# WINGS



News

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#### The Early Years

As I was finishing my Big Breakfast, **Harold Knowles**, a very experienced F4U Corsair pilot and helicopter pilot entered Carl's Jr. for our interview. When he had his ice coffee in hand we began.

"Where were you born?" I inquired. His answer began my history lesson about the San Fernando Valley in the 1920's.

"I was born in Lankershim, California," he replied near Central Avenue which is now Burbank Blvd. Furthermore on my birth certificate, for an address, were the streets Pacoima and Central Ave, It was a very rural area. The postman knew his route and he knew the Knowles family."

Harold began his history lesson. Lankershim became North Hollywood. He attended Lankershim Elementary. Its principal, Mr. Killion had a street named after him. Killion Street is in North Hollywood. Soon this fighter pilot who served in the south Pacific during World War II and latter in Korea asked me if I knew Weddington Street in North Hollywood. He continued that the street was named after the Weddington brothers. Fred was a notable banker and his brother lived across from Lankershim Elementary. This 90 year old veteran went on sharing the life of Guy Weddington Mc Creary. McCreary was a SFV historian, preservationist and descendent of the first families who settled in 1886 and over the years developed North Hollywood, Studio City and Toluca Lake. He was a champion of Campo de Cahuenga where Mexican Governor Pio Pico and General Fremont signed the treaty giving birth to California.

Harold then elaborated about his dad. His family had over 1200 chickens on their ranch and his father was the Deputy County Assessor for Antelope Valley and the San Fernando Valley. When the Van Nuys City Hall was built his father had his office there. As a teenager he remembers driving with his dad in their Model A to view all the different properties that dad needed to assess. Often this future fighter pilot would join his father in the Model A and shoot rabbits in open land with his .22 caliber rifle.

After his graduation from North Hollywood High School he worked for J.C. Penny near home. In 1941 he learned to be a sheet metal man through a Lockheed sponsored school. Lockheed hired him and he earned .51 cents an hour. Remember gasoline was .14 cents for regular and .16 cents for ethyl. This sheet metal man worked on P38s and Lockheed Hudson Wings. In 1942 began the making of a pilot.

#### The Making of a Pilot

In November of 1942 Harold Knowles began flight training as a Naval Aviation Cadet. The training included flying Piper Cubs out of Baker, California. There were no facilities at Baker. The few tents were for maintenance and one building away from the airfield served as a training classroom and mess hall. In about five weeks he had completed 30 hours of flight training.

Next he was located in Susanville, California where he learned acrobatics. He was then stationed at Walnut Creek, California at the Naval Pre-Flight School.

At the Naval Air Station at Livermore, California, Harold just missed rubbing elbows with the actor Robert Taylor who was an instructor.

In Beeville, Texas was the Corpus Christi Naval Air Station where his training focused on instrument flying, Next he received 100 hours of advanced training at Kingsville, Texas. After completion of this training he earned his wings. He became a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. in the Marine Corps Reserve. This promotion led to 100 hours of operational training on Corsairs at the Naval Air Station at Jacksonville, Florida.

At El Toro Marine Base in Southern California he practiced additional skills such as bombing, strafing, etc. This pilot was happy flying with pilots of Boyington's Black Sheep who had returned from the Pacific to teach at the Marine Corps Air Station at El Toro.

Finally Harold was ordered to Peleliu in the Western Caroline Islands that still had about 60 Japanese troops in the jungles. This island with its air base was named Babelthuap.

This very accomplished pilot received medals and commendations. Pilot Knowles crashed into the sea just off the west coast of Babelthuap the last day of World War II. He survived.

Ed Moreno Reporter

#### **November Birthdays**

Eli Baker-November 30, 1920 Bill Blair-November 10, 1922 Ray Rodriguez-November 9, 1939 Guy Chookoorian-November 15, 1923 Gene Darnell-November 3, 1932 Clyde Reynolds November 24, 1923 Glen Sherman-November 24, 1928 Richard Stilling November 23, 1922 Gerald Detamore-November 29, 1947 Wings News Talk

This Veterans Day season is remarkable, from the Armond Arabian Awards to being recognized by the Los Angeles City Council in Chambers.

In our youth we defended our exceptional country and now we are in service to our veterans, young and old.

There is a purpose that drives our patriotic allegiance. It is being relevant and useful in our latter years with comrades that are still here to tell of their adventures of war and of peace time.

This November Wings over Wendy's has been invited more than a dozen tributes, dinners and awards.

#### Thank you

All I can express is our sincere gratitude for all the attention our growing organization has gained in these past twelve years. We have the deepest desire to see a valley museum that will hold and tell our stories beyond our last words.

This museum is a new project that will develop in the coming months.Stay healthy and fit my friends so we can gather once more on a Monday morning with the memories of our past and a clear eye towards the future. Fred R. Kaplan - Editor



Thank You for Impacting My Life!

Grandpa Elmo, he fought in World War II in 1935-1945. He was a Lieutenant Colonel for a B-24 Bomber. He crash landed on a bunny. He is still alive. He has a bullet from the air plane. It does not have gun powder in it. He gave me a model of a B-24 Liberator. It has 4 propellers and 3 running wheels. He played KU football. He was going to be in the Navy, but the Air Force line was littler than the Navy line.

> Great grandson of Elmo Maiden Eli Brunner 8 years old

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

Your Travel Guide Use this space to write the Veterans Day events you plan to attend!

### **Events for November 2014**

Wilson School Nov 5Th Wed 8:30am St Martin's School 7136 Winnetka Ave. Winnetka, Ca Nov 6Th Thurs 9: am North Valley Military Institute 1221 Monterey Rd Glendale, Ca. Nov 7Th Fri 11:00 am **Conversations With Heroes** November 8, 2014 Saturday for children & parents 2:15 pm- 3:30 pm at the Northridge Library. 9051 Darby Avenue Northridge, CA 91325 The Museum of the Valley Nov 8<sup>th</sup> 4:00 pm 18860 Nordhoff St. Suite 204 Northridge. CA 91324 Los Angles Jewish Home 18855 Victory Blvd Reseda. Ca Nov 9Th Sun 4:30 Lawrence Middle School Nov 10Th Mon 10:00 am-- 10100 Variel Ave. Chatsworth, Ca San Fernando Valley Veterans Parade Nov 11Th 9:00-10:15am Laurel Canyon Blvd S.F. Mission Blvd San Fernando, Ca Tony Cardenas Vet Day Forum Nov 11Th Tues 4:30Pm R.E.B, Meddle School 16501 Arleta Ave. Sun Valley, Ca **Ronald Reagan Library** Nov 11Th Tues-- Vet Day Will give time info as soon as possible Malibu C of C Veterans Day Event Nov 11<sup>th</sup> Tues Will give the info as soon as possible Temple Aliyah Honoring Vets Nov 15Th Sat 9:00-11:30am6025 Valley Circle Blvd Woodland Hills. .Ca Remember Fred Day! !!!!Nov 17Th Mon 8:30am If you don't know I won't tell you Pommelo Community Charter School Nov 18Th Tues 10: am 7633 March Ave. West Hills.Ca

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