



THE SQUADRON

EAA Warbird Squadron 4

A newsletter for Squadron members and friends of Warbird aircraft.

April, 2004

Web Site: <http://www.warbirdsquadron4.org/>

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Squadron 4 Officers and Board Members

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Tom Buck, Executive Office

Tim Bauer, Adjutant

Bruce Graham, Secretary (Active Military Duty)

Dan Gunther, Financial Officer

Brian Churchill, Communications Officer, Membership and Web Page Editor

Ron Molinets, Recruiting, Membership

Ted Koston, Public Affairs Officer, Squadron Photographer

Stacy Kolls, Quartermaster

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Jim Delany, Past Commander

Will Martin, Chairman of the Board

David Maren, Board Member

Matt Huffnus, Squadron Chaplain

June 13th Regular Meeting

The next regular meeting will be held at Kenosha Airport in Kenosha, Wisconsin on Sunday June 13, 2004. This meeting will be a joint meeting between Squadron 4 and Squadron 6. Aircraft will be available for a discovery flight for anyone who wishes (see flyer for details). Program details for the meeting are being ironed out and will be published in the May newsletter. One thing to anticipate, weather permitting, there should be a good deal of warbird aircraft present.

**Where: Kenosha Airport
10460 52nd St., Kenosha, WA
When: Sunday, June 13, 2004**

**Time to be announced
Lunch will be served**

**R.S.V.P. for the meeting by
contacting,
Mark Laatsch at 773-695-8122 or via
email at mlaatsch@csinet.net**



F4F departing USS Wolverine in Lake Michigan, 1945

The C.O.'s Desk

With warm weather approaching, warbirds will be flying. After a successful excursion to Frasca Field for our March regular meeting, we now look forward to another innovative program for Squadron 4. Our June 13 meeting will be a first for Squadron 4, in that this meeting will be a joint venture with Warbird Squadron 6, our Wisconsin counterpart, to be held at Kenosha Airport. Weather permitting, the June meeting should bring in a good deal of warbird aircraft. There are also initial plans for a Squadron field trip, early next year, to the US Air Force Museum in Dayton. Although the Squadron has visited the USAF Museum twice in the past, the museum has made significant changes, which would make the repeat journey well worthwhile. There are also plans in the works for Squadron 4 to host the EAA B-17 'Aluminum Overcast' on one of its 2005 stops. This event could bring significant rewards to our Squadron, should we win a stop on the agenda. The future for Squadron 4 will be filled with new programs and events sure to keep the members excited about being involved.

Recap of Frasca Field Regular Meeting

Squadron 4's most recent meeting was held at Frasca Field in Urbana, IL, hosted by member Rudy Frasca, one of Squadron 4's charter members. Rudy treated fellow Squadron members to his impressive collection of warbird and civilian aircraft up-close and personal. The clubhouse facilities at Frasca field offered an excellent venue for the meeting, with various scale model aircraft hanging from the ceiling and numerous aircraft displays. The meeting began with an introduction to some of Rudy's civilian aircraft housed in the hangar attached to the clubhouse. Rudy began by telling the group about the beginning of his involvement in aviation starting with his first solo flight at age 14, continuing with his enlistment in the Navy and his military career as a Link Trainer instructor at

Glenview from 1949 through 1952. His first aircraft was a Luscombe, purchased in 1950 for \$500.00. The hangar houses several other excellent examples of civilian aircraft including a Luscombe (not his original aircraft) a J-3 Cub and a Great Lakes - biplane. Rudy was especially proud of the PT-23 purchased from Paul Poberezny (the side of the aircraft even bares the signatures of Paul and his wife Audrey), and allowed Dan Gunther to sit in the aircraft for a great photo opportunity.



Dan Gunther, Rudy Frasca, and the PT-23

After lunch in the clubhouse, the group then toured additional hangars and building housing Rudy's warbird aircraft including the Spitfire Mk. XVIII (the only flying Mk. XVIII in North America), P-40E, SNJ, Zero replica, Streamman, and T-34, which incidentally, Rudy considers to be the best "all round" aircraft he has flown. Rudy also has a "mini" museum in the facility which contains several examples of Link and competitor's trainers, as well as early versions of the Frasca trainers built in Rudy's factory. There were also various aircraft (warbird) engines on display including a Rolls Royce Merlin and Griffin engine, side by side, which clearly exemplified the impressive size difference of the Griffin. Other attractions of interest were the FW-190 project waiting to be completed. The FW-190 is a German made reproduction, which is 98% accurate. Rudy needs only the prop assembly and landing gear to complete the parts inventory; however, the project is on hold pending completion of the restoration of his FM-2 (General Motors built F4F Wildcat). An interesting curiosity was a second

Spitfire Mk. XVIII fuselage and main wing off to the side of the hangar with a sign indicating the project was for sale.



Rudy's Spitfire, the only flying Mk XVIII outside of England

Rudy told the group many stories regarding his early years in aviation and his warbird collection, which began with the FM-2 purchased in 1968 for \$28,500.00. Rudy also told a few personal anecdotes, including a story about a gull-wing Stinson he thought he was purchasing without his wife's knowledge, only to find out she knew all along. Rudy's stories and experiences will soon be available in an up-coming book (due out hopefully before the end of this year) Rudy has written.

The meeting concluded with a visit to Rudy's restoration hangar where restoration work is underway on the FM-2. Rudy explained the present work on the folding wings, which necessitated some re-skinning of the wing roots and a need for Rudy to have several thousand unique rivets custom made to complete the skinning work on the aircraft. The FM-2 is slated for a new paint scheme once the restoration work is complete.



The FM-2 under restoration

All in all, the meeting was a great success and hopefully gave our members a chance to experience one of the Warbird community's premier figures, one who Squadron 4 is very fortunate to have as a member.



First prototype Frasca trainer

A Day on the Western Front

Squadron 4 'Model Master' Tim Dunavin has invited Squadron 4 members and friends to his residence in Rock Falls for a day of socializing and hangar flying.

Sat. May 15, 2004

Where: Tim Dunavin's house
28931 Bell Rd Rock Falls, IL 61071
Phone # (815) 438-2420

When: 11:00 AM until 5:00 PM

What: Fly-In/Drive-in fun time together and visiting. Brats, hot dogs, and fixings provided.

Location of grass airstrip South of Rock Falls is:

Lat. 41 39.39
Long. 89 41.37

Note: This used to be a blacktop runway, but the condition of the blacktop is such that a grass one has been set up next to it, just west of the old one. If you plan to fly to this airstrip, contact Tim for the latest runway condition!!

Alternate landing available at Whiteside County Airport.

In either case, contact Tim with your ETA, to arrange transportation to his house.

For those driving: I-88 west to the IL. 40 exit - south 7 miles on IL. Rt. 40 to Bell Rd. (1 mile south of IL. Rt. 172 junction) - west on Bell Rd. - 2nd house on left, from the corner.

Fred J. Olivi Lt. Col USAF (Ret.)

1922 – 2004

It is with great sadness I write that Fred Olivi, the co-pilot of "Bockscar," passed away on April 8, 2004. Fred's legacy will live on though. Through history books and the people that will always remember and talk about Fred, his spirit will live on.

Squadron 4 had the privilege of Fred's company at a past annual banquet. Fred talked about his time in the military during WWII. Fred believed it was very important for young people to know about and understand the mission to Nagasaki back in 1945. For those of you that were not at the Squadron Banquet, Fred does tell his story in a book he wrote, *Decision at Nagasaki: The Mission that Almost Failed*.

One memory that I will always have of Fred is when the Squadron took a bus trip to Wright-Patterson Air Force Museum. We met up with Fred during this trip and I, as well as other members of Squadron 4, got to pose with Fred next to "Bockscar." This was indeed a highlight in my life. I remember, as we stood there, two Japanese fellows wandering by. They stopped and looked at the plane and they saw all of us around Fred. I noticed the men walking towards us and I was a bit unsure of what was going to transpire. What transpired will always stick in my mind as two races coming together. The Japanese men and Fred introduced themselves to each other and they shook

hands. The Japanese men were told of Fred's involvement in the bomb dropping on Nagasaki. This did not faze them; they were very respectful to Fred. The kindness in each of their eyes was a way for Fred to say he was doing his job back in 1945 and the Japanese men to say "we don't hold you responsible." As fate would have it, we ultimately learned the two men lived in Nagasaki.

Written by Sue Bond

Trivia

Which bomber can dump the biggest payload? (ordnance)

- ✦ Rockwell B-1B Lancer
- ✦ Boeing B-52H Stratofortress
- ✦ Convair B-36H Peacemaker
- ✦ Northrop B-2A Spirit

New Members

The following members joined Squadron 4 in February and March 2004:

Michael Dean
Don Lichey

Welcome aboard!!

Publication of Membership Roster

A few members have requested a copy of Squadron 4's membership roster. We would like to accommodate these requests although we do not want to give out member's phone numbers and email addresses without first checking with our members. If you would **NOT** like your name on the membership roster, to be given to fellow members upon request only, please send an email to Brian Churchill requesting that your name be removed. Brian's email is brian.churchill@warbirdsquadron4.org. Brian can also be reached by telephone at 773-714-3347.

Squadron 4 – Year 2004 Calendar of Events

June 13, 2004 – Regular Squadron 4 meeting. Kenosha Airport, Kenosha, WI.

July 27 – August 2, 2004 - Annual EAA Airventure, Oshkosh, WI

August 15, 2004 – **Note new date** for Annual Squadron 4 Fly-in/Drive-in BBQ, Joliet Regional Airport, Joliet, IL

September 12, 2004 – Regular Squadron 4 Meeting, Lindenwood Field, Lindenwood, IL

October 9, 2004 – Captain Chuck Downey invites Squadron 4 members to a fly-in/drive-in cook out at his residence at the Poplar Grove Airport.

November 21, 2004 – Veterans Forum, Tentative Location Rockford Airport

Squadron 4 Merchandise

The Squadron presently has the following items for purchase:

Squadron logo patch (3" dia.)	\$5.00 ea
Squadron logo lapel pin (1" dia.)	\$5.00 ea
Squadron golf shirts with embroidered w/Sq. 4 logo	\$25.00 ea
Squadron baseball cap embroidered w/Sq. 4 logo	\$10.00 ea

Available soon: T-shirts and sweatshirt embroidered with Sq. 4 logo.



New shirts and hat with embroidered logo

Annual Dues for 2004

A reminder for anyone that has not paid their 2004 membership dues, the 2004 Squadron 4 annual dues remain \$25.00, and can be sent to: Mark Laatsch, P.O. Box 1910, Valparaiso, IN 46384.

Bulletin Board

Congratulations to Dan Gunther who has taken on the role of Financial Officer, and to Matt Huffnus who has volunteered to be the Squadron's Sky Pilot

Trivia Answer:

The B-1B is capable of carrying 125,000lbs. With four GE F-101 afterburning engines, the B-1B can haul the big iron. Designed in the late 70s as a supersonic, high altitude 'swing wing' bomber, it has been forced to fill a low-level bombing role with the advancement in USSR SAM technology. The agile Lancer fills both roles today admirably. The B-36H Peacemaker, with its huge wing and airframe altogether, outweighs even the big, 8-jet B-52 and carries 85,000+ pounds. The B-52H, already 50+ years old, one of the most enduring military aircraft, carries a deterring load of 50,000+ pounds, and is not scheduled to retire for more than another decade. The B-2A carries 40,000 pounds.



Keep 'em Flying