



# The Squadron



---

An EAA Warbirds of America publication of Squadron 4 Feb. 2008 Vol. 3 No.1  
[www.warbirdsquadron4.org](http://www.warbirdsquadron4.org)

---

## Events

**Saturday, Feb 16** starting at 5:00P.M. - Annual Dinner at the William Tell Holiday Inn, - 6201 Joliet Rd., Countryside, IL 60525 .

**Saturday, April 26** starting at 11:00A.M. - The Home of the Desert Rat - Kellner's Restoration - 21010 Anthony Road, Marengo, IL 60152,

**Saturday, May 10** starting at 11:00A.M. - A day on the Western Front - Tim Dunavin's home - 28931 Bell Road, Rock Falls IL 61071

**Sunday, June 22** starting at 11:00A.M. - Pick Field - Harry Pick's Place - 9611 N 1700 East Road, Chenoa, IL 61726

**Saturday, July 19** starting at 09:00A.M. - Work Weekend on EAA Warbird Grounds - Oshkosh WI

**Sunday, Aug 17** starting at 11:00 - Sq4 BBQ - Tom Buck's Hangar at the Joliet Regional Airport (KJOT)

**Sunday, Sept 7** starting at 11:00A.M. - Fly-in/Drive-in - Tim Bauer's Place - 17050 E Lindenwood Road, Lindenwood, IL 61049

**Sunday, Nov 9** starting at 11:00 - The Veterans' Forum - 5233 Falcon Road, Rockford, IL 61109

## In this issue:

**From the C.O.'s Desk** – pg. 1  
**Buzzing the Airfield** – Tim Dunavin – pg. 2  
**Veteran's Forum** - Art Sereque – pg. 2  
**Mustang Solo P3**– Will Martin – pg. 3  
**Squadron Officers** – pg. 5  
**Warbird Squadrons** – pg 5  
**Warbirds of Squadron 4** – pg 6  
**Merchandise** – pg. 6

## From the C.O.s Desk

Winter is here! Most warbirds are quiet this time of year. The Christmas season is over and things seem to be getting back to normal.

But wait, February 16th is our annual banquet, at the William Tell Restaurant. It is approaching fast! Our speaker is the one and only, Squadron 4 member, Vlado Lench!! He is the premier pilot of the P-51 Mustang! You don't want to miss the exciting stories of his adventures flying the mighty P-51! Vlado is respected not only in the Chicago area but all over the United States.

Be sure to make your reservations early as this will be a very popular event for our Squadron members. Contact Dan Guenther to hold your place, and bring a friend to share the fun.

Have you ever dreamed of riding in a P51? Here's your chance! We will be drawing the winning raffle ticket for a flight of a lifetime in the Mustang.

Also you'll have an opportunity to win one of two embroidered flight jackets. In addition, an auction will be held featuring a unique P-47 model, made in the likeness of the late Mike Titre's warbird. This tribute was built by our own Tim Dunivan, master model builder.

There will also be other warbird items raffled off during the evening.

This is a banquet you don't want to miss!! I want to see all of our members there!!

Tom Buck

### **Buzzing the Airfield**

By Tim Dunavin

This year, at the Squadron annual dinner, we will be auctioning off a model of Maj. Mike Titre's P-47 "The Mole". Mike flew 58 missions in this aircraft, and I have built a 1/32 scale model of it. Hand painted, she represents a great pilot's contribution to our freedom. Come and bid on it – have fun and enjoy the wonderful friendship and fellowship that we enjoy on this occasion.



Action photo of the model being auctioned off. The pilot has been painted to look like Mike! Prop is powered too.

### **Veterans' Forum**

By Art Sereque

On a bleak dreary Armistice Day (I know – I know – Veterans' Day – some habits are hard to shake) Sq.4 held their annual

Veterans' Forum at Courtesy Aircraft Sales at the Rockford Airport.

C.O. Tom Buck opened the meeting by introducing Mark Clark, President of Courtesy Sales, who welcomed the more than 50 people in attendance.

Jan Lindenmier, a volunteer with the Rockford Air Show committee, requested volunteers for the air show. She can be contacted at 815-874-4200 or e-mail at [lindenmier@aol.com](mailto:lindenmier@aol.com).

A break for lunch followed, provided by Quartermaster Stacy Kolls and her excellent team of helpers. During lunch, a fine local group called "Skippin' A Beat" sang many WWII era songs, including one of my favorites "Praise The Lord.... And Pass The Ammunition". The group can be contacted at 815-289-8204 (Inis Bloomster) or e-mail [buzzandinis@gmail.com](mailto:buzzandinis@gmail.com).

It should be noted that among those present were Dive Bomber pilot Capt. Chuck Downey, the youngest American pilot in WWII and Col. John Guess, a Marine Corp Corsair pilot who was only 19 years 4 months old when he became a pilot.

Also present was a Veteran of the brutal Anzio Campaign. There is a saying about those veterans: "They will all go to Heaven – because they spent their time in Hell!"

Following lunch, a business meeting was led by C.O. Tom Buck.

Tim Dunavin announced he would contribute a P-47 model "The Mole", in honor of our late member, Maj. Mike Titre, which will be auctioned at our annual banquet in February.

Brian Churchill reminded everyone to sign the "sign-up" sheet and that in the absence of Tim Bauer, he was selling Squadron merchandise.

Stacy Kolls brought us up to date on her care packages for the overseas troops, as well as the fact that we sold 142 seats on the "Aluminum Overcast" B-17 tour stop. Congrats on a job well done, Stacy, along with your co-chair Gordon Milleron and your group of hard working volunteers.

Art Sereque mentioned how we are working with WOA Administrative Assistant Midge Fischer to send letters to the new Warbirds members of Squadron 4 and our activities.

One of the two main speakers was Capt. Chuck Downey who brought us a history of the Pacific war, The Battle of Midway, a devastating loss due to the Douglas Dauntless SBD – called “Slow But Deadly”!!



Chuck mentioned “Shattered Sword – The Untold Story of The Battle of Midway” (\$35 – 600pgs, Potomac Books. Probably cheaper though Amazon.com, but I don’t know how much, ‘cuz my daughter sent it to me for Christmas). Chuck also mentioned how President Roosevelt galvanized the country.

Chuck’s training took him through dive bombers. He was on 5 carriers, including the Ticonderoga, which was hit by a Kamikaze, killing 135 crew members.

The second speaker was Ed Finnegan, a National Warbirds Director and American Airlines pilot. Ed had his private certificate while in high school but was trained in helicopters after joining the Army. He later transferred to the OB-1 Mohawk, which he flew in Korea in 1986-87, flying recon missions, both day and night. To protect himself he had a 38 revolver!! Flying mostly at night, he was shot at by both North and South Koreans. From Korea he was sent to Germany (1989) where he saw the Berlin wall fall.



Ed also drives nearly 600 miles round trip on occasion to American Wings Museum in Minnesota, where he is a volunteer.

Of course, hangar flying followed another successful Veterans’ Forum.

## **MUSTANG SOLO**

By Will Martin  
Part 3

The trouble began with a few misses in the engine, followed by several skips in my heart beat. I scanned the gauges, but everything appeared to be normal. Nothing to worry about, I concluded.

But the misses increased, the engine sputtered, gasped, and finally quit. I suppose every pilot has pondered what he/she would do in an engine-out situation. The distinctive roar of the Merlin engine overwhelms many first-time Mustang pilots, but I can tell you that its silence is even more frightening. I was now flying a glider.

The first thing that jumps into your mind is switching tanks. I went from left to right to the baggage tank with no luck. The electric fuel pump is part of the fuel control valve, and when you switch tanks, it automatically turns on the pump in that tank. The fuel pressure gauge was reading normal pressure and all of the other instruments showed in the green. I moved the throttle back and forth along with the mixture. No response. I was quickly running out of options.

When the engine quits, the prop doesn’t stop and the manifold pressure was reading about 30 inches. It takes a few seconds to realize

you are looking at a barometer reading the local barometric pressure instead of engine output or performance. The airspeed was falling off fast. It's time to do something – and pretty damn quick! Someone once defined an adventure as “While it is happening, you wish you were somewhere else.” I was having an adventure!

A dead-stick landing was one of the scenarios that I had gone over thoroughly before I ever flew south of the border and certainly one that came to mind flying a mothballed Mustang. Once it was plain that I had turned into a glider, I put the prop control into coarse pitch. The Mustang has a four bladed 11-foot-diameter prop and the drag difference is enormous from an almost flat pitch at cruise to coarse pitch.

When the prop is put into coarse pitch, it is almost feathered. I haven't seen any data, but I would guess that it decreases the drag by two thirds. The Good Book (World War II pilot's manual) says that a Mustang will glide with gear up, flaps up and prop in coarse pitch at a fourteen-to-one-glide ratio. It also says that the best glide speed is 175-miles-per hour.

When the engine quit, I was at 8000 feet. I knew that I could glide a good distance so I headed back toward Managua with the airspeed pegged at 175 mph, hoping that the engine would come back to life. While I obviously wasn't doing any calculations, I knew that I had a few minutes before I had to deal with the consequences of gravity. Later I calculated that I had had about seven to eight minutes before impact.

Most of Central America is hilly with isolated villages. On the way down I saw what looked like a small town, and I kept the road in sight, searching for a flat spot to land. I picked out a field and made a straight-in approach. Everything looks better from altitude but this field was uncultivated

and full of lumps. I lowered full flaps when the landing was committed.

By now I had already gone through the cockpit crash work such as fuel off, switches off, and canopy open. I stowed my gun, so I wouldn't accidentally shoot off my foot or anything else important. The flaps slowed me up to about 100 mph, and I was determined to keep at least that much speed to give me last minute control.

I was bleeding off airspeed just inches above the ground when a fence suddenly loomed up directly ahead. I decided to take the fence posts in the wings rather than chance stalling, cart wheeling and landing upside down. I don't remember any thud or jar when I knocked out the two posts.

When I felt the plane making contact with the ground, I shoved the stick forward and sort of dug the nose in to keep from bouncing. I slid about 250 feet and came to a stop right side up. Since I had a full load of gas, I didn't sit in the plane, pondering world events but leaped out of the cockpit and ran like hell thirty-fourty feet. I finally turned and just stared at the wreck. It just broke my heart to see such a beautiful bird dug into the ground with the prop twisted, wires hanging out like snakes and big holes in the wings.

After a few minutes, I figured it wasn't going to blow up and cautiously went up the plane. The entire bottom was torn out where the radiator air scoop was located. Looking back over my landing track I could see a little dip and that's where the radiator parted company. It weighs about two hundred pounds and was lying about fifty feet from the wreck.

I sat on the plane for about 30 minutes hoping that someone would come along. It was mid day and the temp was well over 100 degrees. Finally, realizing that I was not

exactly on the Interstate, I started out in the direction of the little settlement I had seen from the air, which ended up being about four miles. In a small grocery store on one side of the plaza, I pointed to a Coca-Cola and assured the woman that an American dollar was good. I asked for a phone in my broken Spanish and she pointed across the plaza to a church. By now I was feeling a little woozy – whether it was from the crash, the heat, or the walk I couldn't tell. Finally, I reached my agent in Managua. He sent a car and in two hours, I checked back into my usual spot, the Grand Hotel. There was nothing grand about it, but I was glad to collapse on a bed.

It was then that the full impact of the day's events hit me. I had successfully made a dead stick landing on rough terrain and survived. I reviewed my actions and rethinking them, I didn't see anything I could have done differently. The plane had been mothballed for some time but Copesa, the flight service firm in Costa Rica, had done a thorough job of checking it over as far as I could see. They had worked a month on it, and it appeared they were following the manuals.

One consolation was that I had insured the plane with Lloyds of London. Unfortunately I learned the hard way about component parts insurance. The claims adjuster was on the scene promptly since he was in Managua on another matter. He took one look and pronounced it a total. I agreed and was waiting for the check when another communication came that said that since some parts were not damaged, Lloyds would only pay for those that were. In their clever analysis, the claim was worth about 10% of the insured value. This was just another of the surprises doing business south of the border.

The Nicaraguan Air Force mechanics stripped the plane of anything they thought

useful and I just left the remains. The village natives had drained all the gas and oil and promptly started skinning the aluminum off with machetes to use as roofing on their shacks. The flight only lasted 51 minutes making my total time in Mustangs something under two hours. That was the end of 6170U and almost me.



Postscript: The landing slide had been pretty short, but my shoulder straps held and I figured I was okay. Although my head didn't hit anything, five days later back in the states, I was laid low with a powerful headache. My doctor said that it was a concussion. He explained that in severe deceleration the brain moves forward, stretching the nerves going to the brain box, or something like that. In any event, I was in bed for several days and pain killers didn't help.

### **Squadron Officers**

(Partial listing – see website for full board)

C.O. Tom Buck  
(815) 726-5059

EX.O. Frank Bartilotta  
(773) 763-4659

ADJ. Tim Bauer  
(815) 393-3932

Com. O. Brian Churchill  
(847) 356-9056

SEC. David Maren  
(708) 352-6220

Q.M. Stacy Kolls  
(815) 544-1223

### **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-eaa.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 Lenocho
P51 Mustang	John O'Connor
TBM Avenger	Tom Buck
T6	Rick Siegfried
SNJ	Vic Krause
T6	Clyde Zellers
T6	Rudy Frasca
T6	John O'Connor
SNJ	Tom Buck
Yak	Bob Fitzpatrick
OW Meyers	Chuck Downey
Stearman	Roger Paykert
Stearman	Keith Birsas
L3	Keith Birsas
L5	Larry Tinker

T34	Will Martin
T34	Rudy Frasca
Wildcat	Rudy Frasca

B25	Ray Hillson
-----	-------------

## Please send in updates

### MERCHANDISE

We have the new Squadron 4 T- shirts available at a reduced price. They come in 2 colors – green with tan lettering, and tan with green lettering (“Squadron 4 was here” Kilroy-type). This reduced price is for a short time only. Next batch will be sold at the regular price.

## Keep'em Flyin