



Volume 3 Number 6
Ed & Judy Reynolds Publishers

Established May 2014
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June 1, 2016
Fred R. Kaplan Editor

Our Busy Month

Wings Over Wendy's has two very busy months - May and November attending and speaking at many events honoring and remembering our fallen comrades and friends that served this great country of ours. May 2016 was no different.

Canoga Park/West Hills Chamber of Commerce Memorial Day Parade

As in the past Wings Over Wendy's provided the Grand Marshall and lead floats (trucks) for the parade. This year we supplied two Grand Marshalls:



Steve Politis



Guy Chookoorian



The trucks with over 40 members forming up

Photos by Harlis Brend

Steve Politis enlisted with the Army Signal Corp in 1941. He was serving as a radioman on a B-17 Bomber when it was shot down over Croatia. Steve reflects "When John Wayne bails out he lands in the arms of a beautiful woman but with me I land in a tree bleeding." He was found by the underground and reunited with US troops four days later. After the war Steve continued to serve the public. Equipped with two engineering degrees and a doctorate he worked in the defense industry for Lockheed. After "retirement" he worked as a math teacher for St. Genevieve's School in Panorama City. Later, he was recruited by LAUSD and at the age of 97, in a walker, was still tutoring students at Welby Way Elementary School. *Resource: Los Angeles Daily News 2014*

In 1942 **Guy Chookoorian** was attending Fresno State studying medicine until the fateful day of December 7th. Guy joined the Air Corp and flew 32 missions over France dropping food, weapons, and clothing to French Freedom fighters. Many died during these missions including his best friend. In 1945, Guy left the military and went into "show biz". He became known as the Armenian Mickey Katz recording over 15 songs. He also served for 50 years as the Choir Director for a local church accompanied by his wife as the organist. Guy performed at the Flamingo and numerous other club in Vegas and Tahoe. He also appeared in the TV series I Love Lucy, Ironsides, McMillan and Wife, Columbo, and the Sonny and Cher Show. *Resource: Latitude 38 January 2000*

Following the parade WOW members were invited to lunch at the American Legion Post.

From the May 31st Los Angeles Times



A **WORLD WAR II** veteran who belongs to the military club Wings Over Wendy's rides in the Canoga Park parade. A recent poll found that many Americans don't understand veterans' issues.

The Wings of Freedom Tour

One of the first events of the month celebrating our member's service was the "The Wings of Freedom Tour" which visited Van Nuys Airport on May 9 to 11. The tour featured a B-24J Liberator and a B-17G Flying Fortress. Rides in the aircraft were available for purchase.

The May 20-22nd EAA's: B-17G Aluminum Overcast

Another event provided the opportunity to ride in the B-17G *Aluminum Overcast*.



Anne Marie Radel served as tour coordinator and several of our members flew in the aircraft.



Howard Swerdlick, Mike LaVere, Leon Waldman & Art Sherman



EAA's: B-17G Aluminum Overcast
Reported and photos by Peggy Sue Bassett

PJ's Adventure to Remember

The day began with breakfast at Lu Lu's Restaurant decorated with the theme of "Airplanes", nicely done and just a stone's throw from the Van Nuys Airport. Fueling up their bellies before their take-off on the B-17G "Aluminum Overcast" were our Wings Over Wendy's aviator crew of WWII veterans. My son, Tracy Bassett and I also enjoyed breakfast with the crew.

Now off to the airport for their exciting flight on the B-17G "Aluminum Overcast. Lots of love (LOL)

Mike Le Vere, B-24 Navigator, Lee Auger, B-26 Radioman, Leon Waldman, B-24 Navigator, Art Sherman, B-24 Bombardier and B-17 Intelligence Officer, Steve Politis B-17 radar technician, Howard Swerdlick, military supporter and Anne Marie Radel, KNX traffic pilot were there. Mike, Lee, Leon, and Howard flew on the plane.

It was a Milk Run, flying on the Warbird, now renewed and friendly, bringing back fond memories for those whose flew in the B-17 in WWII.

My son, Tracy and I returned to the event on Sunday, May 22nd, for our flight on the same B-17G. It was an adventure to remember.

A special thanks to Anne Marie Radel, our Wings Over Wendy's member and a pilot herself. She is a tour coordinator for the EAA's B-17G "Aluminum Overcast".

One Six Right, PLANE PEGGY Signing Off

Agoura Hills



Several of our members (Art Sherman, PJ Bassett, Lee Levitan, Mike LaVere and Howard Swerdlick, attended an event in Agoura Hills to listen to Roscoe Frazier tell the group about his experiences in Viet Nam.

Hope For A Better Tomorrow: A Legacy of Service to Our Country

On May 28th Roscoe Frazier spoke to the Valley Beth Shalom Congregation on how he volunteered to serve the country in the military for twenty years. He described the type of training he received in the US Army which included basic and advanced infantry training, airborne training, and locations where he was stationed such as Fort Jackson SC, Fort Benning, GA, Fort Campbell KY, Korea, Hawaii, Vietnam, Germany, Thailand, and Washington, DC.

He named a few historical events he participated in including: the Cuban Missile Crisis, the John F. Kennedy Inaugural Parachute Jump at Fort Benning, GA in January, 1960, and his tour as one of the Helicopter Gunners in Vietnam during March to July, 1964.

Roscoe Frazier reporter

“Eagle Scout Court of Honor”

“Wings Over Wendy’s” members: Fred Kaplan, Alice Stone, Paul Boghossian, Ken Mayer, Bob Donovan and Rodger Chartrand, Jr. were at the American Legion Hall, on Thursday, May 26. Rodger’s son Rodger Chartrand the third was the Scout of Honor that night. Rodger, Jr. the leader of Troop #642 presented his son with the High Achievement Award of Eagle Scout with the “Be prepared medal”.

Fred Kaplan reporter

Member Profiles



Bill Blair - From Tonopah to Pasadena

Bill Blair’s life’s journey began November 10, 1922 in Tonopah, Nevada. He grew up on a ranch in Fallon, NV. Following graduation from Churchill County High School in 1941, he attended the fall semester at the University of Nevada, but following the bombing of Pearl Harbor he enlisted in the Army Air Corps and was called up in February of 1943.

He reported for active duty to attend Aviation Cadet training at Lincoln, Nebraska. From there he was assigned to the College Training Program in Bozeman, Montana to study Aviation Science. He was trained in Morse code and weather (especially cloud formations).

Upon completion of his training he was sent to Santa Ana Army Air Base, CA, for Pre-flight Training. Bill and other aspiring personnel were tested to determine who were qualified to become a navigator, bombardier, or a pilot. He was selected for pilot training. He was then sent to Ryan School of Aeronautics at Hemet, CA, for Primary Flight Training (class of 44C) in the PT-22. After completing “Primary”, he was assigned to Basic Flight Training in the Vultee BT-13 at Gardner Field near Taft, CA. Successfully completing “Basic” he was sent to Fort Summer, NM, for advanced pilot training in the Cessna AT-17 where he earned his “Wings” as an Army Air Corp Pilot.

His initial assignment was as a Co-pilot on a B-24 Liberator at Muroc AAB, Lancaster, CA (now Edwards AFB). His crew was sent to Hamilton Army Air Base north of San Francisco to pick up a new B-24 and ferry it to Fairfield-Suisun AAB (now Travis AFB) where the crew was given orders to ferry the aircraft to the Pacific.

Bill’s crew island hopped across the Pacific and finally delivered the aircraft to a base in Australia.

Assigned to a B-24 named the "Red Headed Woman" he flew 40 combat missions from bases located in the Dutch East Indies, Borneo, New Guinea, Noemfoor, Dutch New Guinea, and Moratai Island, Indonesia.

After completing his 40 combat missions, Bill was sent back to the states and chose to stay on active duty. He married his high school sweetheart, Margaret Crehore, on May 19, 1945 and was assigned to Texas to train Chinese military personnel to become more effective in bombing targeted Chinese areas still held by the Japanese.

It was on that assignment that Bill became very familiar with the Norden Bombsight. An interest he has to this day. A few years ago he purchased a Norden Bombsight on eBay.

His assignment was only for a few months because the war against the Japanese ended in August 1945 and he transferred to the Air Force Reserves in September 1945.

Bill was accepted in the Electrical Engineering School at Caltech in 1945 and graduated in 1949. He attended on the G.I. Bill.

Living in Pasadena he was first employed by the Department of Water and Power in Southern California for six and a half years as an Electrical Engineer and, his lifetime interests in electrical motors provided him with employment with Induction Motors Corp. for 24 years. Moreover, he has been involved with motors used in space. These small motors - more a small circuit board were powered by commands from a computer. This has allowed him to be active with JPL-Jet Propulsion Lab.

His collection of electronic musical instruments entertains his friends. A few include: a baby grand piano (it plays via rolls), a Seaberg (it reads rolls) sounds like dance hall music, encore banjo (uses an endless roll), a Violano Virtuoso (a violin and piano sound), and twenty plus cylinder and disc type music boxes.

At the annual air shows in August at the Camarillo Airport, Bill is stationed at a booth with a Norden bombsight which he explains to visitors. At career days every year at the Van Nuys Airport, he displayed and explained to high school students how the Norden bombsight works.

Bill is one of our most faithful members attending every Monday meeting from Pasadena and our WOW events. He is always cheerful at events in his old AAF uniform.

By Ed Moreno, reporter



Fred Kaplan - Always Ready To Serve

By Ray Rosenbaum

What's in a name? Fred Kaplan evokes strength and sounds like he would lead you over the top of the trenches. Actually, he was more of a builder, serving with the Seabees in the US Navy at the time of the Gulf of Tonkin incident. Seabees, as you all know, stands for construction battalion, where Fred served at the age of 21. He left the service as an Electrician third class, after duty in Guam and Okinawa.

Before joining the Navy, he spent two years at L.A. Trade Tech College, and returned there for another two year stint following his discharge. Originally, from Cleveland, where Art Sherman and I (Ray) were also born at St. Luke's Hospital, Fred moved to California when he was six. (Let us know if anyone else is a St. Luke's graduate, we'll have a reunion.) He attended Long Beach Wilson High and then graduated from Los Angeles High School.

Fred had three uncles, a baker, a painter and an electrician; the latter, Uncle Al, got him away from being a truck driver and persuaded him to become an electrician's apprentice. "That's the best thing that ever happened to me," says Fred. He recently received a Diamond Pin from the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, having served a 50 year membership in that field. He retired 28 years ago after "twisting wires for too long."

Fred now has two sons and four grandkids in Texas, one in the computer business with two Master's degrees and the other is an accomplished carpenter in Texas. He speaks proudly of both of them. He's been divorced for 28 years and is in a warm relationship with Alice K. Stone, another member of "Wing's Over Wendy's".

Fred Robert Kaplan (that's a mouthful) is now 78. He has lived in West Hills for 44 years and joined our esteemed group in 2005 serving us well. Fred's our Sergeant at Arms, calling us to attention at 9:30 every Monday morning with a recently acquired whistle and a

“Now hear this!” That's a station he also serves in the American Legion, for whom he will act as a representative in June at a Fresno convention.

At WOW, he's in charge of our parades, chairs our communications committee and is editor for Ed Reynolds on this fast-growing newsletter.

At 5 feet 11, he has a passion for eating, at well over 200 lbs., but that doesn't stop him from hustling around the restaurant every week distributing raffle tickets and keeping the veterans quiet for the meeting.

An accomplished woodwork and furniture builder, he's in the midst of making a chair for Alice, now a resident of Fairwinds - West Hills. He is adept at picture framing, a skill about which I can attest. For only \$15, he will frame your 14th anniversary photograph from our sit-in a couple of weeks ago. He also has a hobby of collecting Oriental artifacts.

Finally, Fred hates gambling, so you won't find him in Las Vegas. You can bet on it.

New Members

We welcomed the following new members during the month of May:



(Howard will sell a hat to anyone who wants to join)

Photo by Howard Swerdlick

Bob Thomas

Kaye Thomas

Hugh MacDonald

Joe Birg

Maurice Portnoy

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May Speakers

Bob Bermant



On May 2nd Bob Bermant discussed an interesting occurrence from the Civil War of both a Union and Confederate brigade that faced each other on more than one occasion. He explained how “Stonewall” Jackson received his nickname.

His interest in the Civil War began when he was 8 years old and since then he has read and studied the war including travels to the various battlefields in VA, MD, PA, TN, GA and NM. He showed us a few items he has collected. As shown below.



He grew up in Chicago and lived there until 1979 when he relocated to CA. He graduated from Roosevelt University with a business degree and majored in Economics and Finance.

Bob served in the US Army, from 1961, to Sept 1962, when his reserve unit was deactivated after having been called up for the Berlin Crisis of 1961.

After leaving the Army, he attended graduate school and began a 44-year career in the securities business.

He retired in 2008 and now spends as much time as he can with his two grandsons, children and wife of over 50 years.

Photos by Ed Reynolds

Richard Ruby



Richard Ruby served in Korea in 1956 and is currently a contractor for the Food and Drug Administration, reviewing private laboratory procedures and testing results.

On May 9th Richard Ruby told us the story of his brother-in-law Fred Brooks, who served in the Navy during World War II. Fred served on three supply ships, two of which were torpedoed and sunk. He was rescued on both occasions and finished the war as the Captain of a third ship in the 7th fleet. Richard also told us that Fred was a marathon runner into his 80's.

Roscoe Frazier

Roscoe Frazier also provided a short story of one of his patrol assignments at Cai Lay, Viet Nam. His Battalion vacated an area and Roscoe was in command of a small platoon that stayed behind to report on any Viet Cong activity moving into the area. After three days when his platoon was leaving the VC started to move in and Roscoe's men were surrounded for 5 and half hours. He shot at least one VC himself at 20 meters. Helicopter Gunships came to his units rescue and all were evacuated without and wounds or KIA.

Robert Ham



On May 16th we had the pleasure of a talk by Robert Ham a two time Emmy Award winning and three time Military Videographer of the Year filmmaker.

Robert is a Los Angeles native. After receiving his B.A. in Film he worked in various parts of the industry, primarily as a freelance editor. In 2007 he felt a call to

serve his country and joined the Army as a combat correspondent/documentarian.

He was assigned th 25th Infantry Division (Airborne) unit in Hawaii but was sent to Ft. Richardson, Alaska where he was embedded in an Infantry unit as a Videographer. The unit was deployed to Afghanistan in 2009 and included PFC Bowe Bergdahl who walked off his post and was eventually held captive by the Taliban-aligned Haqqani network. Robert told us about the missions his unit took to try to find Sgt Bergdahl and the cost of several of his friends.

He was with the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne) for three years and during that time Robert earned two Emmy nominations and the coveted DOD Military Videographer of the Year award for his documentary work in Afghanistan in 2009. Robert went on to serve three years with the U.S. Army Pacific where he traveled all over the Pacific continuing to tell the Soldiers story. During his time in the Pacific, he received two Emmy wins (2013) and two more Military Videographer of the Year awards (2012, 2013). Robert continues to pursue his passion for story telling in Los Angeles where he attends the University of Southern California obtaining an MFA in Film and TV Production.

Roger Chartrand, Jr.

Our last speaker for the month was Roger Chartrand, Jr., an active member of Wings Over Wendy's but also in the USN Reserve. When not on active duty he works for IBM and therefore his military assignments are computer related for often "Black Ops" units. He told us how he has to sneak in the night before missions and set-up the communications link for the following day's missions.

Although he is technically not a Navy Seal he has attended many of the Seal training courses. Because of his association with those units and the possibly he will be deployed again to a hostile environment he requested that we not take pictures of his talk.

May Activities

Warner Bros. Studio Tour

I have listed many of the May activities associated with Memorial and Remembrance events above, but the one big WOW activity that has been several months in anticipation was a tour of the Warner Brothers Burbank Lot. It finally took place on May 25th. LA City Councilmember Mitch Englander was able to provide a bus for the 52 people that could attend the event. We were

limited to the size that the trams allocated for our tour could hold.



A group photo by Warner Bros. in front of the Warner Bros. memorial wall of the employees that served in World War II.

The tour took us to various back lots and sound stages. Warner Bros. have configured some of the buildings as museums with figures from the Marvel Comic movies, Harry Potter movies, the Picture Car Vault and Stage48: Script to Screen experience. It ended in the Commissary where we were treated to a buffet sandwich lunch. Our thanks go out to David Timmerman for his efforts to schedule the event.

June Birthdays

Tom Hays	June 1, 1935
Morton Sherman	June 4, 1937
Ellie Harrison	June 7, 1957
Don Fraser	June 12, 1938
Hugh MacDonald	June 12, 1936
Kay Deitch	June 12, 1961
Wayne Salleng	June 12, 1960
Timothy Velarde	June 14, 1992
Stephen Klausner	June 20, 1938
Fred Davis	June 21, 1921
James Taylor	June 21, 1937
Maurice Portnoy	June 25, 1928
Francis Tully	June 27, 1936
Tom Nelson	June 27
Anarg Frangos	June 30, 1927

Wings News Patrons

Starting this month we will list the WOW members who have contributed \$10 to fund the publication of the Wings News for the next 12 months.

Al Lewis	Art Sherman
Bill Blair	Bob Bermant
Bob Donovan	Bob Stiles
Chip Stevens	Dave Steinbacher
David Loppnow	Dick Edwards
Dick Guyer	Don Foster "Judge"
Doug Rankin	Ed Moreno
Ed Reynolds	Eli Baker
Elmo Maiden	Ethel Margolin
George Musser	George Stone
Howard Swerdlick	Jack Taube
John Helm	Judy Reynolds
Karen Vegtel	Leon Waldman
Lezar Saunders	Malcolm Dipperstein
Mike & Boots LaVere	Morris Litwak
Patrick Daly	Paul Boghossian
Peggy Jean Bassett "PJ"	Peter Helm
Phil Aune	Richard Gross
Richard Hernandez	Richard Jeffress
Richard Ruby	Roscoe Frazier
Sid Maiten	Steve Politis
Ted Davis	Tom Villanueva
Toni Mattlock	Tony Velarde

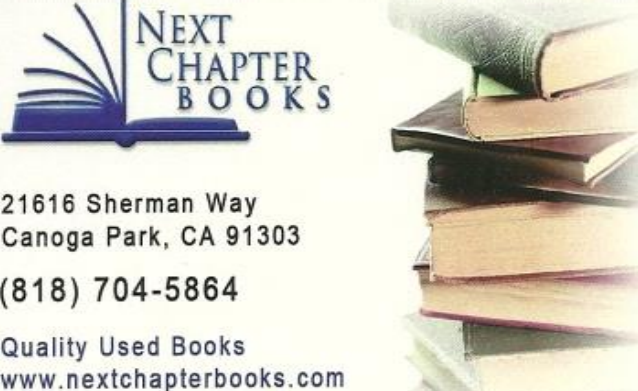
REMINDERS

**Submissions to
Wings News
No later than the Last
Wednesday of the Month
Email to:
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We all want raffle prizes!



Please search your closets and garages and bring your items to the next "Wings Over Wendy's" meeting!



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