29, 2016. In her will left \$50,000 to the B-29 / B-24 Squadron. Ms. Hewitt was a resident of Iowa and had an affinity for the planes of the CAF. We are very thankful to Ms. Hewitt for remembering these planes and the people who fought and flew. The donation has been deposited into our engine reserve account.

Gerald Oliver 312-953-0357 (text only) gerald.oliver@yahoo.com

DIAMOND LIL

B-24 Go Team Report

MX FLIGHT

Shortly after noon on September 1st, *Diamond Lil* flew for the first time since June of 2015. David Oliver was PIC, I flew right seat, Steve Rabroker Flight Engineer with Rick Garvis and Don Thurston as Scanners. A lot of work had gone into *Lil* by Mx Staff & Volunteers to get her to this point. It culminated with a detailed preflight briefing, then we were ready for engine start. Take off was normal and she flew well. After maneuvering over the airport and vicinity for 30 minutes or so, David brought her in for a nice landing. A good, uneventful, Mx flight!

After a post-flight inspection, we prepared for a training flight that afternoon.

TRAINING FLIGHTS

I had the opportunity to fly left seat for some of the training and it was indeed a pleasure to fly *Lil* once again. She felt good and operated without a problem as we flew to Ft Worth Meacham and did a number of take-offs and landings.

David flew the last training flight of the day, during which the #3 and #4 engines decided they'd had enough. As you will read elsewhere, David did a very nice job of getting *Lil* safely on the ground at Meacham. Old engines, with a lot of time on them can have problems and they did.

FALL TOUR FALLOUT

Since we were due to start the Fall Tour with *Lil* and other aircraft the very next morning, a lot of people scrambled to see what could be salvaged. Jonathan Oliver arranged to have the A-26 *Lady Liberty* from Enid, OK take *Lil's* place at Branson. Mark Novak, who was PIC on the A-26 also put a lot of miles on a rent car to ensure the Ride Desk made it to Branson. It all came together and we were able to put on a good showing with the remaining aircraft. Thanks to all who made it happen!

We were unable to secure a replacement aircraft for Muskogee or Fayetteville, so regrettably those had to be cancelled. Similarly, *Lil* will not be able to make an appearance at Alliance Airshow, DFW SkyBall, Wings Over Dallas or New Orleans. She is safe in the hangar at VFM awaiting two or perhaps three new engines.

BUYING ENGINES

Lil has one good low-time engine, one operable hightime engine and two engines that must be replaced before flight. As a practical matter, we need to raise enough money to buy three new/rebuilt engines, plus have the funding for a spare engine. This is going to be a huge effort, which is already underway. You will hear more specifics soon and will be asked to help as you are able.

Al Benzing 214-707-2726 albenzing@gmail.com





Member News September, 2016

The Squadron welcomes the following new members in September, 2016

Dan Smith of Plano, Texas Amy Metz of Denver, Colorado Glenn Smith of Duncan, Oklahoma Julius Yoder of Marion, Illinois Joey Castiglione of Modesto, California Todd Abbott of Dallas, Texas Brett Bourgeois of Aledo, Texas Sheri Glynn of Sonora, California Linda Gordon of Oak Park, Michigan

We have elections at the November meeting:

Unit Leader **Executive Officer** Maintenance Officer John Flynn will not be stepping down from his position as Safety Officer.

Nomination Committee:

Henry Bordelon: pixiee@sbcglobal.net Toni Rabroker: rabroker@hotmail.com Glenn Mount: gmount0985@aol.com

Contact these members with names of nominees.

Membership Info

If you have any membership questions, please feel free to contact me at squadadjutant@gmail.com Dues and new member apps can be mailed to: Debbie King 13562 Braemar Drive Dallas, Texas 75234 B29/B24 Squadron Adjutant 469-688-1709





It is nice to snap the photographer once and awhile. Here is our favorite photog, Raymond Jeffcoat with Lisa "Rosie the Riveter" Foster at Warbirds on Parade in Lancaster, TX, September 3, 2016



Want to wear the cool new Squadron maintenance T-shirt. You gotta earn it by helping out with maintenance on FIFI and Lil. Contact Crew Chief Rick to get engaged.

For a Squadron shirts and gear, contact alma@B29B24px.org at the Squadron Px! http://www.b29b24px.org/





BUY YOUR TICKETS TODAY!

Oct. 28-30, 2016

Dallas Executive Airport

(formerly Redbird Airport)

WingsOverDallas.org



Saturday, Oct. 29 and Sunday, Oct. 30 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Tickets available online or at the event gate.







Callina Colonels

THE CUSTODIANS are coming to Wings Over Dallas

If you have musical talent, can play an instrument, or sing the blues let us know by October 15

cause...

we're gettin' the band back together

Contact Henry Bordelon at skymaster1313@gmail.com

Friday, 10/28 we get it on



Hosted by the B-29/B-24 Squadron



Volunteer Spotlight Don Boccaccio By Konley Kelley



Don Boccaccio was recommended for the Volunteer Spotlight this month. He is one of the newer members of our Squadron and has definitely plunged into the fray. He has a unique connection to another well-known B-29.

Don was born in Hartford, CT in 1954. He spent his youth in Wethersfield,

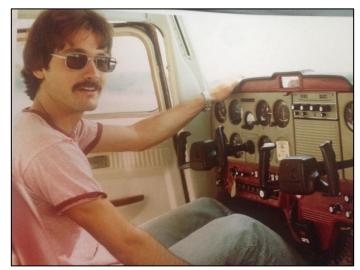
CT and attended Wethersfield High School. Don's father, John, was an engineer at a Pratt & Whitney plant in East Hartford, CT. He was on the team responsible for engineering the fan blades for the JT9D jet engine used on the Boeing 747. His mother, Helen was a homemaker raising Don and his three brothers.

Don's love of aviation started with his dad. When he was a kid, they built airplane models together and a glider they would take to a nearby bridge and fly. Don's favorite memory was heading over with his Dad to a spot where they could watch the final approach of aircraft landing at Hartford Brainard Airport.

In high school, Don picked up photography and found an unusual way to make money with his talents. He photographed automobile accident scenes and sold the photos to the victims and lawyers. On Friday and Saturday nights he'd keep busy listening to the police scanner and hustling out to accidents to snap pictures. He had a darkroom in his basement to develop the pics. It was good money and enabled him to buy some high-end photography equipment and to pay for his college education. Later on, Don put these skills to use in a part-time business taking aerial photographs for realtors, construction companies and others.

At the University of Hartford, Don majored in electronics engineering. He broke up with his college girlfriend which left him with lots of spare time so...he took up flying. He graduated from college in 1976 and earned his pilot's license in 1977 at 23 years old. Getting time to fly with the instructor and dealing with weather delays was too frustrating so he bought his own plane, a Cessna 150, during this time.

While working at Jo-Di's Sound Center in Hartford during college, he created the Service Department. Eventually he became one of three partners for the store which grew to a 10-store franchise and his function was as the General Manager of the stores. Financially this set him up and he was able to sell his portion of the business and retire at 38 years old.



Don takes delivery of his Cessna 150

As a retiree, Don was able to be a stay-at-home dad for his children. He was also able to be there for his dad who was diagnosed with cancer in 1992 and was grateful for the freedom to spend a lot of time with him in the final months of his life.

He had married Barbara in April, 1984 after meeting her at Misquamicut Beach in RI. Barbara, who earned her Ph.D. in 1994, is faculty in psychology at Tunxis Community College in Farmington, CT. She retired last year but still teaches online.

Don started another electronics business in 1992 after leaving Jo-Di's. He was able to manage the business from home and continued to have time for his family which included his two daughters, Vanessa and Leah. His oldest, Vanessa, is 30 years old and is a Physician Assistant (PA-C) at a family practice in CT. Vanessa is engaged to be married in June, 2018. Leah is 26 and received her Master's Degree in Cognitive Science at Ruhr University at Bochum, Germany near where she lives. The family is headed to Germany in December for Leah's wedding.

Don retired from his business five years ago but now works part-time at local airports as an avionics technician. The couple recently moved to and renovated the beach house in Rhode Island they bought as newlyweds and spend winters in their condo south of West Palm Beach.



Flying with daughters Vanessa (co-pilot's seat) and Leah in the back.

Have I mentioned flying? Don's been flying his whole life and took the family on many family vacations in his Cessna. He is most proud of the volunteer work he and Barbara do with several flying charities "Angel Flights," "Mercy Flights Florida" and "Pilots and Paws."



Ten years ago he began volunteering at the New England Air Museum (NEAM) in Windsor Locks, CT. The museum collection includes 100 aircraft ranging from early flying machines to supersonic jets. 60 are displayed in three hangars and surrounding areas. One of the crown jewels of the collection is the B-29 Superfortress *Jack's Hack*, part of the 58th Bomb Wing Memorial exhibit. *Jack's Hack* is one of the most faithfully restored B-29s on static display in the world. Visitors pay \$200.00 for private guided tours of the interior. Don has become the senior docent responsible for tours of *Jack's Hack*.



An article from a German newspaper with Don giving a tour of Jack's Hack

As a certified FAA avionics technician, Don repairs all GA avionics similar to those used in CAF aircraft. Using this skill, he rebuilt a working B-29 gun sight on display with *Jack's Hack* at the museum. He is especially proud of this project. It has the computer technology and electronics of a functioning gun sight. In use it can calculate range to target, speed, gravity and other variables.



Don standing next to the computer control system of a B-29 gun sight

Two years ago, Don learned *FIFI* was coming to Bradley International Airport. NEAM and *FIFI* offered a cross promotion for museum guests. Don was asked to fly a local TV crew to *FIFI* at her stop before Bradley, the Reading air show, where the TV crew was to board *FIFI* for filming the flight back to CT. Don met the CAF crew and arranged for them to take a private tour of *Jack's Hack*. After watching Squadron member, Curtis Wester, at longline, he asked Curtis, "How did you get this gig?" Before you know it, Don was at B-29 Ground School last January and he worked both the Spring and Summer tours – a total of nearly six weeks on tour with *FIFI*.

Don is going to shadow Phil Pardon soon so he can become a tour leader for Spring 2017. He is also on tap to be the "ringleader" at the New Orleans stop coming up in November.

Some of Don's favorite memories on tour include the Reading, PA tour stop – his favorite of all the tour stops. Reading is very close to Chief Flynn's home and Don enjoyed hanging out with Chief as he gave a tour for the crew of the airshow sights including the spectacular

reenactors' village. Don warns us to be prepared to gain weight if on tour with Chief. You'll be dining on ice cream every night. Don claims he gained 10 pounds while on his first tour and the flight suit was fitting very tight on his final days.

He enjoyed flying with Jeff Skiles, Cheryl Hilvert, his trainer, and many other wonderful crew members. All now good friends.

Don is continually impressed by how well-run the AirPower tour is and singles out the organizational skills of tour manager, Jonathan Oliver, as well as veterans such as John Flynn, whom he describes as a consummate professional. The sheer logistics of moving from tour stop to tour stop, coordinating the media, flight crews and back-end crews, ride desk, Px, adjoining aircraft, on-site hotels, cars, meals and support, timing of it all, etc. – it has him in awe. He likens it to the juggler with a bunch of spinning plates. He keeps them spinning and nary has one fall to the ground.

Don says joining our CAF Squadron is one of the best things he has ever done. Touring with *FIFI* is "invigorating" and comes pretty close to the high Don felt when he earned his pilot's license. He loves doing this and hopes you'll join him on tour soon.



Tom Bailey, Don Boccaccio, Don Thurston, David Oliver, John Flynn



Don Boccaccio, Jeff Skiles, Cheryl Hilvert



Cheryl presents Don with his FIFI cap as a qualified scanner



Book Review Code Talker By Al Benzing

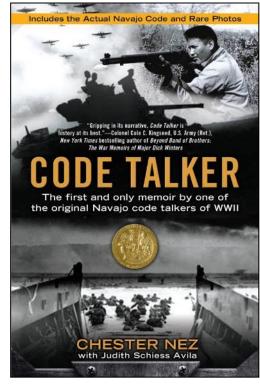
Code Talker

By Chester Nez with Judith Schiess Avila

I found this to be a very interesting book, providing new insights and perspectives on WWII as well as the unique story of Navajo life and contributions to America in the Pacific war. Chester Nez details a harsh but fulfilling life as a young Navajo boy. Long days of hard work in the desert Southwest, with only the most basic necessities was the norm. Being sent off to boarding school was unpleasant on many levels, but it did provide an education and the ability to become fluent in English. This schooling, along with his dedication to his Navajo roots, ultimately provided him a path to join the Marines and become a Code Talker.

He described the terror of multiple beach landings, working long days as a Code Talker under fire and surrounded by death and destruction. As a Navajo and a Marine his positive outlook is evident – a spirit of living 'the right way', working hard in harsh conditions to be ready to do his duty and doing whatever it took to get the job done.

His family, Marine buddies, teachers and mentors were so important to Chester and he treasured their support throughout his life. One comes away from this book with the feeling of fulfillment – that this man and his other Code Talkers were a force for good – not just for their work but in how they did it. In some situations heroic, and always good men doing great work.





Cpl. Chester Nez in 1945



Chester Nez in 2012



Navajo Code Talkers relay radio communications in their native tongue in the South Pacific, July 7, 1943

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Special Feature Major Gregory Boyington USMC Medal of Honor Recipient

by Konley Kelley

The Flyer has featured many MOH aviator recipients. If you have an MOH recipient you would like featured, consider writing a story or contact the editor with your suggestion. This month it's Pappy's turn.

A few weeks after my 10th birthday, a show premiered on NBC. It was Friday, September 23, 1976, the pilot episode of BAA BAA BLACK SHEEP. I was already a WWII history buff. One of my favorite toys was the GUNS OF NAVARONE playset. My ceiling was filled with WWII model planes suspended by fishing line. Now I had a chance every Friday night to watch one of my favorite WWII fighters,

the F4U Corsair dogfight with Zeros. It is hard to believe there were only two seasons of the show (36 episodes). I watched many hours of it in syndication (retitled BLACK SHEEP SQUADRON) for endless years to follow. The show's headliner, Robert Conrad, was already a recognizable star from the 60's hit show THE WILD WILD WEST. Sure BBBS was cheesy. Historians reviled it. In the pilot titled FLYING MISFITS, a wounded Boyington quits the AVG and steals a P-40 to make his way back to US forces. He also steals a general's dog. Later the dog starts barking when a Zero gets on their tail...too funny.

So many of the episodes were formula for entertainment's sake but there was always some nugget of truth in every plotline's inspiration and influencing it all was the larger than life Marine Corps pilot and ace that was Pappy Boyington. He was already a legend well before a TV show about his Black Sheep premiered this month 40 years ago.

I bet some of our veteran CAF members have met Pappy Boyington on the air show circuit. At the time BLACK SHEEP SQUADRON was hot, Pappy Boyington resided in Fresno, CA. My hometown, Madera, CA was just 20 miles north of Fresno. In August, Madera Airport hosted the "Gathering of Warbirds." Pappy was the VIP at the show. I remember seeing him there. I wish I had a picture with him. I also recall a huge B-29 visiting us one year. Pappy passed away in Fresno of cancer on January 11, 1988 at age 75.

Gregory Boyington was born in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho on December 4, 1912. He attended high school in Tacoma, Washington and was on the wrestling team. After high school, he attended the University of Washington and was a member of the ROTC. He was a college athlete and spent his summers working at a logging camp. He graduated in 1934 with a B.S. in aeronautical engineering. He obtained flight



Major Gregory "Pappy" Boyington





training under the Aviation Cadet Act as a U.S. Marine flyer and transferred to the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve in 1935. He got his wings in March, 1937. By November, 1940 he was 1st. Lt. and instructor in Pensacola.

Boyington resigned his commission in 1941 to join the AVG and famed "Flying Tigers" in Burma. He was a flight leader and, flying the P-40, was officially credited with 2 aerial victories and 1.5 on the ground (he later claimed six victories with the AVG). In April, 1942 he quit the AVG and returned to the US.



The Black Sheep pose on the wings of Corsair #17740 on Vella Lavella, Dec. 27th, 1943



Boyington briefs the Black Sheep before a mission.

By December, 1943, Boyington's record stood at 25 enemy aircraft shot down, one shy of WWI ace Eddie Rickenbacker's record. On January 3, 1943, he tied Rickenbacker's record at 26 kills but was shot down over Rabaul. Boyington's wingman was also shot down. After search and rescue missions ceased, Boyington was declared MIA.

He was picked up by an enemy submarine and no record was made of his capture. Boyington remained a POW until liberation from the Omori Prison camp near Tokyo on August 29, 1945. Upon his return to the US, he was met by 21 former Squadron members who celebrated his return in a rowdy party at the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco. Boyington was commissioned a Lt. Col. and awarded the Medal of Honor by President Harry Truman on October 5, 1945.



A Chinese soldier guarding P-40s

In September, 1942, he rejoined the Marines as a Major. Deployed to the South Pacific, he eventually became the commanding officer of Marine Fighter Squadron 214 known as the "Black Sheep." At age 31, he was nearly 10 years older than most of his pilots. He was nicknamed "Gramps" and later "Pappy," which stuck. VMF-214 was equipped with the F4U Corsair.

Flying from the island of Vella Lavella, the Black Sheep flew fighter sweeps in the Russell Islands-New Georgia and Bougainville-New Britain-New Ireland areas, also known as "the Slot." In two combat tours, the Squadron claimed 203 planes destroyed or damaged and produced nine aces with 97 confirmed kills. The media adored and closely followed the Black Sheep's success. The Squadron was subsequently awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for extraordinary heroism in action.



Pappy made a Victory Bond Tour but his participation was overshadowed by drinking and acts of insubordination - behavior he was known for since his training days at Pensacola. He retired from the Marine Corps on August 1, 1947. For the next ten years, he struggled in civilian life, with the bottle and failed personal relationships.

In 1958, he published his autobiography, <u>Baa Baa Black Sheep</u>. This evoked a renewed public interest in Boyington and his wartime exploits. Plans for a film about his life were developed but not realized. In the late-1970s, producer Stephen Cannell brought Pappy's story to the small screen with BAA BAA BLACK SHEEP. Pappy was a consultant on the show but didn't meddle with the storylines – which he later called "hogwash and Hollywood hokum." A Squadron member asked about the show said they got two facts right, their commanding officer was Major Boyington and the Squadron designation was VMF-214.

Pappy Boyington was buried in Arlington National Cemetery with full honors on January 15, 1988. He is buried next to boxing legend Joe Louis. A friend at the funeral ceremony who saw this remarked "Ol' Pappy wouldn't have to go far to find a good fight."





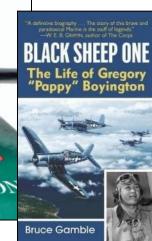






Pappy Boyington's autobiography with a 1:48 figure of Pappy and scale model of his Corsair

Several documentaries about the Black Sheep can be found on the internet/youtube. What I am on the lookout for is an affordable box set of BBBS Seasons I-II



Bruce Gamble's excellent biography of Pappy Boyington



Note: Social media has marked the 40th anniversary of BAA BAA BLACK SHEEP prompting the posting of a fascinating article about the Corsairs used in the show. You can read it at this link:

http://www.warbirdsnews.com/warbird-articles/poor-lambs-corsairs-baa-baa-blacksheep.html



Feature Story LB-30 Diamond Lil Memories By Max Rawlings

Recently, I was blessed to be able to go out on tour with *FIFI*. While out on tour, I made some new friends and re-connected with old friends from my early days with the Squadron. My first experience with the B-29/B-24 Squadron was back in 1997 on a transition flight/one-year membership



from Ogden, Utah to Reno, Nevada. We took off on a beautiful September morning with *FIFI* in the lead and *Diamond Lil* following behind. After a thrilling take off, we headed south to Salt Lake City and then turned west following Interstate-80 through the Utah and then the Nevada deserts. *Lil* was still in her light brown, 98th Bomb Group LB-30 configuration with a solitary gun poking out her nose and the remainder of the plane devoted to PX storage bins and crew seats. At the time, *Lil* had long Plexiglas windows under the wings on both sides about six feet long, and they were great for watching the landscape go by. I still remember being fascinated in watching the underside of the baby blue wings and engines in the mild turbulence bounce up and down with the engines sagging down as the wings went up.

We headed west passing the Bonneville Salt Flats racing area and then Charlie Tilgman, the pilot of FIFI took our trail formation in for a low pass over Wendover Army Airbase. It seemed historical to fly low past the run-down Enola Gay hangar, the row of old wooden hangars and the orange and white checkered control tower. We then banked left and cut across the dug up bomber runways and then completed our circle passing over the Atomic Bomb loading pit before resuming our course west for Reno. I have always enjoyed a little sightseeing when flying with the Squadrons' pilots. About the time we were north of Fallon, Nevada, Charlie started to pull away from Lil with FIFI being the faster plane even with the old engines. We landed at Reno and taxied in together as our own warbird parade.



My second flight on *Diamond Lil* was with Bill Goeken at the controls on a transition flight from Idaho Falls, Idaho to Boise, Idaho in 2001. Bill is a wonderful sightseeing pilot along with Tom Travis, Carl Riese, and Mack Deeds just to name a few. 2001 was our first year of selling rides on the ride program and *Diamond Lil* carried that entire load as a true workhorse for the Squadron and the trend setter for the rest of the CAF ride program. *FIFI* did not do the ride program until 2011 because the old engines were unreliable, the parts were getting scarce and engine rebuilders at the time only did work that lasted a few hours.

Since I have never written an article about *Diamond Lil*, I thought I would take a moment to write a few things about *Lil* and share an article written by Tom Cloyd about *Diamond Lil* back in 1987. I am not a pilot, but I found Tom's narrative interesting on how he flew *Diamond Lil*. Tom passed away about 20 years ago, another of our Squadrons' wonderful pilots. This article appeared in a book titled "Confederate Air Force – Past Perfect- Ready for Action!" photography by Nigel Moll. I will quote the article as it is written in its entirety:

"At the run-up, we exercise the props at 1700 rpm and then take it up to 2300 rpm for the mag checks—two engines at a time, one and four, and two and three. The superchargers are not on the engines any more, and on takeoff we bring our power up to 42 inches. With superchargers, we would get 52 inches. For war emergency, they would go to about 56 inches. We're not flying very heavy. In the war they could fly at up to 60,000 pounds, and we're flying at 42,000 to 45,000 pounds. The empty weight of the airplane as it sits today, with no armament, is 27,500 pounds.

We just let this airplane fly off the ground—we don't rotate—and it'll become airborne at 105 to 110 knots. We stop the wheels rotating, because if you don't, they'll sit out there and shake—shake the whole airplane. It feels as if they'll shake the engines off if you let them. On gear retraction we come back to climb power—38 inches and 2400 rpm—and bring in the 20 degrees of flap when we're 500 feet agl [above ground level].

We don't go too high in these airplanes. Cross-country, we'll fly at 4,500 or 6,500 feet, or a lot of times we'll stay just 1,500 feet above the ground and let people look at the airplane as we fly over the cities and towns. We cruise in the neighborhood of 2000 rpm and 30 inches, and that gives us about 170 knots indicated up to 8,500 feet.

At most airports we go to, we make a low pass before landing. As we turn onto downwind we bring the props up to 2300 rpm and set up 25 inches. We start the gear down—gear speed is 156 knots—and go to 10 degrees of flaps, and 20 degrees and 20 inches of manifold as we turn base, still with 2300 rpm. Speed now is about 120 knots. On the base-to-final turn, we go to 30 degrees of flaps and, on short final, full flaps, leaving the power right at 20 inches and 2300 rpm.

Just as we come over the threshold, we start easing back on the power, round out and touch down at about 95 knots. On rollout, we try to keep the nose off until 70 knots. Steering is with the brakes or with power; there's no steerable nose wheel. Retract the flaps, open the cowl flaps, taxi in and shut down."



I, like all of you hope that *Lil's* engines can be fixed quickly so that she can once again be in the air and on display at airports to show the wonderful work that has been done to keep her flying.

For the Love of Scale

Modeling





1:72 model

"Barbie" flies and shoots her big gun with a little help from Photoshop.



Editor's Corner

In the July issue, I posted pics of scale modeling projects on my workbench this summer. It has been a hot one so I hope you took to the plastic and glue to escape the heat. I finished the two projects

featured in July, Barbie III a 1:72 B-25H Mitchell (the Cavanaugh Flight Museum now owns this warbird) and Omaha Beach. I used sand my wife collected in a ziploc from Omaha Beach this summer while on a high school trip. The diorama turned out great and I'm thrilled to have it in my collection.







These 1:35 soldiers are from the 29th Infantry Division – the first wave to hit Omaha Beach.



I used heated pins to secure the soldiers to the diorama.

We are working on a model display of some sort with local modelers and vendors for Wings Over Dallas on Oct 28-30. I hope we will have something - Pearl Harbor-themed - to show the attendees

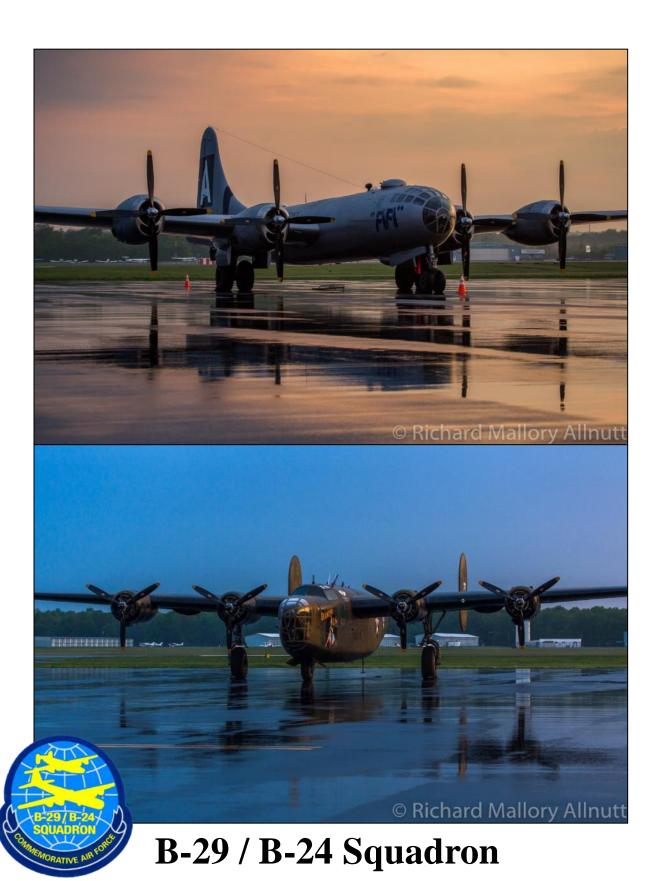
THE FLYER WANTS YOU!

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!"

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