50th Anniversary of mans first supersonic flight

Brig. Gen. Charles E. "Chuck" Yeager, the most famous pilot in the 357th Fighter Group Association was the first person to break the so-called sound barrier. On Oct. 14 1947 he piloted the tiny rocket powered Bell X-1 at a speed in excess of Mach 1 ushering in the space age.

On October 14 1997 Chuck Yeager broke the sound barrier again in a special program to commemorate the event at Edwards AFB California. He flew an F15 jet fighter over the base making a sonic boom at precisely the same time he did 50 years ago. A gathering of several hundred dignitaries, veteran pilots, friends and Edwards workers was on hand to witness the occasion. Secretary of the Air Force, Sheila Widnall was there to congratulate Gen. Yeager after the flight.

A full scale mock up of the X-1 was on display. The Postal Service unveiled a special stamp, featuring the X1 aircraft, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the supersonic flight. There was a small dedication ceremony to rename a street on Edwards AFB, Yeager Boulevard. This had some special significance since in the past all streets have been named after deceased test pilots. That evening there was a symposium held in the city of Lancaster's Performing Arts Center. The Men of Mach One program was hosted by David Hartman and featured Gen. Yeager as well as other living participants of the X1 flight test program conducted 50 years ago.

The following week end Gen. Yeager participated in the two day air show at the Edwards AFB open house, Oct. 17 & 18 1997. Each day Gen. Yeager flew a F15 jet fighter overhead making a sonic boom to open the air show. He would land and welcome the crowds to the air show. Later in the day he flew a P51 Mustang in the missing man formation. On, Sunday the final day of the air show, he announced that he was ending his career of over 55 years flying military aircraft. Since his retirement from the Air Force in 1975 he stayed active flying military aircraft as a consultant to the Commander of the Air Force Flight Test Center. Gen. Yeager will not remain grounded however as he intends to continue flying general aviation aircraft from time to time.

The 357th Fighter Group Association extends our congratulations to Chuck Yeager on this historic anniversary.

357TH FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION
JOE DeSHAY, MASTER OF THE NEWSLETTER

Thank you for the years of work you've done keeping the Group together. It would not be unsupportable to say that you've been Group Leader longer than anybody else ever was.

Not having done actual shooting myself, I've always felt a little like an outsider when reading about the feats of others, who were the reason for being for all the rest of us in the 357TH. Yet we did our bits. Everyone knows, for instance, that war birds would not fly very high, very far, very fast, very long if it weren't for the men manning the wrenches. We with the pencils, spoons, supplies, and trucks also helped, with info, records, pay, food, clothes, ammo, parts, photos, etc.

I was once such a man and I'd like to put my bit in the record, if I may.

I came to the 362nd from Hq&Hq Sqdn, 8th AF because I wanted to be a squadron adjutant again – *but in a Front Line unit, not a Hq.* I'd attended a number of Jimmy Doolittle's daily briefings and I wanted to be closer to the action. Also, I'd helped train thousands of troops and launch several fighter squadrons as a cadre member or during other stateside service.

Here's my story, very abbreviated.

15 Aug 1940 I enlisted in the Signal corps, because there was an opening and I knew radio pretty well. (Had hobbied at it for 11 years, been the neighborhood repairman, and made good grades in two semesters of radio physics at West Virginia University while majoring in business administration). Three days later, Captain Russell Scott, AC, who commanded the Air Corps Detachment at Port Columbus, Columbus, OH invited me to transfer to the AC.

Thinking it would mean flying airplanes, I accepted. I learned to gas, grease, oil, wash, pre-flight, and taxi them by Thanksgiving, when I was sent to Chanute Field to do the A&E mechanics course. I also did the Instruments Specialist and the Instructors courses. Assigned to the Air Corps Technical Training Command, I was teaching the instruments phase of the aircraft and engine maintenance course when 7 December came around and the call for combat volunteers came out. Being Regular Army, I was among the first few to answer. On 25 December I pulled KP on our troop train, peeling potatoes and throwing the peels out the door of our baggage-car field kitchen, as we trundled toward Charleston, SC.

Assigned to the 56th Pursuit Group, Hq & Hq Sq, I helped introduce the Charleston, SC, Municipal Airport to the Army Air Corps. Soon we were transported to Teaneck Armory in West Englewood, NJ to await orders to board ship for England. Our ship was burned and sunk in New York harbor – presumed sabotage.

From the original 56th, they made a cadre for the 81st Pursuit Group and sent me along in it to the Charlotte, NC municipal airport, which already had some Air Corps. Officially, I was instrument specialist for the 91st Fighter Squadron, but we had no airplanes, so the First Sergeant made me the orderly room staff. Shortly after the squadron started getting pilots and planes, I went to OCS in Miami Beach. I was followed there by Clark Gable and Lem Hensley.

On the last day or so of OCS, there was what seemed to be an urgent call for some of us to volunteer for assignment as physical fitness officers, and I did. That got me into the world of training and frozen promotions, including the following "dead end" jobs:

Assistant Director of Physical Training, Lowry Field, Denver, CO
Director Of Physical Training, AAFTTC Detachment, Colorado State College of Education, Greeley, CO
Post Education Officer, Troop School, Lowry Field, Denver, CO
OIC, B-24 Mobile Training Unit #6, Tarrant Field, Fort Worth, TX
Ass't Phys Tng Off, Cp Pinedale, Fresno, CA
Adjutant, 329th Fighter Squadron, Concord, CA
Assistant Adjutant, Hq & Hq Sqn, 8th AF, High Wycombe, England.

In the meantime, Gable grew whiskers and was photographed as a major, helping to recruit tailgunners, and Hensley became the 362nd's Exec, also a major. That was only two of my "underclassmen" who outranked me by two grades when I finally got out of a training command and into a squadron in combat – the 362nd in January 1945.

There I lived with pilots including Dunn and "Hot Shot Charley", and worked with Sergeants Kelleher and Ramm and The Whip, "Kit" Carson z, all gone.

By the way, the lonesome z is not a typographical error. It's the way my computer spells "hot splashing tear".

Fred, 1997 July 25

Fred Weiland

The 178th Fighter Wing

The 178th Fighter Group, originally organized as the 362nd Fighter Squadron, was formed and activated at Hamilton Field, California in December 1942 and assigned to the 357th Fighter Group in 1943. The following year, the unit received orders for England where their mission was to fly the P-51 while facilitating long range bomber support.

In only five months of combat time, the Group was able to claim 248 enemy planes destroyed, and 20 aces on its list. Their biggest day however, was 14 January 1944, when the Group would claim 56 kills and four enemy airplanes damaged. Those actions brought a message from the commander of the 8th Air Force, Lieutenant General Jimmie Doolittle, "You gave the Hun the most humiliating beating he has ever taken in the air. Extend my personal admiration and congratulations to each member of your command."

The last time the 357th Fighter Group was to fire its guns in anger was 19 April 1945. In the 15 months of combat, the 8th Air Force's final victory assessments credited the Group with destroying a total of 688 enemy aircraft. In accomplishing these kills, 43 pilots became air aces and nine became air/ground aces.

In 1946, Ohio citizens and state political leaders recognized the importance of an air arm attached to the Ohio National Guard, and the 162nd Fighter Squadron was activated at Cox-Dayton Airport, Vandalia , Ohio. In 1955, the need to expand became apparent, as the 162nd Fighter Squadron entered into the Jet Age, and a longer runway was needed for this modernization. The unit moved to its new and current facility, Springfield-Beckley Municipal Airport.

The 162nd Fighter Squadron played an important role in the cold war era. From participation in the Berlin crisis to its augmentation role in historical combat exercises, the 162nd continued to increase in value.

Thus in 1963, the 162nd Fighter Squadron and support units were formed into the 178th Tactical Fighter Group.

Today, the 178th Fighter Wing, as it is now known, remains on the cutting edge of modern air weaponry. In 1993, the 178th was assigned the F-16C/D Fighting Falcon, a single engine jet with modern computerization capabilities. The aircraft is a multi-roll fighter; capable of air-to-air and air-to -ground maneuvering.

There are more than 1200 personnel assigned to the 178th Fighter Wing, and nearly a third of them are full-time employees serving as air technicians or active guard/reserve members. Every member of the unit is highly trained and qualified and prepared to deploy on a moments notice when called upon to perform a mission.

The vision of the 178th Fighter Wing is: quality people dedicated to being key players on the world's best air combat team. The 178th also wants to enrich our community while fulfilling the global mission. To that end, it actively participates in programs such as adopt-a -school and KiDSAFE (kids identifying dangerous situations and facing emergencies).

Orientation flights continue to be a successful way to communicate the wing's mission to civic leaders in the local community. Our mission is: Highly trained professionals providing world-class air combat capability and resources in support of our nation, state, and community.

As the 178th Fighter Wing flies into the 21st century with great pride, distinction, and comment to *keeping the American Dream safe from harms way*, we will never forget our proud heritage and those before us who gave the ultimate sacrifice. We extend our deepest gratitude to all who are here tonight sharing our celebration of the 178th Fighter Wing's 50th Anniversary. God Bless America!

BY DOUGLAS STREET
For The Daily News

Greenock native and retired World War II Army Air Corps Lt. Glenn H. Rojohn was honored when the painting commemorating his famous "piggy-back" flight was hung in the library of the McKeesport Area High School.

The painting, titled "The Piggy Back Flight" by Gregg Thompson, is a re-creation of Rojohn's flight on New Year's Eve, 1944, in which he guided his and another B-17 to safety after they hooked together in mid-flight.

Retired veteran William C. Bowen presented the painting to McKeesport Area High School principal Joseph Catalina along with a plaque in honor of Rojohn to commemorate the event.

Rojohn's tale began on a return flight from a bombing mission near Hamburg, Germany.

Rojohn's plane, a member of the 100th Bomb Group 350th Squadron, was engaged in heavy fire with German fighter planes and anti-aircraft when the incident occurred.

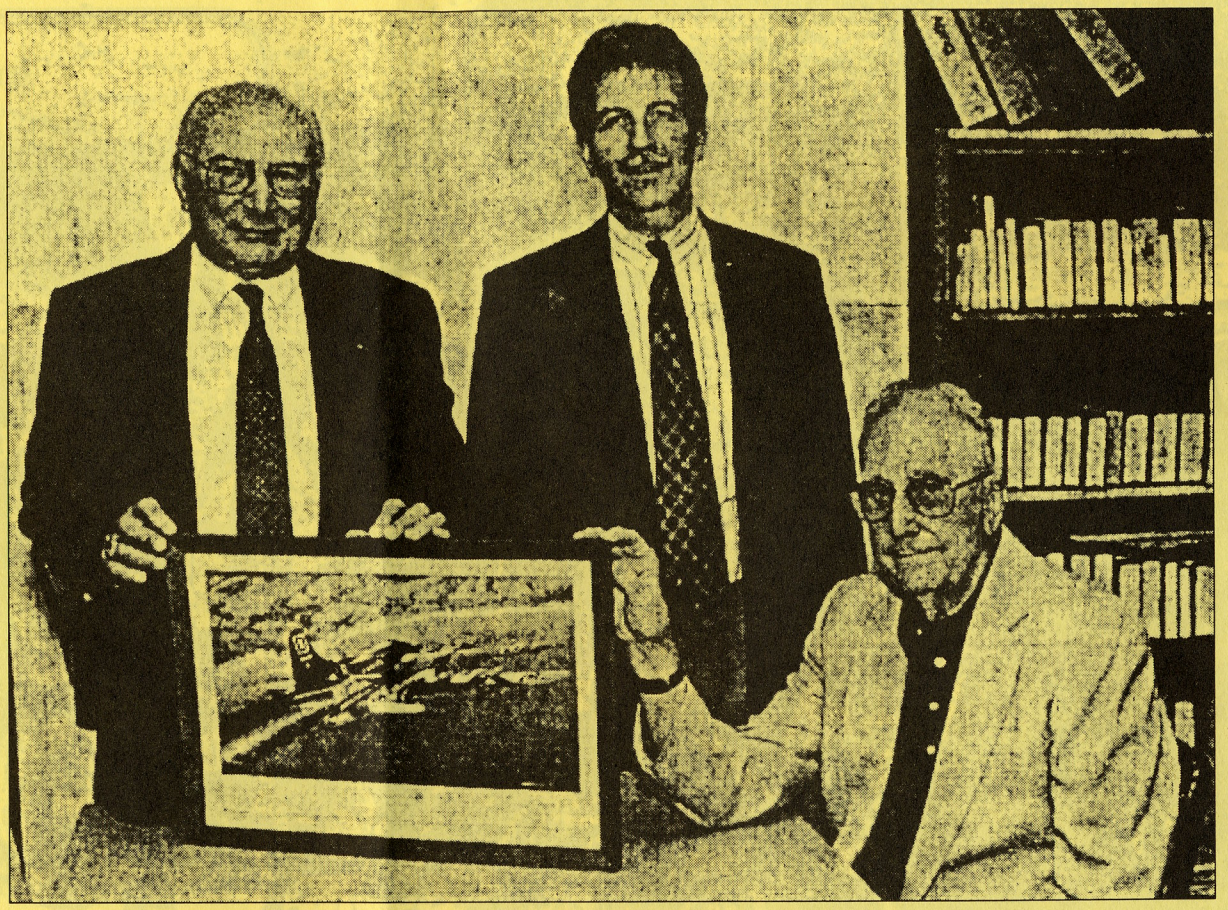
"All of a sudden I heard a crash, and my plane started to shudder," Rojohn said. "I realized I had had a mid-air collision with another airplane."

That other airplane turned out to be an American bomber which was lost in the formation and hooked underneath Rojohn's aircraft.

"I knew that I couldn't get apart from the other plane and I couldn't bail out," he said. "If I were to let go of the controls, the plane would start to spin.

"The only control we actually had was to keep [the planes] level," Rojohn continued. "We were falling like a rock.

"I ordered my co-pilot to bail out but he said 'No.' It probably ended up he saved my life. I don't know how long I could have held it together without [him]."



— Photo by John Barna/Daily News

William C. Bowen Sr., left, and retired World War II Air Force veteran Glenn H. Rojohn present "The Piggy Back Flight" to McKeesport Area High School Principal Joseph Catalina, middle.

The connected aircraft hit the ground at Tettens, near Wilhelmshaven. Five of the seven members of Rojohn's crew survived along with three members of the other plane.

Rojohn and his fellow survivors were captured immediately and taken to a nearby schoolhouse for interrogation. They then were transported to an interrogation center in Frankfurt for several days, then to a prison camp in the Baltic, where they remained until the end of the war.

In September of last year, the German government flew Rojohn and his wife to Hamburg and the site of the famous altercation.

"The Germans took me and my wife, along with 10 witnesses, in a plane to the crash site," Rojohn said.

"They dipped the nose of the plane almost to the ground. To re-live that after 50 years was really amazing."

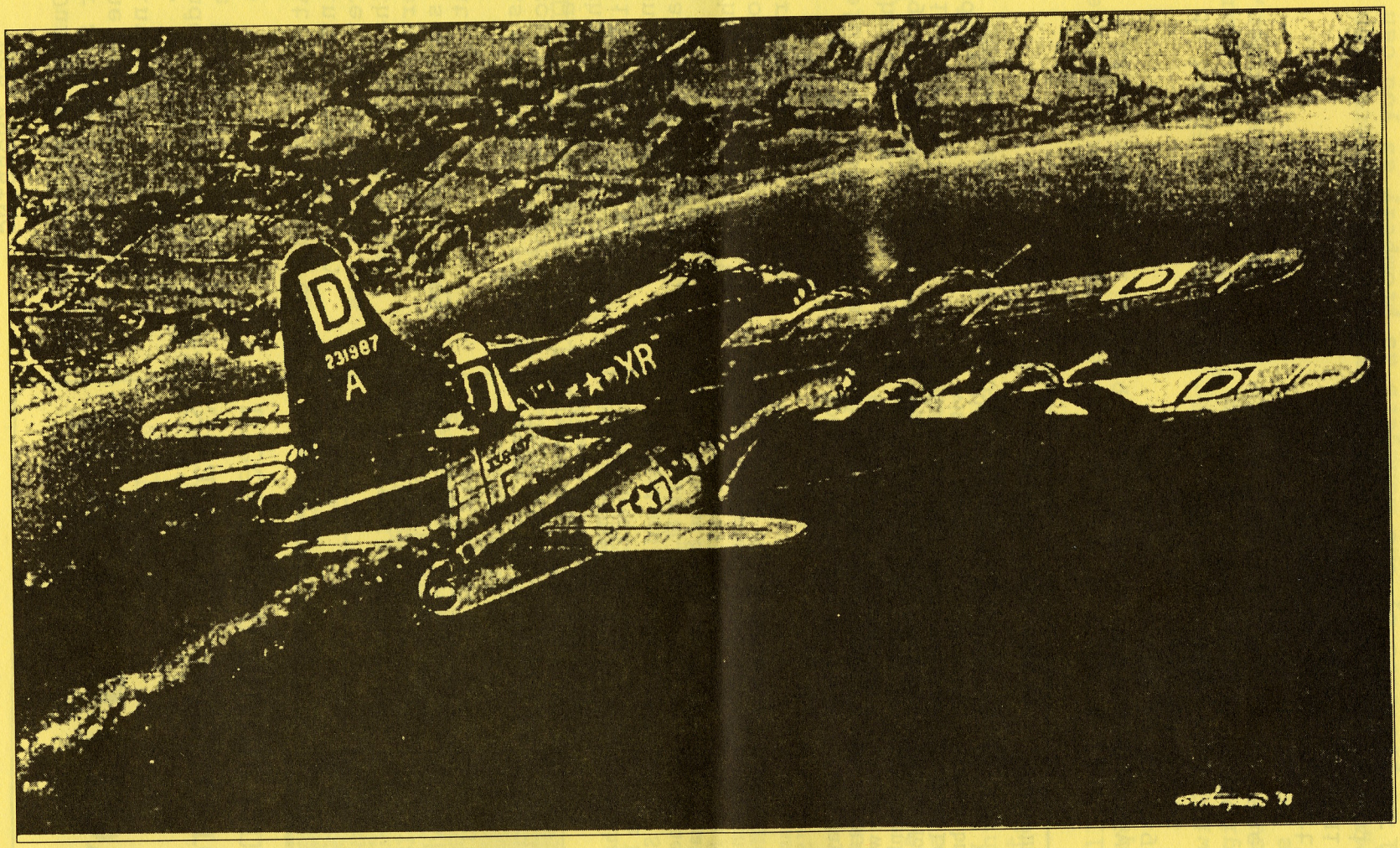
The plaque donated by Bowen reads:

"May 22, 1997
I am presenting this print "The Piggy Back Flight" to the McKeesport Area High School in honor of Glenn H. Rojohn (MHS-41) and all Veterans.

Let this be a reminder of the many sacrifices made by the silent heroes to protect our Liberty. We must be ever vigilant that we never lose our Freedom and that we continue to show our respect to our Veterans, our Country, and to the American Flag.

Respectfully,
William C. Bowen, Sr."

Contributed by Frank Hartig (363rd.FS)
from the
Mc Keesport, PA Daily News 28 May 1997



Rojohn's plane, the "Little Skipper," top, becomes entangled with First Lt. William G. McNab's B-17G during "The Piggy Back Flight."

Greenock Pilot's Flight Immortalized

Painting Recalls Heroic Wartime Rescue

363rd. FIGHTER SQUADRON MECHANICS AT TONOPAH NEVADA A Warren Land photo

NO.1 Sgt. John F. Bertram, 2. , 3. 4. S/Sgt. Percy E. Blount
5. Sgt. William B. Carpenter, 6. , 7. 8. M/Sgt. Chris Widi
9. Sgt. Murry Goldstein, 10. Elmer Peterson, 11. S/Sgt. Idolo E. Augugliaro ???,
12. S/Sgt. Ralph H. Linberg 13. ,14. ,15. Sgt. William Sutherland
16. Sgt. Kenneth W. Curtis, 17. Sgt. Jack W. Palmer, 18. ,19.
20. Richard C. Smith, 21. Warren C. Land, 22. Cpl. Robert E. McCain, 23.
24. 25.



Tailless Flight!

TEN SOLID WEEKS of gunnery at "Willie Field" (Williams Air Force Base)—what more could a fighter pilot ask? The course called "Gunnery Research" was programmed to teach supervisory personnel the latest in gunnery techniques. Most of the pilots taking this course would return to their home bases and, as Squadron or Group gunnery officers, would pass on these acquired skills to others. The course was limited to approximately 12 students so that during the ten week period the instructors and students flew with one another constantly and after a short time sorties became quite routine.

Williams Air Force Base is near Phoenix, Arizona, where the weather can only be described as fabulous. Granted it does get a bit warm in the summer but the sun and visibility have to be seen and felt to be believed. I attended this course in April and May 1948—a wonderful time of the year, not too hot. The Gunnery Research School at that time was equipped with F-80s and P-51Ds. Only jet qualified pilots flew the F-80s so the rest of us flew the outstanding World War II Mustang. Almost all our training was involved in firing aerial or ground gunnery, flying two to four sorties a day, five days a week.

By
Colonel
ROBERT A. TYLER
U.S.A.F.

An average fighter pilot would feel as if he had hit the jackpot doing this type of flying and I certainly was no exception. The gunnery ranges were located about eighty miles from the base in very desolate surroundings. The terrain beneath and surrounding the aerial range was especially remote and quite rugged. Each gunnery sortie involved one flight of aircraft, that is, four aircraft with an instructor leading three students. On a ground gunnery sortie, the flight would proceed to a range where specific targets were set up with radio control and scoring provided by ground personnel at the range. On an air-to-air gunnery sortie the aircraft towing the target would take off about fifteen minutes before the gunnery flight so as to be on the range with the target in position when the flight arrived. Aerial gunnery was conducted by firing on a banner (or flag) target towed with a steel cable by a B-26 aircraft.

After flying a mixture of aerial and ground gunnery sorties for two weeks, the students became familiar with a general routine and sorties were flown following a regular pattern with radio conversation at a minimum. One routine all students got used to was a few minutes of in-trail aerobatics after completing the gunnery. Thus the aerobatics on each sortie not only became routine, but everyone expected it; however, as the old saying goes, it's the exception which proves the rule.

JUST ANOTHER DAY

This was just another beautiful day in April at "Willie Field". I had flown an early gunnery sortie and was on the schedule to go again. The instructor on this mission was Capt. "Fran" Baily, an outstanding gunnery expert. I was flying in number two position and the leader of the 2nd element was a young 1st Lieutenant on TDY from Shaw AFB, South Carolina. Lt. Dave Wynn was flying the B-26 towing our target for this sortie. (He was also one of the instructors for this course just taking his turn at towing the target.)

Take-off was normal, 61 inches of Hg with a lot of right rudder to counteract the fierce torque. Gear up, cut off the leader and get in formation, this done without conscious thought. Everyone pulls into tight formation during the climb out, then after levelling off at about 15,000ft. the leader fishtails which is our signal to spread out. As we approach the range, everyone slides back into tight formation awaiting the leader's signal to go into trail before starting our individual gunnery passes. As we fire out one by one we join formation as the leader heads for home. After two or three minutes the leader gives the signal for trail again. We all know what's coming—several minutes of in-trail aerobatics. As we finish our aerobatics, the leader cranks into a left bank and at the same time waggles his wings.

I slide low on the inside of the turn and take a quick look at my instruments. We are at about 13,000ft. and indicating 300 m.p.h. —everything is in the green and it is high noon. Then I concentrate on the leader moving into a tight formation position. I can see "Fran" is relaxed with his oxy mask pulled loose on the left side.

At this instant I felt a tremendous jolt just as if I had flown through prop wash and at the instant of the jolt my canopy popped open about six inches. I sensed immediately that something had happened to my controls as the stick felt differently. It seemed that several seconds elapsed from the time of the jolt before the nose of the aircraft tucked under quite violently.

This was the beginning of the wildest ride I have ever had or ever hope to have. All of a sudden the earth and sky were madly spinning. It was as if I were in a giant mixing bowl at high speed. I must have unfastened my safety belt harness unconsciously because the next thing I knew I was plastered in the top of the canopy. The aircraft was evidently under negative-g forces because I was literally stuck to the canopy and couldn't move. The P-51 canopy release handle was on the forward right canopy sill but try as I might I could not push away to reach a position to operate this release. I'm sure I had superhuman strength but although I was completely panicked I still could not overpower the negative G force which held me captive. After what seemed like a lifetime—but was probably only seconds—I became absolutely calm and deliberately reached over with my right hand and pulled the parachute rip-cord. Why I did this I will never understand except that it was logically the last resort.

When I pulled the rip-cord the spring-loaded pilot chute popped out and was sucked through the six inch canopy opening. The pilot chute in turn pulled the main chute out and the tremendous slip stream force yanked me brutally against the canopy, pulling it off and freeing me from the aircraft. This tremendous jerk stunned me and the next thing I knew I was floating down very quietly and serenely.

THE LANDING

When I looked up at my chute canopy I was horrified to see that three panels were missing and the shape, instead of being circular, was lopsided rather like a three-leaf clover. I tried to grab the risers but could not get my arms up. It felt as if my shoulder blades were broken. I didn't have long to puzzle about all this as the ground suddenly jumped at me with such force that I literally bounced. I landed on a big rock halfway up the side of a mountain. I hit so hard that it uncaged my eyeballs. I was unable to move or focus my eyes for several minutes although I could hear something burning fiercely.

As my vision returned, I took stock. I was on the inside sector of a horseshoe-shaped mountain. I could see the remains of my P-51 burning merrily on the opposite side of the horseshoe. The mountain appeared as an isolated raised half-circle on a level desert floor.

It was probably no higher than about 1500 feet and I was some 600 feet up from the desert floor. I tried to spread my chute so that the other pilots could spot my position but my back felt as if it were broken. I then noted my shins were bloody and I could feel blood on my face although there was no active bleeding.

I crawled under a small sage brush plant and lay down thinking it might be hours before anyone could reach me. I even wondered if my location was known? I was relieved when the B-26 flew over me twice. There were no helicopters at "Willie Field" at that time so I knew I was in for a long wait even if they knew my exact location. I didn't know at the time that this remote spot was thirty-five miles from the nearest road.

About three hours later I heard a small aircraft and could see an L-5 aircraft making passes in my direction. He was leading a caravan of jeeps, ambulances, and fire-trucks across the desert. I had just begun to think I would be spending the night on the side of the mountain so this was a real heartening sight. A number of men removed me on a stretcher to the waiting ambulance and we began our long trip back to the hospital at "Willie Field".

I got the full story of what had actually happened when I was picked up. The heavy impact I experienced on joining formation was caused by my Number 3 coming from above and neatly chopping my aircraft in half just behind the cockpit. The Number 3 aircraft was only slightly damaged and the pilot was able to return to "Willie Field" and land normally. Amazingly his propeller which had performed the amputation was damaged very little.

Although every muscle in my back was pulled I had no other real damage and was able to leave the hospital and return to flying after a couple of weeks. I can't say that I pioneered tailless flight in the aircraft business but I managed to survive the wildest ride I ever hope to make.



Rescue! The L-5 arrives, leading the ground party.

The author of the above article is a neighbor of our former Group Engineering Officer J. David Murley. Thanks for the story David.



MINI-REUNION OF NISSEN HUT #44, 364th FIGHTER SQUADRON

Reunion held at Three Rivers, Mich. Oct 2, 3, 4, 1997. Hosts were the Krull's and the Slentz's. Attending were Joe Minervini and Jim Enright besides the hosts. The lady co-pilots also enjoyed the busy weekend. At the Slentz home, a contest of pool shooting took place. Dinners were enjoyed each evening. Faithful members of this group, Dick Eagan and Bernie McKenna had to abort this mini due to a health problem.

Dear Readers: Edward C. Iberger of Riverhead, N.Y., submitted this touching story of how *Taps*, played at military funerals, originated. The source is the *Encyclopedia of Amazing but True Facts* by Doug Storer:

In 1862, a Union Army captain, Robert Ellicombe, was with his men near Harrison's Landing in Virginia. During the night, Capt. Ellicombe heard the moan of a soldier who lay mortally wounded on the field. The captain decided to risk his life and bring back the stricken man for medical attention.

When the captain got the man back to his lines, he discovered it was a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead. The captain lighted a lantern, caught his breath and went numb with shock. It was his own son! The young man had been studying music in the South when the war broke out, and he had enlisted in the Confederate Army.

The captain asked the bugler at the son's funeral to play a series of notes found in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform. That music was the haunting melody we now know as *Taps*.



CREW CHIEFS OF THE 364th FIGHTER SQUADRON
LEFT TO RIGHT:
Unknown, John Hopson, Russell McNeil, Gilbert Krueger, Donald Lumley, Lee Henley, Maurice Sabes.
June 1943 Santa Rosa CA. Photo Paul Slentz

On a previous page, we have the photo and story of the two B-17 aircraft of the 100th Bomb Group locked together. WOULD YOU CALL THIS A TIGHT FORMATION? The men and aircraft of the 100th B.G. were stationed at Thorpe Abbotts which is fairly close to Leiston.

When it became time for the 357th F.G. to ship out of Leiston and go to Neubiberg, Germany, it was the B-17's and air crews of the "big D" the 100th B.G. who flew some of our men and a good amount of our equipment across to Germany and the Luftwaffe base at Neubiberg.

Many men of the 357th F.G. had completed their combat flying tours before the departure from Leiston occurred. Some of the non-flying personnel on the G.I. point system for discharge from the service began to depart Leiston just before the group headed to Germany. It was most regrettable for me, your writer, to depart Leiston early in an "advance party" via B-17 transportation and then learn that some of my best friends never joined me. They headed for home directly from Leiston and I never saw them again. SOME MIGHTY FINE MEN!



362nd. PILOTS AT HAYWARD CA.

Left to Right

Constantin Vogel-KIA, Elmer Rydberg-KIA Calvert Williams,
Fletcher Adams-KIA Robert Wallen Al Lichter-POW
James Van Dyne-Killed in crash (Hayward?) Photo Arval Roberson
Photo Production-Olmsted

APO 559 US Army
8 March 1945

SUBJECT: Squadron History Report. (Engineering & Line Section)

TO:-- Intelligence Officer, 364th Fighter Squadron.

1. As we go to press we find events and allied progress for the past month very acceptable. The reward of our courage, determination and perfect teamwork is reflected in our recent advances, bringing the day of allied victory ever nearer. The 364th Fighter Squadron is most proud to be represented in play with this great team and the Engineering and Line personnel of the 364th Fighter Squadron share this same honor.

The maintenance division section is conscious of dividends returned by good maintenance and have gone all out to maintain a high degree of efficency. In some instances accepted maintenance procedures have even been improved upon. For the month of February the abortive percentage of aircraft airborne reached a new low of 5.5, an improvement of 1.3% over the previous month.

If you should make a tour of the Line section you may stop to talk to S/Sgt Ardell E. Fiedler, a Crew Chief with a most enviable record. You will learn he has sent his aircraft on 214 missions compiling 961:50 hours. His aircraft has had to return early but three times during this period and he holds a non-abortive string of 101 missions with 469:00 hours. S/Sgt Fiedler hails from Belleville, Illinois. You would continue your tour and probable stop to talk to S/Sgt John D. Schults, from Cullman, Alabama. He would tell you he is quite proud of his aircraft and you would learn he holds a non-abortive string of missions totalling 85 with 364:35 hours. Of his 134 missions and 564:35 hours he has had but five early returns. You would probably stop to talk to another Crew Chief. This would be S/Sgt Earl L. Lloyd, from Ottawa, Kansas. You would find his conversation very interesting and impressive, with 143 missions and 616:50 hours. He has had one early return, his string of completed uninterrupted missions total 82 with 350:55 hours.

You would remark about the uniformity of the combat tank racks you see on each aircraft hardspot. Every Crew Chief would tell you the credit for this work belongs to S/Sgt Albert T. Skidmore of Lumbard, Kentucky and Cpl Hardesty O. Terrell of St Louis, Missouri. They constructed these racks of wood from old glider crates.

You leave the line now and you wander to the two Engineering blister hangar You are impressed with the walled in rear of the blisters, the built in workshops for the Sheet Metal, Electrical, Propeller and Instrument Departments, the tool cabinets, stands and the neatness of the adjacent area. You are introduced to the Engineering Chief, M/Sgt Joseph B. DeShay of Johnson City, New York. You will discover that the versatality of his crew is largely credited to his management, he believes in all around mechanics. You will see how his department operates as a team with perfect harmony and coordination. You will see electricans, instrument specialists and propeller specialists performing duties of the engine and aircraft mechanics;

you can frequently find them changing spark plugs, checking brake clearances and setting valves. You will note the Engineering Chief is ever present with his men, directing the work, giving a hand wherever needed and explaining the various maintenance approaches.

You will next meet T/Sgt Carl Dreschler of Kansas City, Missouri, Chief of the Sheet Metal Department and one of the most versatile men the Engineering and Line section. He possesses natural talent in the field of hydraulics and aircraft mechanics, is an expert machinist and equally adept at welding. He has manufactured many tools which were not immediately obtainable through regular channels but which were occassionally needed to get an aircraft into commission. He designed and built a rig from a salvaged P-51 landing gear strut, which enabled one man to change a tire for a P-51 aircraft rather than requiring the usual two.

Outside one of the blisters you will see an aircraft undergoing an oil clarification. S/Sgt Amos C. Langdon of Farley, New Mexico, has charge of the Briggs Oil Clarifier and employs this system on about eight aircraft per month. S/Sgt Langdon will tell you this is an excellent system, it cleans the oil of the entire system, the tank, lines and radiator. It removes all the fine carbon particles that get past the cuno and makes for oil conservation. S/Sgt Langdon has made a dummy cuno by removing all the rotating discs from an old cuno and when clarifing an aircraft this dummy cuno replaces the engine cuno. This makes an open passage at the cuno and the continous flow of oil receives no clarifing at the cuno and is allowed to flow through the clarifier uninterrupted, the clarifier performing the complete purifing function. This serves a two fold purpose, it insures the engine cuno will be cleaned and all residue will be stopped by the clarifing unit and the cuno life is extended by relieving it from operation during the process.

If you drop in the Engineering Office you will see some singular touches. Sgt Angelo J. DiCapua of Brooklyn, New York, has compiled a combat chart where at a glance you can find the combat hour of the aircraft or engine, the total sorties of the aircraft, the abortions, the date of assignment and hours on date of assignment. M/Sgt Henry C. D'Esti of Binghampton, New York, has set up a picture bulletin board. These pictures are photos of Unsatisfactory Conditions of various parts of the aircraft and are underlined with warning captions to the crew chiefs and all maintenance personnel.

Your tour has been interesting and you are satisfied, so you prepare to leave the office, as you leave you notice the Refueling Units parked on a newly built parking stand just across from the office. You will note the trucks have been newly painted possessing a new appearance. The new parking stank affords a natural drain for the water when washing the vehicles. The excellent condition of these vehicles are a result of the untiring energy and supervision of the Refueling Chief, Sgt Adrian Vierra of Salinas, California.

It is drawing late, your tour is completed and you take leave of the base with one impression uppermost in your mind. For an outfit to be successful, to pay dividends, to do a job right you must have organization, efficiency, cooperation of every member; in other words, perfect teamwork.

(continued from page 1)

SECRET

ENGINEERING AND LINE

"BREVS"

Promotions:

TO BE MASTER SERGEANT
T/Sgt DeShay, Joseph B.

TO BE STAFF SERGEANT
Sgt Conaughty, George J.

TO BE SERGEANT
Cpl Gilman, Ernest G.
Cpl McGeehee, James D.

TO BE CORPORAL
Pfc Rutledge, James R.

TO BE PRIVATE FIRST CLASS
Pvt Horne, Bruce S.
Pvt Sanderlin, Harry, T.J.

Hangar Notes:

For the month of Eebruary the Engineering Section has made two engine changes.

Transfers:

1st Lt. WILLIAM I. LEE, Tech Supply Officer to the 363rd Fighter Squadron,

New assignment:

Captain ROBERT T. DOTTERY,JR, Engineering Officer has taken on the duties of Tech Supply Officer along with his present assignment.

Schools:

The following enlisted men have attended the Packard Merlin Rolls-Royce Engine School.

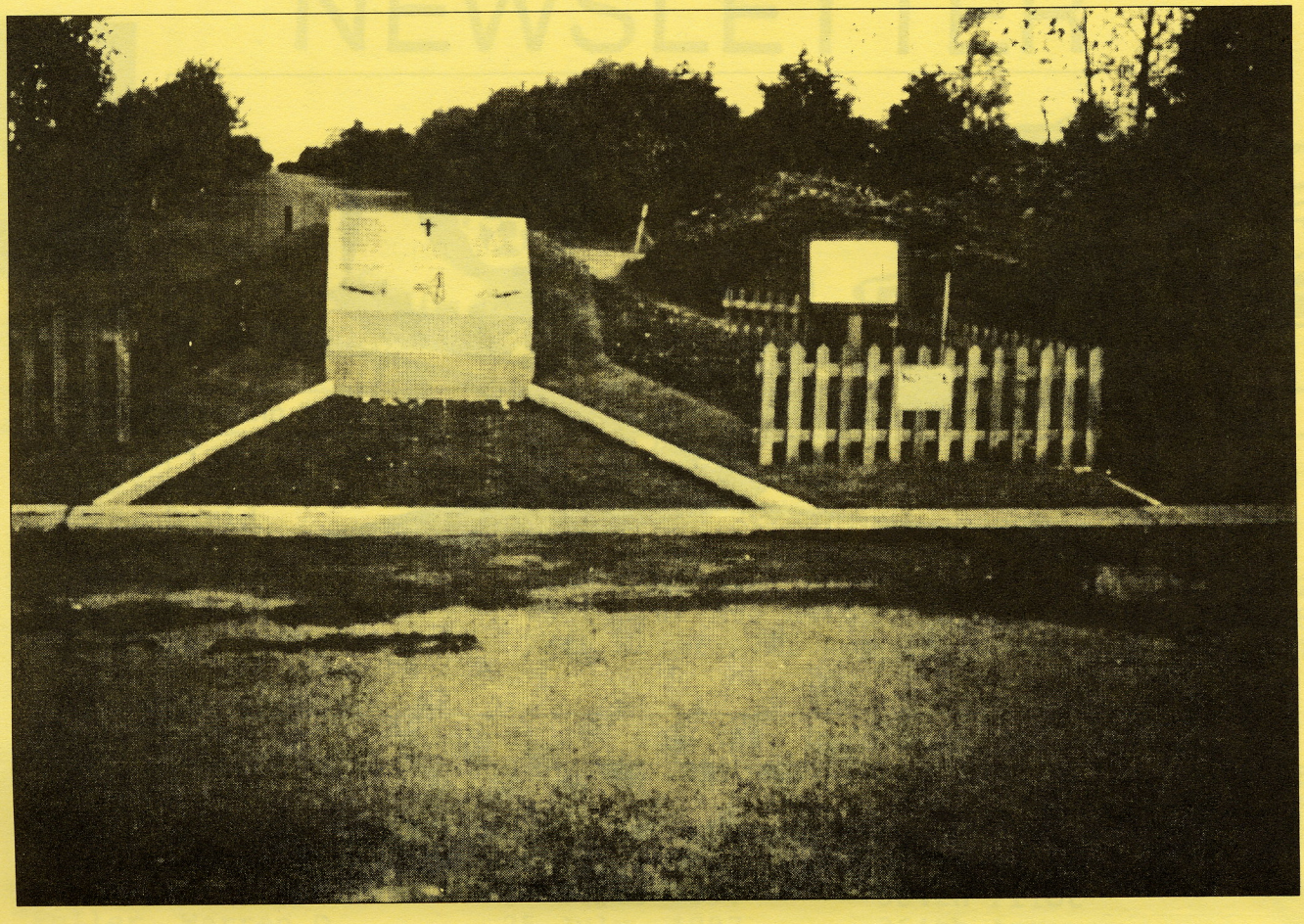
T/Sgt Grupposo, Robert A. S/Sgt Krantz, Arthur E.
S/Sgt Slentz, Paul E. Cpl Roape, Donald
Cpl Froehlich, Anton P.

Robert T. Dottery Jr.

ROBERT T. DOTTERY,JR,
Capt., Air Corps
Engineering Officer

On 2 August 1997, Will Foard (364th pilot) sent the above Engineering Officers Report to us. The Foard's moved to Alabama from North Carolina about a year ago. Will and his wife Katherine spent some time at the Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, AL where they read many 357th Fighter Group G. I. records and copied this one for us. Joe D.

SECRET



The above photo was sent by Gus Clutten. Photo was taken in October when the new Memorial was completed at the new location. A committee of interested and concerned men with the support of the local people, made the Memorial happen. The 357th Fighter Group Association made a monetary contribution to the fund for moving and rebuilding the Airfield Memorial. A nearby Caravan Park closes at the end of October and opens the 1st of March.

The road in the foreground is Harrow Lane. The airfield wiped out this portion of the Lane during the war but it has been restored to its original routing. Over the top left corner of the new Monument is a view along the lengthy straight stretch of remaining perimeter tract that accomodated the 363rd Fighter Squadron's flight line. Hedgerows have grown alongside.

363rd Fighter Squadron Crew Chief Elsworth Stevens attended the dedication of the American Museum at Duxford, England. He traveled on to Leiston and visited Gus Clutten at the site of the old airfield.

Don and Freda Kocher toured Germany and France and then visited Freda's niece in England for seven days. Dale and Cathy Karger enjoyed the tour to Duxford by Tamarac Travel Agency. They also visited Leiston. Dale laid our wreath at the Cambridge Cemetery.

Others may have made the mission to Duxford but did not check in at our Orderly Room.