



The Squadron



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www.warbirdsqadron4.org

Events

Sunday, Feb 8th 3:00PM - Annual Dinner at the William Tell Holiday Inn, - 6201 Joliet Rd., Countryside, IL 60525.

Saturday, April 25 The Home of the Desert Rat - Kellner's Restoration - 21010 Anthony Road, Marengo, IL 60152.

Saturday, May 9 A Day on the Western Front - Tim Dunavin's home - 28931 Bell Road, Rock Falls, IL 61071.

Saturday, June 20 Host the Cross Country Military Convoy and Hangar Dance at the Rochelle Airport, IL.

Sunday, June 21 Host a Fly-in/Drive-in pancake breakfast at the Rochelle Airport, IL.

Saturday, July 18 Work Weekend on EAA Warbird Grounds – Oshkosh, WI.

Sunday, Aug 16 Sq4 BBQ - Tom Buck's Hangar at the Joliet Regional Airport (KJOT)

Sunday, Sept 13 Fly-in/Drive-in - Tim Bauer's Place - 17050 E Lindenwood Road, Lindenwood, IL 61049.

Sunday, Nov 8 The Veterans' Forum - 5233 Falcon Road, Rockford, IL 61109.

As always please check our website for the most up-to-date information:

www.warbirdsqadron4.org

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From the C.O.'s Desk

The holiday season is upon us, a time to celebrate and reflect. Our Veterans' Forum started the season as we thanked our Vets for their service to our country. The Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations are filled with family and friends. Amidst all the hectic activity, a sense of peace and calm come on Christmas day. May the joy of Christmas fill all of us and may the New Year be a new beginning. Make your first New Year's Resolution a commitment to fully participate in our Warbird group events this year. First step is to reserve your place at the Annual Squadron 4 Banquet being held on February 8th at The William Tell Restaurant. You'll enjoy a colorful speaker, Clancy Hess, who was a WWII TBM pilot! Also there will be an opportunity to buy raffle tickets for the P51 ride, a flight jacket and a new item- warbird jewelry. Join other warbird enthusiasts for great conversation and a delicious dinner. I'll be looking for you there!

Tom Buck

Buzzing the Airfield

By Tim Dunavin

As you will notice, the activities for next year have been posted on page 1. For a more detailed description, check out our website. There will be a large number of these events that will require a lot of help from our members, so there will be plenty of places to volunteer your services to the Squadron! Later this list will also be expanded to cover the B-17 tour – most likely in September again. Right now we are in the planning stages of a large event to be held at the Rochelle, Ill. Airport on the 20th and 21st of June 2009. This will include the MVPA (Military Vehicle Preservation Association) retracing the first US ARMY motor cross country convoy in 1919 with a stop in Rochelle. Following will be a hangar dance with a USO type show and re-enactors for Bob Hope, Bing Crosby and Company. Next there will be a Sunday morning pancake breakfast and our June regular squadron meeting, all of which will require a lot of volunteers. Hopefully we can also attract a good number of warbirds. (More details will be announced later, as they become available.)

Yes, 2009 will be busy. In my opinion there is no better way on earth to have this much fun and there will be plenty to go around! Like the old saying goes, “You get out of it what you put into it,” so come join us!

Our first event of the year is just around the corner – the annual dinner. Plan on attending. If you have ever met Clancy Hess, you’ve got to know you are in for a treat!

Ol’ Man Winter has hit us hard, but with the things being planned for this spring and summer, he can’t hold on forever.

3 October, 2008 Dupage Airport KDP West Chicago, IL

By Dave Stevens

EAA’s Aluminum Overcast B-17 arrived around 12:30 to undertake 4 flights for passengers who had been booked to fly during the Sept 12-14 tour stop which was canceled due to record rainfall. We learned that it took almost a week to get engine No.1 running and the bomber back in the air after the drenching weekend.

Friday, Oct 3 was sunny and crisp, perfect flying weather for the 40 paid customers who came out for their rides. Squadron 4 was represented by Tom Buck, Frank Bartilotta, Gordon Millerin, Dave Stevens, Tim Bauer, Mike Hudak, Tim Dunavin and John Schulz. We assisted passengers safely to and from the plane, answered questions, and helped with check-in.

Tim Bauer was able to bring the tent and table with chairs which turned out to work very well since EAA had no equipment with them for this "make-up" stop. This gave George a welcomed Base of Operations and we did sell a few hats and T-shirts. Thanks Tim!

Each of the 4 flights was full with 10 paid passengers and the whole operation went very smoothly. We had one FAA inspector (off duty) and one RAF airman as passengers too. I think the EAA crew was pretty happy with the way the stop was handled, and they offered us the choice of Dupage or Lewis for the stop next year.

I was lucky enough to get a "jump flight" to Peoria with John Schulz and Mike Hudak. It was one of the most unforgettable experiences of my life. I can't wait 'til next year.

Veterans' Forum

By Art Sereque, Jr.

A raw, cold November 9th saw members of Warbird Squadron 4 gather at Courtesy Aircraft Sales in Rockford for their annual honoring of American Veterans.

Commanding Officer, Tom Buck, opened the meeting, followed by Tim Dunavin giving the invocation.

Q.M. Stacy Kolls provided a fine lunch, including two different pots of homemade soup. A local group, "Skippin' a Beat" sang many popular songs of the time.

The National Anthem was sung, followed by the introduction of Mark Clark, President of Courtesy Aircraft Sales, who once again provided the use of his facility for the Squadron.

During the meeting that followed, Jim Delaney said the annual banquet would be held at the William Tell Holiday Inn in Countryside on February 8th (a Sunday) in mid-afternoon. (Editor's note – That dinner will start at 3PM, Sunday 8 February – see website for more details.)

Stacy Kolls then gave updates on the B-17 Tour, The Rockford Air Show, and the care packages for the troops in Iraq.

The main speaker was "Buck" Windam, an A-10 Warthog pilot who flew the "Hogs in the Sand" (Desert Storm) from December 1990 to June 1991. He gave an extremely interesting talk on the A-10 Demo team in air shows, technical information on the A-10, and daily life in Iraq.

Buck mentioned that his girl friend was assigned to a near-by unit. An Arab Prince offered him camels, goats, and a falcon for his girlfriend!!! During a question and answer period, he was asked what happened to his girl friend. He answered that she married a guy in the Army. At that point someone in the audience said, "You should have taken the goats!"

Hangar flying followed the conclusion to a very nice forum.



"Buck" Windam

Veteran's Corner

My Combat Service during WWII and Korea

By Col. John J. Geuss USMC Ret.

Part III

I returned to the land of the Rising Sun, Saki, pearls and almond-eyed girls, August, 1951. The 1st MAW rear echelon was at Itami. We were assigned to VMF 312 "Checkerboards", stationed at K1, Korea, which was north of Pusan. I flew five missions from K1. It was a long haul up to the bomb line. The squadron moved from K1 up to K18. It was right on the coast of the Sea of Japan which was a lot closer to the 38th Parallel, which for us was the bomb line.

Being on the water, the temperature was decent. The coldest it got was fourteen degrees below zero. North Korea is really mountainous. It was funny how the engine went into automatic rough the minute you passed the bomb line. Most missions were rail cuts and CAS strikes. The air group rule was one drop per target, never two, for after the first drop they were ready to shoot. However, on close air support strikes, we made as many runs as possible i.e., until all out ordnance was expended, because we knew if we got hit, we could make it back to our lines and bail out.

Every mission was constant exposure to small arms and anti-aircraft ("AA") fire.

Our use of napalm was most effective and dropped with accuracy from low altitude. Another gem was using a 1000 pound bomb with a variable timing (“VT”) proximity fuse. These could be set to detonate at different heights above the ground. We would send the first four planes in set with these fuses for flack suppression.

In the first twenty missions I flew in Korea, we covered four downed pilots. I was assigned a few missions near the Yalu River. Flying those missions was the most uncomfortable feeling because we knew we were out of range of the Air Sea Rescue (“ASR”) planes and choppers.

I got hit on my twenty-fifth mission. The target was an airfield near Pyongyang. I fired 8 HVARs and dropped 1-500 pound bomb. I felt a jolt but didn’t see any damage. AA fire was moderate. Returning to the west coast, on the Yellow Sea side, the oil pressure started dropping. I headed for Cho-Do Island, which at the time was still in enemy territory. I heard the strike leader call ASR. The island has a 3200 foot beach with a 200 foot hill on the north end and a 750 foot hill to the south. The oil pressure at that time was 10 pounds. I kept the wheels up and when I let the flaps down, oil streamed out from the wing root. I hit at the edge of the water and skidded about 600 feet. The plane ended up in approximately eighteen inches of water. At that point my radio went out, but I gave the signal that I was OK. My flight, including Captain George Kubal, flew cover over me until they saw the SA 16 come in. It took me a couple of minutes, but I got the clock out of the plane. (It made a great souvenir and today still sits on my desk.) I made it to shore and kept a handful of Koreans at a distance. The ASR had a SA 16 Albatross and a chopper in orbit, and it was a grand sight seeing that bird come in. At this point there was just about a half hour till sunset. I let off a smoke flare to give the pilot the wind

direction. I had to wade out to the plane because the pilot got stuck on a sand bar. Just after take-off, the crew chief came after and handed me a bottle of V.O. Needless to say, I was feeling pretty good by the time we landed at K16. The Wing policy was to assign downed pilots to staff jobs, however, that policy was changed a week before I ditched. I was back in the air.



A model of Col. Geuss’ F4U #9

Just two weeks after my shoot down, my good friend Jim Bailey had a real bad mission. On a rail cut mission near Sunchon, they flew into a flack trap. Jim got hit. His wing man crashed and burned. The section leader crash landed and was captured, tail end Charlie made it back to base but the plane was so shot up it was a strike. Jim was hit in the oil cooler and was losing oil pressure. He made it to the coast but had to ditch fifteen miles north of Cho-Do. The SA 16 pulled him out of the water, but the sea was so rough they couldn’t take off. They taxied all the way back to Cho-Do to the calmer water in order to take off. After Korea Jim became the chief test pilot for Honeywell. He flew with the Swedish Air Force for three years. Jim became a close friend of Neil Armstrong and had lunch with him in the fall of 2007. I still keep in touch. The Drinkwater brothers were in our squadron. Fred was the youngest brother and was my wing man for a number of missions. After Korea he became the chief test pilot of N.A.S.A. and also got some time on the Concord.

I ended my tour flying a total of 78 missions. I spent the last two months on my tour as Air Group Briefing Officer. My secondary job was flying the TBF to Wing Headquarters to pick-up one hundred cases of beer and other high priority supplies. I also ferried Corsairs back to Atsuki, Japan. Most were for wing changes. If a wing was hit in the wing spar, it was an automatic wing change. At one time we had six planes waiting for wing changes. I was scheduled to take one back but my boss, Jeff Poindexter needed flight time so he took the flight. Unfortunately, the wing folded on take off and he crashed and burned. It could have been any one of three different things gone wrong.

The Recap

Now for a play on numbers; I was recalled with VMF 121 and served with VMF 312. Total number of missions flown from Okinawa, Japan and Korea came to 121 missions. Total combat flight hours totaled 312 hours. During the Korean Conflict, the Marine and Navy squadrons lost 312 Corsairs. The losses were 268 planes of the 312 total.

On each mission in Korea, I logged ordinance expended. Totals were 54 – 150 gallon napalm tanks, the equivalent of more than eight thousand gallons of napalm, 49 – one thousand pound bombs, 16 – five hundred pound bombs, 21 – two hundred and fifty pound bombs, and 257 – 5 inch high velocity aircraft rockets (“HAVRs”). I shot most of the twenty millimeter cartridges each mission. I returned to the United States in May 1952 and was released from active duty.

Upon my return to NAS Glenview, I joined the VMF 543, flying believe it or not, Corsairs. In all I ended up logging a total of 1134 hours in the Corsair. In April 1955,

we received our first jets, Grumman Cougars, F9F6-7-8s. No more kick the tire, light the first, first one off the leader. Everything was done by the numbers now. I never thought I would be flying at forty-five thousand feet.

VMA 611 was commissioned in February 1959, and in September 1961, we received the FJ4B Fury. I did manage to fly supersonic in this bird. I went on the required two week active duties at Cherry Point, North Carolina, Jacksonville, Florida, Yuma, Arizona and MCAS El Toro. During these duty tours, we did aerial refueling which took as much concentration as carrier landings. The probe came out of the left wing, and you had to fly it into the basket. The tankers were KC130s. I had a number of flights firing AIM 9 Sidewinder air to air missiles. I attended two staff command schools at Quantico, Virginia. I became Commanding Officer of VMA 611 and served two and half years. I was promoted to full bird Colonel and retired August 1, 1978 with 25 years, 11 months and 4 days of federal service. I transferred to Class III after logging 703 hours in jets and a total of 2429 hours flown.

I have to thank my wife for her patience and understanding for all the separation and missed vacations. I am most fortunate to have shared nearly 65 years of married life with her. I thank the Lord every night of my life for keeping me in His care. I was blessed to always be in the right place at the right time. Many of my friends were not as fortunate. **I dearly miss them.**

Editor’s note: Col. Geuss received the Distinguished Flying Cross for action on the 22nd of November 1951. Below are a description of that action and a copy of the letter from the Secretary of The Navy, C.S. Shoman.

VMF 312 (Checkerboards) K-18

Kangnung, Korea

November 22, 1951

It was the Air Group policy to have four planes on alert status. These were long boring hours, but we got a call and vectored to the front lines near Kwang-Sor-Tong. We picked up our Air Force Controller flying a T-6. The weather was marginal with the ceiling varying between five hundred to fifteen hundred feet.

Our troops were receiving heavy casualties from mortar fire. The controller said it was up to us if we could find and hit the target. He was able to mark the position with a smoke rocket. We couldn't gain much in the way of altitude due to the low ceiling, and we never flew more than two hundred twenty knots the whole mission. Needless to say, it was very uncomfortable flying at that speed. We become a slow moving target for the enemy and received some small arms fire.

We each made four runs, dropping a total of two napalm and 6 one hundred pound bombs each. We received thanks from Wolfhound regiment through J.O.C. and then our Air Group.

As we flew more and more close air support missions for the Army, they became confident in our ability to hit the targets very close to their positions. We had trained and flown such missions during both World War II and Korea.

The Secretary of the Navy
Washington

The President of the United States takes
pleasure in presenting the
DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS to
CAPTAIN JOHN J. GEUSS,
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
RESERVE,

for the service as set forth in the following
CITATION:

“For heroism and extraordinary achievement in aerial flight as Pilot of a Plane in Marine Squadron THREE HUNDRED TWELVE during operations against enemy aggressor forces in Korea on 22 November 1951. Responding to an emergency call from hard-pressed friendly forces during a close air support flight, Captain Geuss led his flight in repeated low level rocket and strafing attacks and was directly responsible for the destruction of seven hostile bunkers and two field pieces and the annihilation of forty of the enemy. Despite heavy hostile antiaircraft fire, he continued to carry out bombing runs until his ordinance was gone. His outstanding skill, courage and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.”

For the President,
Signed: C.S. Shoman
Secretary of the Navy

Squadron Officers

(Partial listing – see website for full board)

C.O. Tom Buck

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EX.O. Frank Bartilotta

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ADJ. Tim Bauer

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Com. O. Brian Churchill

(847) 356-9056

SEC. David Maren

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Q.M. Stacy Kolls

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Treasurer Jim Delaney

(847) 713-0808

Warbird Squadrons

You can find all of these links on our site under the "WOA Squadron" button.

Listed below is the text for the links.

Warbirds of America Link:
<http://www.warbirds-aaa.org/>

Tennessee Warbird Squadron 1 Link:
<http://www.geocities.com/Nashville/7348/twb.html>

Seattle, WA Cascade Warbird Squadron 2 Link: <http://www.cascadewarbirds.org/>

Eugene, OR Warbird Squadron 13 Link: <http://www.squadron13.org/warbirds/>

Chino, CA Warbird Squadron 16 Link:
<http://www.warbirdsusa.org/>

Kennesaw, GA Warbird Squadron 17 Link: <http://www.warbird17.com/>

Cincinnati, OH Warbird Squadron 18 Link:
<http://www.cincinnatiwarbirds.org/>

WARBIRDS OF SQUADRON 4

Spit Fire	Rudy Frasca
P51 Mustang	Vlado Lench
P51 Mustang	John O'Connor
TBM Avenger	Tom Buck
T6	Rick Siegfried
SNJ	Vic Krause
SNJ	Clyde Zellers
T6	Rudy Frasca
T6	John O'Connor
SNJ	Tom Buck
Yak	Bob Fitzpatrick

OW Meyers	Chuck Downey
Stearman	Roger Paykert
Stearman	Keith Birsa
L3	Keith Birsa
L5	Larry Tinker
T34	Will Martin
T34	Rudy Frasca
Wildcat	Rudy Frasca
B25	Ray Hillson
CJ-6	Craig Payne
PQ-14B	Harry Pick

MERCHANDISE

We have the new Squadron 4 hats – 7 styles to choose from! Lots of new items coming soon!

You can help the Squadron and look great too! See Tim Bauer for details!

Next Issue

Veteran's Corner – Ted Koston

Keep'em Flyin