WINGS



# News

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#### **Future Field Trips**

Richard Raskoff trip planner

- 1.Black Bird Park at Palmdale Airport many war birds including a U-2, SR-71, B-52
- 2.Space Shuttle at the California Science Center in Exposition Park!
- 3.Santa Monica Museum Of Flying
- 4.Battle Ship Iowa in San Pedro
- 5.Robinson Helicopter Factory Zamporinii Field Torrance Airport

The Memorial Day Parade is behind us



Wings News photographer Peggy Jean Bassett

#### And the 4<sup>th</sup> of July is here!

#### What Is a Kamikaze?

Seven year old Zachery stood tall in the second row and in a small clear voice asked Barney Leone to explain the odd sounding word.

He had listened closely to the story about Leone's fuel tanker memories after Pearl Harbor was bombed in the Pacific war. Barney replied with a grandfather's kindness, "that a good question" he said.

Little Zack stood there until he was satisfied with the long ago account of the desperate Japanese suicidal airplane crash dives into United States Ships.

The "Conversations with Heroes" lecture at the Studio City Library was a long awaited success.

Along with Barneys naval adventures, Art Sherman, Mike La Vere and Lee Leveton explained in good accountability of their personal history, the different bombers that they flew in and there numerous missions over France, Italy and Germany.

In two hours our crew of four experienced history tellers seemed to satisfy the fifty curious listeners in the audience.

There World War II stories were told with great detail from when they enlisted to when they finally came home.

Fred Kaplan Editor

#### Karen Pickard-Four Branch Manager

All of our efforts are nothing without a receptive audience and Karen did the ground work way before we got there.

With a large well lit room, cookies and fresh strawberries to welcome the patrons and her enthusiastic and entertaining manner she put together an informative afternoon.

Thank You letter from Karen Pickard-Four

Thank you so much for the wonderful program yesterday! We were so excited to host you and your WOW brothers

#### Just a flyer and engineer

It started on Thursday, June 12th as about twenty of Wings Over Wendy's members were seated around four round tables abutting each other. Most of us had ordered when Elmo entered the banquet room in the back of this Chinese restaurant nears Lowe's. We made room at our table and this B 24 pilot joined the group. He was apologetic for being late.

When the food was being served and I was savoring my almond chicken, Elmo began to tell me how he visits his wife Dorsie at a living facility every day, often twice a day. He explained that the sweetheart of his youth is battling dementia. Dorsie is physically very healthy, but this mental condition demands that she be in an assisted living home.

As we were both enjoying our food, this member of the 466<sup>th</sup> 130, shared his story about how fond he was of his wife and thought about marrying her when they were young. It seems her mother was against it and so Elmo continued his adventures in flying and studying to be an engineer at the university in Lawrence, Kansas. Briefly, I shared the fact that I had just lost two close lady friends from high school Colleen on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of

June and Wanda on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June. Ile added that he lost his first wife Jeanne after many years of happiness. A member clowning around interrupted our conversation.

After a few minutes, this distinguished pilot and engineer continued spelling out random highlights of his life during the rest of the luncheon. In a few days I called him and we agreed to have lunch at the Lamplighter on De Soto on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June.

We both arrived about a couple of minutes apart. We were seated and ordered similar light breakfasts. Elmo started listing all the planes in which he was trained. It included the PT 19, PT 13, twin engine trainers, the AT 17, the C78 and when he was in the service - the B 24. The B 24 training took place at Fort Worth, Texas. Civilian pilots conducted his initial flying experiences. Ironically, in 1941 and 42 when his parents moved to San Diego, Elmo became a toolmaker and worked on the wings of the B 24s. He was taught this trade by an expert German toolmaker.

His friend, Jeanne, was living in Kansas City, and busy with her life, yet this distinguished pilot continued to write to her and Dorsie. Dorsie became a lost cause because of her mother's opposition. While in the service, Elmo flew the B 32's that were phased out and replaced by the B 29's. He dated Jeanne. He took her to the opera on their first date. Near the end of the war he and Jeanne were married.

Elmo has had exciting work experiences. He worked for TRW in the field of micro miniaturization. At Hughes, he excelled in the semi conductor field and he has patents. His patent for micro diode semi conductors received the Arthur B. Little Award for excellence in the field. His work experiences were often related to advancing space activities.

His life long interest in sports as a player in high school and college glues him to the TV watching baseball, football, basketball, etc. If you should see him curled up reading a good book ... it probably is a book by his favorite writer Mark Twain.

While I was spreading more strawberry jam on my last piece of toast, he continued stating his activities with the 8th Air Force 2<sup>nd</sup> Division organization. He added that his Methodist Church on Roscoe had closed. I reminded him how wonderful the yearly Art Shows sponsored by the church were for artists. My sixth grade son displayed his work there.

"By the way, was a colonel who served in Iraq a parishioner there?' I asked. "Yes. Why did you ask?" replied Elmo.

" He spoke to us at a public meeting about what was happening in Iraq during those first few years. What I remember best was his observation that it is not about territory or oil, but a religious struggle between the Sunnis and the

Shiites. As a field officer he was very knowledgeable about all the self—interests in Iraq."

The waitress placed our bill on the table. Our chats were over. Elmo was planning to visit Dorsie and I had to go to Green Thumb. As we get up from the table, he reminded me that he would be 95 years old at the end of July.

I wished him a very "Happy Birthday".

Ed Moreno Reporter

### They never were turned back (Tradition of 8th and 15th AF)

There have been some great traditions
Through a thousand years of war
That helps recall and honor
The heroes gone before

There's the story of the Alamo Of courage unsurpassed Pickett's charge -- San Juan Hill Verdun's "They shall not pass"

That left with many regiments
Traditions tried and true
Honors aged and multiplied
As they fought the centuries through

But the world and war are changing
And today unlike the past
A fledgling code without prelude
Becomes tradition fast

It was born high in the heavens Amid the battles' din Over Schweinfurt and Regensburg Ploiesti and Berlin

It was writ by brave young airmen
High above the tortured lands
Who held the future of all mankind?
In their young and sweaty hands

They faced the savage fighters
They flew through raging flak
To create a new tradition

--Jan G. Begg 2003

Submitted by Karen Vigtel

Happy Belated 94th Birthday Darrell Huston

## Submissions to Wings News no later than the last Wednesday of the month!





