



# The Squadron



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[www.warbirdsquadron4.org](http://www.warbirdsquadron4.org)

## Events

**February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012** The Annual Dinner has been scheduled for Saturday 4:00PM. Dinner cost: Per person - \$40.00 at the door or \$30.00 with called-in reservations by Feb. 11th. Please contact Brian Churchill:

[brian.churchill@warbirdsquadron4.org](mailto:brian.churchill@warbirdsquadron4.org)

**April 28th, 2012 Saturday**  
09:00AM, Kellner Restoration Group - B-17E Flying Fortress

**May 12th, 2012 Saturday** 11:00, - Day on the Western Front

**June 24th, 2012 Sunday** 11:00, - Joint meeting with EAA Chapter 95 Morris, IL

**July 7th & 14th, 2012 Squadron**  
Work Days at Oshkosh - contact: Jim Delaney (630)438-7338  
[jim.delaney@warbirdsquadron4.org](mailto:jim.delaney@warbirdsquadron4.org)

As always please check our web site for the most up to date information:

[www.warbirdsquadron4.org](http://www.warbirdsquadron4.org)

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## From the C.O.'s Desk

We hate to see the Warbird flying pausing for the winter season. Squadron 4 had a busy year with meeting and events that delighted our members and their guests. Each of us has our favorite memory of Warbirds.....that is a mission of Squadron 4, to keep alive the old round engines, their pilots and crew, their stories, their sounds. Probably none of us will ever fly to Antarctica, but we saw and heard Don Hall relate his experience there, at the Veterans' Forum last weekend. All the while we sat surrounded by Warbirds in Mark Clarks' hangar. Incredible! Check out our website and be sure to get involved in next year's events and bring a friend! See you at the Annual Dinner in February!!

Tom Buck CO.

Photos and videos of our activities are available from our web site.

Keep'em Flyin

## Buzzing the Airfield

By Tim Dunavin

As you can see if you have been reading the newsletter, that Squadron 4 has been a busy bunch! We miss you folks who don't

make it to the events, but I realize that there are a lot of things that distract and/or demand our attention. We would love to see you all come out – we do have fun! There are those who are not able to get out much, and it is important to keep in touch with them too. Take a few minutes this holiday season to call, write, or phone some of our Squadron 4 members whom we haven't seen lately. I do try to get in touch with some of our older members once in a while – it is a joy to talk to them, when I do.

The annual dinner is coming up in February, plan on coming to it – be sure to get your reservation in to Brian early.

Some of next year's events are listed here in the newsletter. Be sure to check the web site for the rest of them.

Progress is being made on the torpedo for Tom's TBM – hopefully we will have a report in the next newsletter, and I am making good progress on the B-17 top turret that will be used when "Aluminum Overcast" visits us next year (see the article on the top turret that is included in this newsletter).

## **Veteran's Corner**

If you know a Veteran whom we can write an article on, please feel free to do so, and submit it to Tim Dunavin. Thanks.

## **Poplar Grove Party**

By Art Sereque

Squadron 4 member Captain "Chuck" Downey's spread at the Poplar Grove, IL Airport was the scene for his 10<sup>th</sup> annual bash and fly-in for his "combat flyers" friends and Squadron 4 members. A group of 60 showed up, including 16 Squadron 4 members, to enjoy his hospitality. This was the 10<sup>th</sup> straight year Chuck had the get-together.

Chuck's WWII trainer, a Meyer OTW "Out To Win" was in another hangar, it's engine out. However, another OTW (one of 102 built) took its place. Chuck was the youngest Navy pilot in WWII – younger than "H.W."



Two TBM Avengers in one place

Brad Deckert flew up from the Peoria, IL area, in his TBM, while Squadron 4 C.O. Tom Buck flew his TBM in from Joliet, IL. Ninety year old Clancy Hess was one of Tom's passengers. Clancy said he had 3000 hours flying an Avenger. Clancy flew recon in P-38s and flew "brass" in many other planes. After the war he bought a P-38 for \$1200!! That plane now resides in the EAA museum with "Marge" painted on the nose. Marge was Wisconsin native Dick Bong's wife. Dick was America's top WWII Ace, with 40 kills.

Sgt. Lou Seno (EAA 1472) talked about his experiences as ground crew chief on the B-24s in India, working in monsoons and 110 degree F. heat.

Sgt. Bob Johnson was left waist gunner on a Super Fort, flying out of Guam in the Marianas. The machine guns were computer controlled, and he explained how it worked. His gun was 40' aft of where he sat!

Grant Young, the Avenger pilot who put the final torpedo in the Yamato, arrived late, due to his wife's illness.



Two Avenger pilots (no 4) Grant Young, Clancy Hess, and Chuck Downey

Sam Kelso and Terry Bilger taxied their bright yellow and cream and burgundy, respectively, Champs from their Poplar Grove hangars. A beautiful Lake Amphibian flew in, as did “Old Bob” Siegfried who flew up – on an absolutely gorgeous day – from his Brookeridge (Downers Grove, IL) fly-in community in his very nice PT-17. “Old Bob” has over 38,000 hrs. in all kinds of planes, including 747s. His son Rick, National WOA President, who lives next door to him in Brookeridge, had to leave his Texan in its hangar, due to family commitments.

Chuck provided snacks and all kinds of liquid libation for the gang. Later came delivery of many pizzas for the troops. Nobody left hungry!

And then, when the party was over, what a sight to see, not one, but two Avengers were buzzing the field.

With friends like Chuck, it is all the more reason for local WOA members to join Squadron 4. As much as we love the planes, it’s the friends we make that counts.

Great planes, great friends, and a great host made for a great day.

## Squadron 4 at the Illinois Aviation Museum

By Art Sereque WB545852

On a glorious Indian summer day (Sunday October 9<sup>th</sup>) the Squadron, with friends and guests almost 40 strong visited the Illinois Aviation Museum at Clow International Airport in Bolingbrook, IL.

Squadron 4 C.O. Tom Buck flew in – in a big blue Grumman Avenger, with his normal crew of George Barbadeau, and Steve Pagels. A third passenger was Lt. Charles Muller, a guest as previously noted, of a guy with a mustache named Adolf in Stalag Luft III, made famous by Steve McQueen in the movie, “The Great Escape”.

Stalag Luft III was specially designed to prevent escape. They took all the hard core prisoners from other prison camps and put them in Stalag Luft III. That was their mistake!! Now all the hard core prisoners were together and immediately plotted escapes.



Mike Hudak and Charlie Muller

“Old Bob” Siegfried (one of his sons happens to be National WOA President) flew in from Brookeridge in his Navy version of the Stearman. Years ago “Old Bob” gave me a ride in it on a similar beautiful day. It is so great flying low and slow, observing the world from 1000’ AGL in a real plane. I say real because it has the 4 attributes needed: a round engine, two sets of wings, an open cockpit, and a wheel at the aft end. When “Old Bob” was asked if he made it from Brookeridge to Clow in 8 minutes, he said “No – it took 10 minutes. I fly slowly!”



Keith Birsa, in his beautiful blue PT-17 and his buddy Harvey Bushby in Keith's L-3 Aeronca Grasshopper, replete with invasion stripes, flew several passes in formation. What a sight!

Capt. "Chuck" Downey was picked up by his friend Harold Chinisk and flew in from Poplar Grove.

C.O. Tom Buck opened the meeting by saying that lunch would be at "Charlie's", the on-field eatery.

Following lunch, C.O. Tom buck made some opening remarks, followed by Gordon Millerin updating the group on the P-51 ride raffle. This year Keith Birsa gave a ride in his Stearman. Next year Keith, "Old Bob", Rick Siegfried, and John O'Connor have said they will give raffle rides. It is great friends and members like this that make the Squadron so successful!



National WOA Director and Squadron 4 member Bill Miller also addressed the group.



Tom Buck surprised Lt. Mueller by announcing that Charlie was the featured speaker. Charlie didn't miss a beat. He talked about growing up on Chicago's South side. After the war he got a master's in Physics and taught in schools in the some of the worst neighborhoods. When he finished, the group gave him a rousing round of applause.

After the meeting, our newest and youngest board member, Chris Millerin, gave an exhibition of stunt flying – with a model airplane!

Squadron 4 is a great Squadron because of the great people who participate and volunteer.

## **B-17 Top Turret Part I – The Weapons**

By Tim Dunavin

Every year around Labor Day, Squadron 4 sponsors a visit of the EAA B-17, "Aluminum Overcast". I serve as the tour guide – in full WWII flight gear up in the cockpit, and as people come through, I am frequently asked, "What went up there?" as they point to the plexiglass covered opening in the top of the cockpit. My reply is always the same – there were 2 .50 caliber machine guns in a turret mount that were fired during combat by the Flight Engineer.

This caused me to think about building a full scale replica of the top turret for display during the tour portion of the B-17 visit. This would allow visitors to visually see,

and make a better connection, to my explanation.

My first consideration of materials was to use PVC pipe for the barrels and 2 x 6 blocks for the receivers. I also spent time during the last B-17 visit to take plenty of photos and measurements. I found that the cooling jackets of all of the guns was 1 ¾ inches in diameter. Later, I found a good source for the cooling jacket material and ordered a piece long enough to do the job for 2 guns. It was 1 ¾ inch, 18 gage welded steel tube – perfect.



2 x 6 blocks used as the receivers

Getting the PVC was no problem and the wood was available locally too, so I was off to a “flying start”.

My shop is not one that can be considered a metal working shop, and I had to give a lot of consideration to putting the holes in the cooling jackets – in a straight line and 90 degrees apart, let alone ¾ inches in diameter. While at Captain Downey’s, a gentleman from Bensenville, Harold Chinick, offered the use of his shop to help me with the project.

This was great, but the distance and time were too! So I opted to make the attempt on my own.



Trail fit of cooling jacket material to gun  
I used 22 gage steel plate for the top,  
bottom, and side plates



Cooling jacket with holes drilled out –  
Note the jig used to help

A wise old man once said, “When using caveman tools – pray a lot!” So I followed my own advice! When I made the 500 pound bomb, I cut the tail fin slots in a round section of the tail. I attached a square piece of wood and milled out the slots at 90 degrees. So I made the pipe square too! (well, the jig around it anyway.) I cut 4 – 1 x 2 ½ inch by 29 ½ inches long (the full length of the cooling jacket) pieces out of scrap wood. I then screwed the pieces together in such a way as to make a box around the pipe that held the pipe tight. I then marked the location of the holes on all 4 sides, drilled a ¼ inch pilot hole for each ¾ hole, and used a 6-32 clearance drill for

the mounting screws. It took some time, but the larger holes went well and were pretty much in line, as hoped. The wood jig was a one time use thing, but it was well worth the effort.



Cooling jacket mounted



Ammo feed mounted

I cut the casing, link ejection shoot, cocking arm lever slot, and other holes in the receivers, and mounted the barrels before painting (“Gunmetal”). Later, I primed the cooling jackets and painted them inside and out. I used spacers made of PVC and slid the cooling jackets into place, made the ammo feeders, and mounted a 10 round belt of .50 cal. ammo to each gun.

The air actuators are tubing and dowel.

(See article on the Veteran’s Forum for photo of completed weapons).

Next issue: The Turret ring and gun mounting

## Veterans’ Forum 2011

By Tim Dunavin

Photos by Ted Kowalik

This year’s Veterans' Forum, held at Courtesy Aircraft, at the Rockford, IL. Airport was as great as any we have had in the past. As usual, Stacy Kolls, put on a fine lunch of soup and sandwiches, with the help of some fine helpers.



Stan, Steve, and Stacy and helper at the lunch line

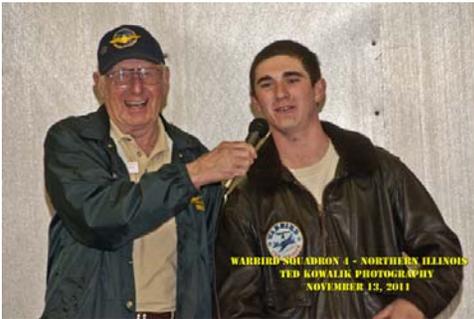
C.O. Tom Buck opened our meeting, and after our invocation we enjoyed our meal and great fellowship – lots of hangar talk and getting to know our speaker, Lt. Col. Don Hall (U.S. Air Force Ret.)



The Churchill’s



Warbirds of America National President, Rick Siegfried and Director Bill Miller were in attendance too.



Gordon Millerin and his Grandson Chris Millerin talk about the plane ride raffles (See these guys for tickets if you want a neat Warbird ride!)



Our speaker, Lt. Col. Don Hall, (U.S. Air Force Ret.), was a navigator and navigator instructor serving in Vietnam and after. He flew in C141s, flying cargo from supply stations to where it was needed. He also now serves as the Illinois Chapter President of the Military Officers Association of America.

His program was about the series of missions they flew from Christ Church, New Zealand to Macmudo Station on Antarctica.

They were to fly 4 missions, but had to fly 8 just to accomplish getting the 4 done, because of bad last minute weather conditions.

He has 2 sons, one an Air Force Major who flew F-15s in Iraq and Afghanistan.

He was a very interesting speaker and had many more stories to tell.

A special thanks goes to him for the great program!



On display were the B-17 top turret project and a model of "Aluminum Overcast" (built for Craig Welch) by Tim Dunavin



No Veterans' Forum is complete without getting the veterans, who attended this year's event, to stand together for a fine photo shot!

### Visiting Friends

A trip by Gordon and Charlotte Millerin

Gordon and Charlotte Millerin, long time friends of Ken and Chris Kehlet, spent a few days in OKC. The Millerins were on their way to Las Vegas to attend a reunion on Navy personnel who served on the Air Craft Carrier U.S.S. Ranger.

While they were there in OKC, they visited the Oklahoma Museum of Flying and Gordy (Capt'n Skyraider) was able to revive old memories of his U.S. Navy days as an AD-5 Skyraider plane Captain aboard the carrier U.S.S. Ranger.



[www.oklahomamuseumofflying.org](http://www.oklahomamuseumofflying.org)

Mr. Larry Butler is in control of the Air Force designation A1-E Skyraider at the museum. Larry was kind enough to allow Gordy the pleasure of getting on and in the seat of a very rear, 2 seat utility, AD-5 Skyraider now painted back in Navy colors.



Someone had to force him.....Right!!



He's not very happy about it.



Two days later, he still had that smile on his face.

While at the museum they checked out the RENO AIR RACER "Miss America", a Russian L-39, the FOCKKER E-III replica, North American T-28, and the Ryan ST-A being repaired due to a collapsed landing gear.



Photo taken September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011, the day before everyone left OKC to attend the Reno, NV Air Races. Luggage was sitting on the wing, ready to be stowed aboard the "Miss America" P-51 Mustang, based here in Oklahoma at the Wiley Post Airport.

## **Welcome to new Squadron 4 members!**

Douglas Blair  
 Sam Cryer  
 Leigh Ann Evans  
 James Klick  
 Robert Mistakevich  
 Sue Nealey  
 Gary Otto  
 Ken Pacholski  
 Walt Reddel  
 "Old" Bob Siegfried  
 Shari Thomas  
 Kathy Tyler  
 John Werner

## **Help Squadron 4 Support Our Troops!**

We are still collecting donations to send care packages to our troops overseas. Started in September of 2004, our care package drive has collected items for an average of 4 care packages every year,

including special Christmas packages. Donations can be brought to any Squadron meeting. A list of approved items for care packages is posted on the Squadron website ([www.warbirdswardron4.org](http://www.warbirdswardron4.org)). Monetary donations help to fill out the packages with needed items that have not been donated. It's easy to remember our servicemen and women on Memorial Day and Veterans' Day. We need to let them know they are always in our thoughts and prayers.

If you have any questions, please contact Stacy Kolls, Squadron 4 Quartermaster, at 815-218-9202. Please help us support our troops!

### **Squadron 4 Officers**

(Partial listing – see website for full board)

Commanding Officer: Tom Buck (815) 726-5059  
 Adjutant: Tim Bauer (815) 501-1468  
 Financial/Communications Officer: Brian Churchill (847) 356-9056  
 Secretary: Ted Kowalik (603) 289-2785  
 Quartermaster: 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/>

#### **Seattle, WA Cascade Warbird Squadron**

**2 Link:** <http://www.cascadewarbirds.org/>

#### **Chino, CA Warbird Squadron 16 Link:**

<http://www.warbirdsusa.org/>

#### **Cincinnati, OH Warbird Squadron 18**

**Link:** <http://www.cincinnatiwarbirds.org/>

#### **Florida Warbird Squadron 24 Link:**

<http://www.floridawarbirds.org/>

## WARBIRDS OF SQUADRON 4

Spit Fire	Rudy Frasca
P51 Mustang	Vlado Lenocho
F8F Bearcat	John O'Connor
TBM Avenger	Tom Buck
T6	Rick Siegfried
SNJ	Vic Krause
T6	Rudy Frasca
T6	John O'Connor
SNJ	Tom Buck
OTW Meyers	Chuck Downey
T34	Will Martin
T34	Rudy Frasca
Wildcat	Rudy Frasca
PQ-14B	Harry Pick

### MERCHANDISE

We have the new Squadron 4 hats; lots of new items coming soon!

You can help the Squadron and look great too! Contact Steve Pagels for all the details: [steve.pagels@warbirdsquadron4.org](mailto:steve.pagels@warbirdsquadron4.org)

**From the staff at  
Squadron News:**

**Happy Thanksgiving**  
**Merry Christmas**  
**And**  
**A very Happy New Year!**

**Keep'em Flyin**