

WINGS



News

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Distinguished Ottawa Native

After parking by the bridge, I entered the Jewish Home on Wilbur and Victory and received my pass to walk to Room 109.

Eli welcomed me into their home. His wife, Lillian, the gracious host, served me a Diet Coke and joined us in the living room for the interview. After he informed me that he was raised in Ottawa and graduated from high school there, he began.

"I was 19 when I joined the Air Force in the Spring of 1940, and was inducted at Manning Pool in Toronto. From there I was sent to the station at St. Thomas, which had been a mental institution before the Air Force took it over. I was trained to be a rigger, an airframe mechanic. After graduation, I was sent to Uplands in Ottawa to work on airplanes.

When Japan entered the war in December, 1941, I was sent to Vancouver, and then to Bella Bella, B.C. At Bella Bella, I went to Vancouver for tests to transfer to aircrew. After passing these tests, I was sent to the University of Alberta in Edmonton for my initial training. Following graduation, I was transferred to the airport in Edmonton for navigation training. I graduated with honors and became a Pilot Officer and transferred overseas in the Fall of 1942.

My first station was at Bournemouth, England, and then I was transferred to an operation training unit. There I met my pilot, Gordon Bennett and the rest of my crew. From there we were transferred to the 408 Squadron in Yorkshire. I did eight operations over Germany with the 408. On one of those missions, an incendiary bomb from a plane above us fell through our fuselage and landed on my desk. Fortunately, it did not start a fire, but it did knock out our electrical system. Without lights, we returned to base by astronavigation, truly flying by the stars.

Flt. Lt. Bennett, our skipper, volunteered our crew for the pathfinder squadron, 405. This squadron only flew at night. Its purpose was to have the first planes over the target and light it with colored flares for the following bombers. At the end of our first tour - thirty operations — we volunteered to do the second tour, which would add fifteen more operations. Our 45th mission would have meant that our

flights over Germany would have been completed. At this point our two gunners who had missed one of our trips still needed one more operation to finish their second tour. We volunteered to fly another trip so we could all finish together.

The trip was over Aachen, Germany, which ordinarily would have been a piece of cake. Fortune played us otherwise. On May 24, 1944, we were shot down by a German night fighter over Tilburg, Holland, on the return portion of our flight. The plane was on fire; the crew bailed out. I was second to last of the crew of seven to jump. As I passed Gordon, I asked him if he was O.K. His answer, "I'm fine. Get the hell out." I jumped."

What happened to the plane? Did Eli's parachute open right away? Who of the seven did not make it? In which direction would they go to reach England?

The next issue will continue Eli's adventures in the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Ed Moreno

Camarillo Air Show



Art Sherman talking to visitors to the Veterans tent



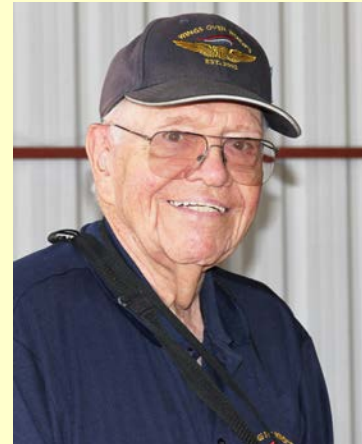
Barney Leone telling about the Okinawa invasion



Roscoe Frazier and his Viet Nam memorabilia



Mike & Boots La Vere about the bombing missions over Europe



Judge Don Foster



Al Lewis and his damaged plane



Bill Blair & his Norton Bomb sight

September Birthdays

- Neil Huston-September 26, 1931
- Jerry Beushausen-September 11, 1930
- George Ja Cobs III-September 19, 1935
- Gil Rendon-September 1, 1921
- Barney Leone-September 25, 1924
- Jack Kennedy-September 23, 1924
- Jim Rodgers-September 11, 1934
- Dale Edmundson-September 16, 1932
- Dov Landa U-September 21, 1948
- Stanley Oli Vier-September 14, 1931

**Submit all articles before the last
Wednesday of the month to
Wingsnews@gmail.com**

Conversations with a Hero The Camarillo Air Show

The morning overcast covered the low Conejo Valley hilltops last Saturday, August 22, 2015 as we came down the steep freeway grade to the annual Camarillo Air Show.


Art Sherman and the "Wings over Wendy's" combat story tellers assembled early eight am before the show opened at the veterans display hanger.

After a complementary pancake breakfast we waited for the gates to open and all the detailed questions to answer. There was Al Lewis, Art Sherman, Barney Leone, Bill Blair, Elmo Maiden, Roscoe Frazier, Michael La Vere, and Judge Don foster.

To be continued next month

Fred R. KsplnsEditor

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